

**INDIA ASCENDANT: AN INTERPRETATION OF INDIA'S ASPIRATIONS
TO GREAT POWER STATUS**

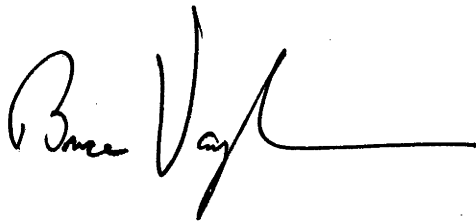
BY

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A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of the Australian
National University
July 1993

This thesis is based entirely on my own fieldwork and research.

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bruce Vaughn". The signature is stylized, with a large, looped initial "B" and a long, horizontal stroke extending to the right.

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In making some observations about how diplomats, officials, academics, journalists, and others formed their opinions on regional security issues in South Asia Stephen Cohen observed, as many have done similarly in other contexts, that "[e]ach brings to the region his or her own intellectual and perceptual baggage."¹ This highlights the extent to which analysts are captives of their own perspectives. Breaking out of the confines of one's own perspective not only enriches inquiry, by opening space for alternative conceptualisations and/or solutions to existing problems, but acts to inhibit the projection of the values of the analyst onto the subject under consideration. Because value structures can be revitalised through periodic re-evaluation, challenge is a positive force.

While a PhD student with the Department of Political Science at The Australian National University (ANU) my intellectual baggage was challenged. I thank Australia and India for allowing me to study in their countries. This inquiry has gained much from the perspectives offered by these two states. I would also like to acknowledge the financial support which I received from the Australian National University's postgraduate scholarship scheme and from the Faculties for my research and fieldwork.

More specifically, I would like to begin by acknowledging my supervisor Dr. Michael McKinley. A common complaint among doctoral students is that their supervisors have little time for them. This was not the case with Dr. McKinley whose door was always open. Dr. McKinley's dedication to teaching is inspired by his commitment to the role of the university in society. I also want to thank Dr. Sandy Gordon of the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre (SDSC) for agreeing to act as my advisor. Dr. Gordon's expertise in South Asia was a valuable resource to me during my research.

There are several other individuals that gave me invaluable assistance during the course of my studies at the Australian National University. Professor Desmond Ball's assistance with two related projects was most valuable. Dr. George Tanham and Dr. Manoj Joshi were both generous with their time and experience while visiting fellows at the

¹ Stephen Cohen, "Rashomon in South Asia: Six Views of Regional Security," Paper presented at the 1989 annual meeting of the International Studies Association in London, 3/28/89. See also Edward Said, *Orientalism*, (New York: Vintage Books, 1979).

SDSC. I am deeply indebted to Dr. Gillian Thompson. She deserves a special thanks for the many hours which she devoted to the editing of this thesis. Rick Bigwood similarly took time away from his own research to proof read chapter drafts. In the Department of Political Science I would also like to thank Drs. George, Hart, Adams and Ballard for their assistance.

The number of individuals who graciously assisted my research while I was on field work in India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Pakistan are too numerous to list entirely. I am particularly grateful to the Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) for allowing me to be a Visiting Research Associate. This was facilitated by Dr. Muni Kaul to whom I am grateful. At JNU I would also like to thank Drs. Mukerjee, Das, Muni, Prasad and Kumar. I would also like to thank Director Jasgit Singh for his views and for the use of the facilities at the Institute of Defence Studies and Analysis. Others in Delhi that deserve thanks include James Clad, S.P. Sethe, General Chibber, J. Elkin, W. Anderson, John Zubrzycki and the staff at the Teen Murti Library. In Nepal Prime Minister Koirala and the members of the Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies of King Tribuvan University were most generous with their time. In Sri Lanka, R. P. Aryasinha of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, was very helpful in facilitating my research. Colonel Cloughley's gracious assistance in Islamabad was most appreciated. I want like to thank the Nath family for taking me on, not only as a boarder but as a friend. Further I wish to thank my own family for their support. The above mentioned individuals are only a fraction of the many who generously gave of their time, experience and ideas.

The observations presented in the dissertation are the product of many fruitful and enlightening interviews and discussions. The majority of these interviews took place between June 1990 and June 1991. Many of those interviewed preferred not to be acknowledged or quoted. I am indebted to them for enriching my perspective. In keeping with their desire for anonymity, I have not directly attributed their observations and insights in the dissertation's text.

This inquiry takes as its starting point the belief that greater discussion and research into South Asian security issues will lead to better understanding and that this understanding may reduce tensions and foster harmony in the region. I hope that this dissertation makes a humble contribution towards that end.

ABSTRACT

This inquiry into India's strategic and international posture seeks to understand and explain why India is an aspirant to great power status. Demonstrations of India's power during the 1970s and 1980s led regional and extra-regional states to become concerned about India's aspirations in the region. This concern, and a lack of defence policy pronouncements by the Government of India, created an atmosphere of uncertainty. In such an environment of suspicion relations between India and its neighbours have been strained. Cross border assistance to internal separatist groups continues to exacerbate intranational and international conflict in the region. It is hoped that analysis of the causal factors behind India's external posture will increase understanding and thereby lessen the possibility of future conflict in the region.

After reviewing India's expanding military capabilities and increasing assertiveness, the dissertation identifies the domestic, geographic and economic issues areas that define the parameters of India's foreign and defence policy decision-making. The primary utility of the decision making perspective is to highlight that it is through the assessments of the ruling elite within the strategic and international affairs structures that India's external relations are established. The country serves as the important backdrop against which policy is created. The determinants set the boundaries and the elites chart a course within these parameters. In this there is a direct linkage between internal socio-political developments and India's external posture. The process is further influenced by the very external environment which its policies are designed to affect.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AASU	All Assam Students Union
AGP	Asom Gana Parishad
ADMK	Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam
AIR	All India Radio
ALH	Advanced Light Helicopter
ANZUS	Australia-New Zealand-United States
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ASIO	Australian Secret Intelligence Organisation
ASIS	Australian Secret Intelligence Service
ASLV	Augmented Space Launcher Vehicle
ASW	Anti-submarine Warfare
ATTFV	All Tripura Tribal Force Volunteers
BNU	Brachin National Union
BSF	Border Security Forces
CBI	Central Bureau of Investigation
CCPA	Cabinet Committee of Political Affairs
CDP	Committee of Defence Planning
CHT	Chittagong Hill Tracks
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CID	Central Intelligence Department
CNN	Cable News Network
CPI	Communist Party of India
CRPF	Central Reserve Police Force
DCC	Defence Committee of Cabinet
DD	Doordarshan
DDPS	Department of Defence Production and Supplies
DDRDR	Department of Defence Research and Development
DIO	Defence Intelligence Organisation
DMK	Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam
DPSU	Defence and Public Sector Undertakings
DRDL	Defence Research and Development Laboratory
DRDO	Defence Research and Development Organisation
DRE	Directorate of Revenue Intelligence
ECC	Emergency Committee of Cabinet
ECM	Electronic Counter Measures
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
FCNRDs	Foreign Currency Non-Resident Deposits
GNLF	Gorka National Liberation Front
GNP	Gross National Product
IAF	Indian Air Force
IB	Intelligence Bureau
IDG	Interdisciplinary Group
IDSA	Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses
IPKF	Indian Peace Keeping Forces
IRBM	Intermediate Range Ballistic Missile
ISI	Inter Services Intelligence

JIC	Joint Intelligence Committee
JKLF	Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front
JNU	Jawaharlal Nehru University
JVP	Janata Vimukthi Peramuna
LCA	Light Combat Aircraft
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Ealam
MBT	Main Battle Tank
MNF	Mizo National Front
MQM	Muhajir Qaumi Movement
MTCR	Missile Technology Control Regime
NAM	Non-Aligned Movement
NEF	North East Frontier
NF	National Front
NICs	Newly Industrialized Countries
NRI	Non-Resident Indians
NSC	National Security Council
NSCN	National Socialist Council of Nagaland
NSG	National Security Guard
OBC	Other Backward Castes
PAF	Pakistani Air Force
PAG	Policy Advisers Group
PCJS	Parbatya Chattogram Jansanghati Samity
PPP	Pakistan Peoples Party
RAW	Research and Analysis Wing
RCP	Rangamati Communist Party
RSSS	Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh
SDSC	Strategic and Defence Studies Centre
SC	Scheduled Castes
SLOC	Sea Lines of Communication
SPG	Special Protection Group
START	Strategic Arms Reduction Talks
TNLF	Tripura National Liberation Front
TNV	Tripura National Volunteers
TUJS	Tripura Upajati Juba Samity
ULFA	United Liberation Front of Assam
US	United States
VHP	Vishwa Hindu Parishad
VLF	Very Low Frequency

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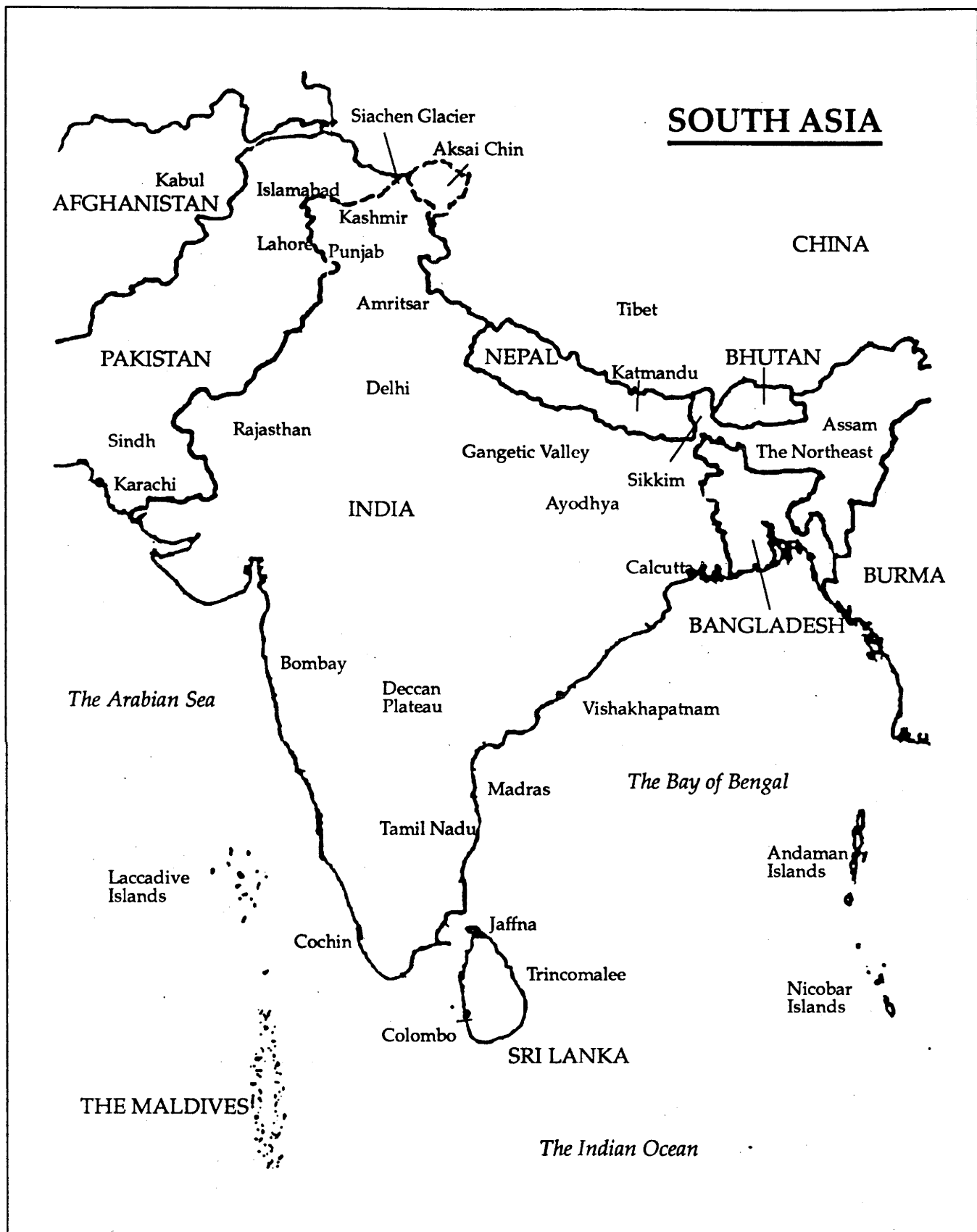
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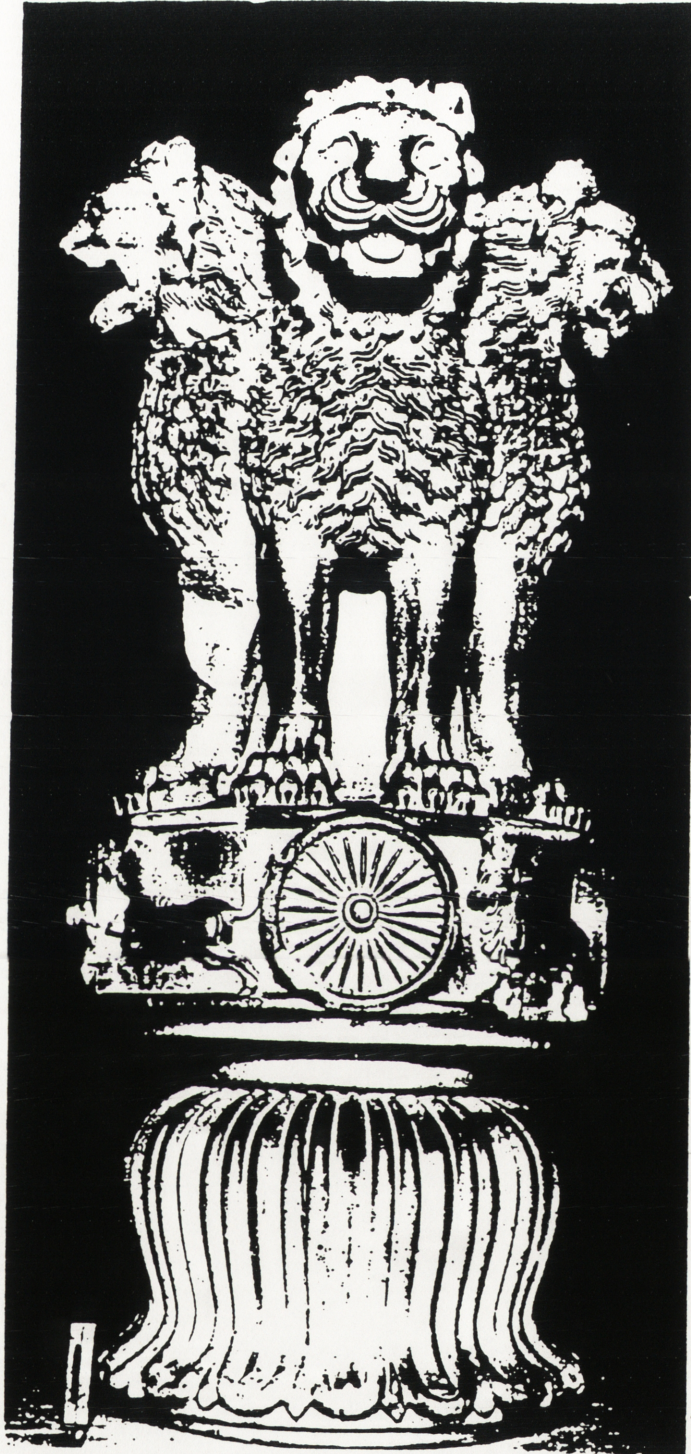
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Note: Capital of Asoka Pillar at Sarnath, Sarnath Museum.
Source: Amulyachandra Sen, *Asoka's Edicts*, (Calcutta: Institute of Indology, 1956).

CHAPTER ONE

I wonder if we can remain free from the fever of power politics or the bid for power, which afflicts the political world in the East and the West.

-Mahatma Gandhi¹

Introduction

The above thoughts were expressed by Mahatma Gandhi a few days before his assassination. Today we ask similar questions about the Indian state. As India has expanded both its capability and its evident willingness to become involved in the affairs of its South Asian and Indian Ocean neighbours, it has increasingly become the focus of debate by concerned intra- and extra-regional actors. Despite the attention paid to the change in the correlates of power, the underlying causes for India's evolving position remain elusive. Many existing inquiries into the reasons for this build-up have formed an incomplete explanation of the causal factors that contribute to the formation of India's evolving role in the world arena. One explanation of the deficiencies of Western analysis on India as a strategic and international entity is that such analysis fails to adequately integrate knowledge of Indian culture, society and statecraft. Indeed, Indian analysts have remarked that there is "almost a compulsion to make India think like someone else" when discussing issues of national security.² Further, emphasis on the state level of analysis has left unanswered the multi-faceted question as to why India is seeking a more preponderant role.³ A more comprehensive explanation requires an exploration of the internal dynamics of India's external posture and this is one of the prime aims of this thesis.

There is of course, a distinct tendency to project value systems and understandings onto other cultures when analysing them.⁴ This is

¹ As quoted in Raghavan Iyer, *The Moral and Political Thought of Mahatma Gandhi*, (London: Concord Grove Press, 1983), p. 53.

² Manoj Joshi, Seminar on Nuclear and Missile Capabilities given at the Australian National University, 12/92.

³ The assertion that India is seeking a more preponderant role will be discussed in Chapter Two.

⁴ For a discussion of American ethnocentrism in its foreign policy outlook see Howard J. Wiarda, *Ethnocentrism in Foreign Policy: Can We Understand the Third World*, (Washington: The American Enterprise Institute, 1985).

especially the case with India where the institutional and ideological legacy inherited from the British colonial period lulls the Western observer into a false perception that India is approachable in Western terms. While it is a necessary first step to understand that inheritance, a more comprehensive grasp emerges with a knowledge of the indigenous traditions and cultures. The former explains how India functions while the later explains why.

Though set in terms of the inadequacies of Western understanding of Soviet ideology, the following captures this dynamic:

... the need to recognise that just as the essence of knowledge is not as split up into academic disciplines as it is in our academic universe, so can intelligence not be set apart from statecraft and society or subdivided into elements ... rather ... intelligence is a scheme of things entire. And since it permeates thought and life throughout society, Western scholars must understand all aspects of a state's culture before they can assess statecraft and intelligence.⁵

Accordingly, this inquiry takes as its *raison d'être* the need to develop more fully a comprehensive understanding of India's multifaceted social, economic, political and strategic cultures in the belief that it is only from this base that an analysis of India's international behaviour can proceed.

This dissertation will examine the interrelationships among the causal factors of India's strategic and international relations in an attempt to explain the nature and progression of India's international posture. The inquiry is primarily concerned with the last decade. To understand events as they have transpired during this period the study will briefly trace the development of India's international and strategic posture since independence in 1947. Emphasis will be placed on the contemporary period of transition. This, it will be argued, will bring into focus India's relations with the states of South Asia,⁶ and, to a lesser extent, other Indian Ocean littoral states and those extra regional states with interests

⁵ Adda B. Bozeman, "Statecraft and Intelligence in the Non-Western World," *Conflict: All Warfare Short of War*, vol. 6 no. 1, 1985, p. 33.

⁶ This paper considers South Asia to consist of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan and the Maldives. Afghanistan and Burma are thought of as states in transition zones between the South Asian region and Southwest Asia, in the case of Afghanistan, and Southeast Asia, in the case of Burma.

in the region. The need to incorporate a sense of historical progression justifies the period under consideration.

This study is a new look at an old question. In the past three decades there have been a number of studies that have examined various aspects of India as an emerging power. There are also many studies of India's internal political situation, and its bilateral and regional relations. The value of this study is that it takes a new, integrative and multivariable approach to a problem which has changed significantly in the last five years. These changes in India's international and domestic situation necessitate such a review. The end of the bi-polar world, the diminished salience of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), the Gulf War, economic liberalisation and social transformation in India, the rise of Hindu fundamentalism, inter-caste strife and the escalation of secessionist and autonomous movements have redefined the context of Indian external policy.

This study has purposefully cast its net broadly. The coherence of the study stems from the common objective of the chapters to explain the central question as to why India has been expanding its strategic posture. To set this in context Chapter Two provides both an overview of the expanded capabilities and a chronological interpretation of India's external posture since 1947.

After establishing the nature and progression of the modern Indian state's strategic and international relations, four converging explanatory perspectives, or determinants, will be applied to develop a more holistic conception, and, in turn, an overall framework of analysis of the causal factors influencing India's general posture within the region. The four explanatory perspectives used encompass; domestic components, geopolitical factors, economic aspects and the decision-making process.

Since the evolution of India's security position is inextricably intertwined with its internal affairs the latter must be analyzed with a view to recent political and sociological developments in the Indian domestic milieu. By identifying the determinants of India's external relations an understanding of the country's direction, as it emerges from its current state of internal turmoil and transition, will be developed. The role of intra- and extra- regional actors in this process will be

considered largely from the perspective of their influence on India's security posture.

10. India as an emerging power

India's external posture⁷ has undergone three key periods of growth. Each of these has been preceded by a transitional period during which the pre-existing Indian paradigm underwent a fundamental restructuring which was necessary for India to redefine its international posture. Presently, India is in yet another transitional phase which is also likely to be followed by a period of growth. At each of these junctures the way India perceives its external environment has changed significantly. The 1962 War with China impressed upon India the need to augment its security forces. The end of the Cold War and the Gulf War of 1991 similarly acted as a catalyst for transition.

The events of 1947 left an indelible scar on the national psyche. Millions found themselves refugees in the land they had considered home. Mass slaughter based on religious identity took a savage toll. As a result, deep-seated animosities became entrenched. In this way, Pakistan became a threat in more than a geopolitical sense. The conflict became a blood feud which was further infused with religious animosity. The events of 1947, reinforced by the historical legacy of the Islamic Mughal and Afghan invasions from the northwest, made a significant impact on the way in which India was to perceive the threat from Pakistan. In this way India's suspicions of Pakistan stem from its emotive interpretations as well as from security dilemma considerations.⁸

Gandhian non-violent political behaviour, while effective in mobilizing the nation to realize *swaraj*, has been less effective in coping with the conflict of values and identities that became India's reality after

⁷ The term posture is used because it implies a broader meaning than specific governmental action or purely strategic consideration of the states of the region. Posture encompasses notions of position in that where a person stands or sits is itself located, (an attitude of the body, the way a person etc. stands or sits or walks) which is a spatial concept and also the idea that the agent is being perceived (to assume a posture especially for effect) which thereby involves the perception of others which is so central to the understanding of the question. These common definitions are drawn from Joyce M. Hawkin, *The Oxford Paperback Dictionary*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984).

⁸ For a discussion of the security dilemma in South Asia see Barry Buzan and Gowher Rizvi eds. *South Asian Insecurity and the Great Powers*, (Hounds Mills: Macmillan, 1986).

independence from Britain. The "Quit India Movement" had been effectively vitalized by Mahatma Gandhi and his active policy of non-violent protest. His battle, waged with moral force, was effective against a colonial power which no longer believed in its sense of mission. The satyagraha movement drew its strength from one source within the Indian socio-cultural tradition.

Since independence this has increasingly been challenged by alternative notions of the state. These notions are more readily associated with a realist conception of power politics. Within the Indian tradition realism is identified with the ancient treatise of Chanakya who is also known as Kautilya.⁹ Throughout India's history its nature as a state has undergone periods of integration and disintegration, of idealism and realism. This study is cognizant of these cycles as setting the larger context within which the limited period under consideration is part.

10.1 A comprehensive framework and heuristic model of India's strategic and international posture

While covering the progression of the external relations of the modern Indian state and identifying the determinants of India's strategic and international relations, an overall framework to unify the study will be developed in an effort to establish the interrelationships between the determinants, the decision-making process and India's external posture. Through this, a comprehensive explication of India's strategic and international relations and its quest for great power status within the region will emerge. It is within this context that India's quest for great power status will be presented.

The three chapters following Chapter Two survey and examine the domestic, geopolitical and economic perspectives which are viewed as constraints or parameters for setting the context of the Indian decision making process.¹⁰ Chapters Five and Six deal with the impact of economics on India's defence posture and the manner in which the

⁹ Chanakya is also known as Kautilya. see V. K. Subramanian, *Maxims of Chanakya: The Crystalised Wisdom of the Indian Machiavelli*, (Delhi: Abhinav Publications, 1980).

¹⁰ I would like to acknowledge the influence of J. Bandyopadhyaya author of *The Making of India's Foreign Policy*, (New Delhi: Allied Publishers prvt. Ltd., 1979). This seminal, and relatively unacknowledged work, deserves wider recognition for its attempt to explain the underlying causal factors of Indian foreign policy. For a more historical approach to Indian foreign policy see A. Appadorai's works.

decision-making process functions. The trade off between development and security expenditures, the relationship between GNP growth and defence expenditure and the impact of indigenous arms production on the economy will be discussed. The way these parameters and determinants influence Indian external relations is explained through a structural and perceptual exploration of the decision-making organs of the Indian government in Chapter Six. The decision making process is seen as having to operate within parameters set by the domestic, geopolitical and economic issue areas. Despite the constraints that these three issue areas exert on the decision making process there exists a fair degree of latitude within which the decision makers may operate. Further, the nature and composition of the decision-making elite will be examined as a determining factor on the outcomes of the decision making process. Chapter Seven will draw conclusions based on the preceding chapters.

While these factor groupings set the parameters, they, in and of themselves, do not directly determine policy direction. Specific policy direction is the product of those individuals and groups who staff the decision making structure. The psycho-perceptual profiles of those in the structure are key to gaining an understanding of the decision making process. This is in addition to the nature of the organisational structure of decision making and the regional and global factors that impinge on the process.¹¹

Three levels of analysis of Third World decision-making

1. The "great man" or psychological perspective
2. The national - societal level
3. The global level¹²

¹¹ There are few attempts to apply decision-making theory to the Third World context. Bahgat Korany describes Third World foreign policy studies as being in a "barren state." He also suggests that this demonstrates the "limited help that established foreign policy theory can offer." While there are a few Indian foreign policy studies which integrate decision-making theory, which are discussed in Chapter Six, the author's research generally confirms this problem as pointed out by Korany. Those attempts that have been made usually apply what Bahgat Korany has described as the "great man," or psychological, approach to analysis of Third World decision-making. In his work *How Foreign Policy Decisions are Made in the Third World: A Comparative Analysis*, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1984), p. 39.

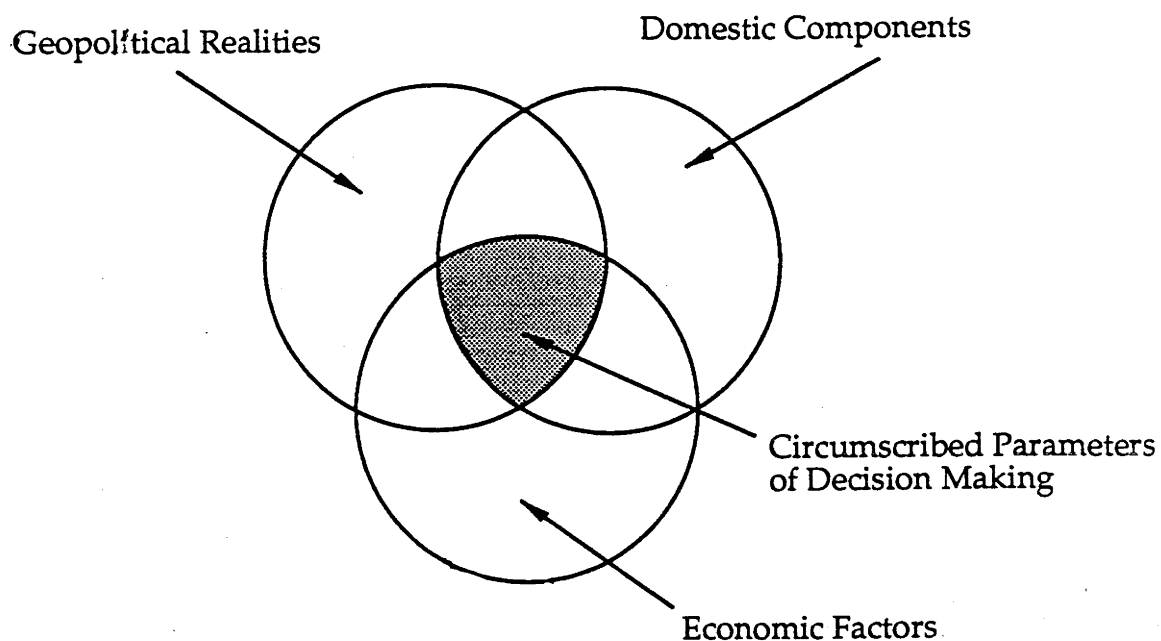
¹² By setting out three levels of decision-making Korany expands on the two tiered approach of Snyder, Bruck and Sapin, that emphasised the psychological and bureaucratic levels of analysis. Korany deemphasised the psychological perspective for its "personalistic and simplistic view." p.xii. While the earlier seminal work of Snyder,

Despite the generally high levels of consensus among the decision making elite there are emerging alternative perspectives. There are those who favour a more assertive India, and expressions of Indian national will, through coercive diplomacy supported, when necessary, by overt demonstrations of power. There is also an alternative voice which is increasingly aware of the interrelationship between security and development, and the necessity to focus on internal national development considerations. The perspective which shall emerge as dominant will be determined by the on-going interplay between economic reforms, the transition from Congress politics to coalition politics, the rise of Hindu fundamentalism and the shifting regional and global geopolitical correlates of power in the post cold war world.

In asking the question why India has been pursuing an assertive policy direction it becomes necessary to seek to establish India's objectives. Before developing an understanding of the components of Indian external posture this inquiry will establish the pace and direction of India's increasingly assertive stance. The defence and foreign policy decision making elite wield a disproportionate influence on the formation of India's external policy and posture to those groups which challenge their policy direction. In addition to exploring this level of decision-making, the societal, regional and global inputs to the decision-making process will also be considered. The effect of secessionist and autonomous groups on the centre, through their linkage to the external environment, is crucial in attempting to extrapolate India's future direction from it's past course.

Bruck and Sapin may have been guilty of such emphasis, in the Indian context, due to the centralization of decision-making within the Gandhi-Nehru dynasty, it's emphasis is not entirely misplaced. Korany is correct in his stress on societal and global factors. This study proceeds under a perspective that integrates Korany's work with that of Snyder, Bruck and Sapin.

A heuristic model of the parameters of India's strategic and international relations and the decision making process as determinants of India's external posture



The above diagram highlights the parameters of decision-making. It does not seek to assert that the decision-making process itself is the totality of a country's external relations. While Chapter Six focuses on the bureaucratic and psychological aspects of decision-making, Chapters Three, Four and Five concentrate on the societal, regional and global factors that make up the "amorphous whole"¹³ of India's external relations. Through analysis of the decision-making process, and the larger setting within which it operates, a comprehensive picture of India's external posture emerges.

System dominant states' concern over India's growing defence posture is causing them to pay more attention to India and its aspirations. They are seeking ways, through both incentives and the spectre of sanctions, to bring India within the international fold. This is to keep India from becoming an outside actor. This is most noticeable through international efforts to effect a reorientation of India's Nehruvian socialist inspired economy. American attempts, such as super 301

¹³ B. Korany, *How Foreign Policy Decisions are Made in the Third World*, p. 39.

sanctions,¹⁴ were unsuccessful as long as India felt that it had options. With the collapse of the Soviet Union and the Gulf War India had little choice but to come to terms with the West. This was facilitated by the distancing of the American relationship with Pakistan.¹⁵ Attempts will continue to be made by the West to link aid, technology sharing or defence cooperation with reduced defence expenditures and compliance with nuclear non-proliferation and missile technology control. These initiatives will seek to keep India from rising as an independent power in opposition to the existing international order. Despite these efforts India will emerge as a major global actor when it realises the achievements of its present course of economic reform. The process of economic reform is viewed as giving India the potential to significantly expand its posture in the Asia-Pacific region.

The year 1989 marked a period of significant change on numerous levels. This is true not only for the political realities of the Indian state but also for the global correlation of forces and the conceptualization of the major debates of the world affairs. The ideological imperatives of the Cold War have given way as ethno-nationalist and politico-economic concerns take a more prominent position in the international relations of states. The fracture of the multi-ethnic states of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia may set the precedent for the expansion of ethno-nationalist and ethno-religious conflict across a shatter belt from Eastern Europe to Korea. India will not be immune from the expansion of such conflicts. It is also recognised that India has dealt with such issues for some time.¹⁶ As the ideological prism of the Cold War is removed the world will once again become cognizant of ethnic divisions that threaten the peace.

Not surprisingly, the state of international relations as a study is continuing to undergo transition as competing paradigms spar in their attempts to provide the most illuminating explanatory frameworks. This

¹⁴ In May of 1989 the United States identified India, along with Japan and Brazil, as an unfair trading partner. This was done under the special 301 provision of the Omnibus Trade and Competitiveness Act of 1988. See "Indo-US Economic Relations," *Spotlight on Regional Affairs*, Institute of Regional Studies, Islamabad, February 1990, p. 11.

¹⁵ Pakistan received 3.2\$ billion in assistance from the United States between 1981 and 1986. This relationship was a marriage of convenience.

¹⁶ Some have gone so far as to compare India with Lebanon, and the Austro-Hungarian Empire as well as Yugoslavia. See Ved Mehta, "The Mosque and the Temple: The Rise of Fundamentalism," *Foreign Affairs*, spring 1993, p.16.

is more than an academic debate since the way in which the world is conceived will have an impact on its outcome, the biases of various perspectives being internalized by practitioners and thinkers alike. The perspective which the practitioners, analysts and observers of global affairs use as their filters for inquiry and analysis is therefore important for its input in the definition of the parameters of debate.

This study, while conscious of the potential impact of the on-going theoretical debate, is theoretically located largely within the mainstream. As such, it does not challenge the basic thrust of International Relations theory but seeks primarily to apply itself to a perplexing and understudied phenomenon. The study's objective is to analyse India's position within its region.¹⁷ The work therefore has a somewhat eclectic theoretical approach. This is justified through a pragmatic argument that in order to gain a comprehensive and holistic view of the anatomy of India as an emerging regional power, a multi-perspective approach must be adopted due to the multifaceted composition of the Indian political milieu. This is not the first study to take the position that no "single model drawn from history or from the experience of the contemporary world is wholly applicable to South Asia today."¹⁸

The work shares the pluralists' view that the state should be considered as one unit of analysis among many. While the state will remain the predominant level of analysis within the foreseeable future, international relations will benefit from multi-level and multi-perspective approaches. State and non-state centric levels of analysis, such as the individual, group and global, are reflected throughout the study.

Along with a change in the units of analysis we have no choice but to recognise a shift in the set of values under study. In the state-centric approach the values of the state are primary. If we are to broaden our levels of analysis to include other units we must also examine their particular value interests. Within the subcontinent, the sub-national loyalties and values are the mobilizing forces.

¹⁷ The issue of India's sense of region will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Four.

¹⁸ Surjit Mansingh, *India's Search for Power: Indira Gandhi's Foreign Policy, 1966-1982*, (New Delhi: Sage Publishers, 1984), p. 274.

The recognition of the value of the multi-perspective and multi-level approach rests on the continuing relevance of the state as the single most identifiable level of analysis for the study of international relations.¹⁹ The perspective brought to bear under this study seeks to adjust the traditional emphasis of state level analysis with the multiplicity of factors operating at other levels of political interaction, which ultimately express themselves on both the domestic and international stage. Despite the multi-leveled approach of the framework, the objective is geared to understanding a state's actions. The state remains the most salient unit of analysis despite the increasing importance of non-state actors. The multi-perspective approach is employed for the purpose of understanding the motives of the state along with those of its influential components which would otherwise be excluded, diminished or disproportionately underemphasised in a discussion of India's political evolution which placed more emphasis on the state level of analysis.

If there is a place within the current theoretical debate in the field for this study, it is somewhere between post-behaviourist and pluralist perspectives. Michael Banks discusses the post behaviourist and World Society perspectives' search for solutions to international conflict in the following terms

The world society perspective, therefore, was forced to go beyond the standard talking points of the post behavioural phase-interdependence, the extreme complexity of decision making, the activities of transnational actors - to consider also the linkages between domestic and international conflict, the successful record of conflict management in domestic contexts, and the academic literature on problems of deviant behaviour, perception, human needs and political socialization.²⁰

¹⁹ As Christopher Emsden has pointed out there remains a certain logical fallacy in this in that by "continuing to rely on the most identifiable level of analysis" the study ignores that which its method doesn't open out a priori. While this study attempts to push method somewhat by utilizing non-state levels of analysis it is not primarily concerned with these methodological questions.

²⁰ Michael Banks, "The Evolution of International Relations Theory," in Michael Banks ed. *Conflict in World Society: A New Perspective on International Relations*, (Brighton: Wheatsheaf, 1984), p. 20.

Patrick McGowan and H.B. Shapiro put forward a framework for the study of foreign policy. Based upon their survey of the literature, they proposed a unifying model for the establishment of more specific parameters for scientific study, in the hope that this would lead to increased standardisation within the field.²¹ The question regarding whether foreign policy frameworks which seek to standardise the discipline are or are not the optimal model for all foreign policy assessments is far from clear. What is indirectly relevant about their study for the assessment of India's strategic and international relations is the appropriateness of the general concepts of the feedback loop between the foreign policy patterns of a state and those external inputs into the decision making process which involve intrinsic attributes of the actor in question. Indeed it follows that, having culled the literature, they would establish this relationship. The definition of the dependent variable, as solely the acts of official representatives of the country under consideration, and the handling of the relationship between the decision-making process and the independent variables are significant deficiencies for the purposes of a broader study which is not strictly analyzing foreign policy but which is assessing the overall strategic and international relations posture of a state. An exclusively foreign policy oriented framework omits non-official outputs which are a significant component of the international posture of a state. Those actions of a state that are the result of policy and decision are but a fraction of what constitutes its external relations.

The international environment formulates its impression of India, or indeed any state, based upon perceptions which include, but are not limited to, the foreign policy representations of official representatives. Pakistani perceptions of India certainly take into account perceptions of India as a largely Hindu state. India's Hinduness is articulated primarily at the sub-national level. This perception is not the creation of explicit

²¹ Patrick McGowan and H. B. Shapiro, *The Comparative Study of Foreign Policy: A Survey of Scientific Findings*, (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1973). The model was used in a study of foreign policy by DeHaven. See Mark DeHaven, "Internal and External Determinants of Foreign Policy," *International Studies Quarterly*, March, 1991, pp. 87-108. This study explicitly limits its purview to an assessment of how the foreign policy acts of one nation could affect policy making in another, specifically, how the Soviet Union influenced policy making in the United Kingdom and West Germany by appealing to public attitudes in the wake of the dual track policy.

government policy. It stems rather, from a complex socio-cultural exchange of information. The interpenetration of the various agendas of states is one aspect of the formulation of foreign policy which may be the result of explicit state policy. The degree to which a state is successful in projecting its agenda externally is commensurate to the state's power and desire to do so; or in other terms, its capabilities and assertiveness. India's place in the global hierarchy is rising from a regional power to a global actor because of its new capabilities and its increasing assertiveness.

The inputs into the formulation of India's posture are a conglomeration of state and non-state actions and effects. The structure of the world order, international economic realities (as a result of both governmental policy and market forces), regional and global security networks and nexuses, and the actions of other state and non-state actors all figure into the totality of inputs into India's position. In effect, inputs can be thought of as any policy or non-policy action or perceived thing that has an impact on either the determinants of India's posture or more directly on the decision making process itself.

The study of the decision making process is useful, not only for its illumination of the process of foreign policy formation, but also because it helps to break down the notion of the state as a monolithic entity. By focussing on the process, in addition to the state as actor, the analysis will be more fully developed and may have greater predictive power. All too often, when discussing foreign policy, there is a tendency by policy makers and analysts to conceptualise all the inner workings of the various forces and components in reified terms. When we speak of Indian foreign policy or Indian strategic and international relations, we are really incorporating a host of contending and converging facets that are components of what is considered as Indian external policy and behaviour.

Foreign policy is the product of the complex intersection of the determinants of India's strategic and international relations and the decision-making process. Before policy is formulated it is subject to external influences, converging domestic forces and organizational interests within the decision making process. From these dynamic exchanges emerges policy. Richard Snyder, H. W. Bruck and Burton

Sapin's framework for the study of foreign policy decision making was outlined in four key subdivisions.²²

Foreign policy decision-making

1. perceptions of decision makers and the definition of the situation
2. the decisional context as a set of intervening variables
3. the interrelations of structure and process and decisional outcomes and
4. the combination of psychological and sociological levels of analysis.

Chapter Six proceeds from these four perspectives and Korany's three levels of analysis of Third World decision-making in its effort to understand strategic and international decision making in the Indian context.

Constructing a cognitive map of the individuals and groups comprising a decision-making structure is a difficult and problematic project.

to combine in a single conceptual scheme two levels of analysis- the individual (psychological variables) and the group or organization (sociological variables) -.... is still felt by many to be logically impossible or empirically unfeasible.²³

There are, undeniably, difficulties in gaining information on those involved with security policy decision making. This difficulty in obtaining data does not however, discount the explanatory value of the perspective.

If a framework for analysing foreign policy decision-making can embrace both the psychological and sociological levels, then we can ask the following questions: what rules for rational behaviour are prescribed by the organization? are

²² Richard Snyder, H. W. Bruck and Burton Sapin, *Decision Making as an Approach to the Study of International Politics*, (Princeton: Princeton University organizational behaviour section, 1954).

²³ While much work within the decision-making perspective has been done since 1962 it is by and large based on First World situations. A summary of the findings of this earlier study, an empirical application, a critical review and a linkage with other international relations analysis is provided in the 1962 reprint Richard Snyder, H.W. Bruck and Burton Sapin, eds. *Foreign Policy Decision-Making: An Approach to the Study of International Relations*, (New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1962), p. 5.

these rules attached to roles, or do they result from socialization of the individual policy maker?²⁴

If we add to these psychological and sociological levels of analysis regional and global inputs into the process we approach the stage where we can comprehend the decision-making process as a whole. The overall framework is one which integrates evaluation of the individual decision makers with the organizational structure and the defining parameters within which they must function. These parameters are themselves influenced by the regional and global context.

Decision-making as an analytical perspective commonly concerns itself with the people who make decisions and carry out actions. It also focuses on "the part of the process that deals with choosing among alternative courses of action."²⁵ Defence and foreign policy decisions are concluded and implemented within some sort of a sociological, regional or global context. Those who would be affected by a decision will seek to influence its outcome. The nature of the structure within which decisions take place similarly influences their outcome.

India's decision-making system draws extensively, though not exclusively, on Western, and particularly British, organizational models. The key difference in the decision making process stems not from structural factors but from the attitudes and perceptions of the people who compose the government. This defines the Indian quality of the decision-making process. Much was made in the Indian press of the technocrats which characterised the Rajiv coterie. In contrast to this style of leadership, with its Western educated elite, there is a rising number of Indian educated local politicians who draw their support from more traditional areas. This can be seen as a growing division between the modern elite and more traditional leaders. Decision making is a complex and convoluted process. With the presence of so many competing influences any decision certainly can not be seen as the result of a monolithic rational actor. Despite this, there is a tendency to

²⁴ Richard Snyder, H. W. Bruck and Burton Sapin, *Foreign Policy Decision-Making*, pp. 8-9.

²⁵ Bruce Russett and Harvey Starr, *World Politics: The Menu for Choice*, (San Francisco: W. H. Freeman and Co., 1981), p. 267.

conceptualize India as such. India, in its complexity and confusion, has, like any nation, its own definition of politically rational behaviour.

10.2 Levels of analysis

When discussing questions ranging across individuals, groups, organizations, and more broadly defined structures, ranging up to the national and international, it is essential that we address the issue of the levels of analysis under consideration and explore the potential problem areas which may extend from such a perspective. The extent to which the various levels of inquiry maintain their coherence is related to their relationship to the central question of where Indian strategic and international relations are headed and why.

India's posture is largely the product of a process which is subject to prisms or filters which cluster around three of five levels of analysis. The primary level of analysis is the national. Here the basic determinants of India's strategic and international relations are brought to bear on the decision-making process. The remaining key levels of analysis are the group and individual levels. At these two levels, identity and values are formed. Their relationship to the national level is bi-directional. To an extent their values and aspirations are articulated by the national level. More often the group acts to coalesce individuals into shared identity units which then compete for influence with other groups at the sub-national, national and international levels. As the centre has lost its ability to maintain a national identity subnational groups have grown in strength. The competing identity groupings will be discussed in Chapter Three while the domestic roots of India's external relations will be explored in Chapter Four.

The output of the decision-making structure, is determined by the interplay of the bureaucratic and organizational processes, influenced at the national level by sub-national and governmental groups. These groups seek to influence the cognitive maps of individual decision makers. The extent to which actors outside the power structure of the state have an impact on the process is determined by their ability to orchestrate sub-national groups.²⁶ The influence of individuals inside

²⁶ The Gandhi-Nehru dynasty seemed to be able to escape this more than other political actors as their power base was associated with the nation itself. They were allowed to

the decision-making structure similarly incorporates a myriad of factors. The power of the individual, their formal position in the structure of decision making, their informal position, the extent to which there is an organisational ethos, the degree of a broad decision making elite mind set etc. all influence those within the structure.

Hence research on belief systems must ultimately be embedded in a broad context, and the problems of linking and interrelating theories and concepts that are oriented to the individual decision maker to the behaviour of groups and organizations need to be addressed directly.²⁷

It is this interrelationship between national foreign policy and a holistic conception of the context from which it emerges that is lacking in most assessments of Indian foreign policy. To study a state only on the level of the interface of the national with the international level is to focus on only that part of the equation. To be more fully informed other levels which influence the process must also be brought in.

operate above the sub-national level more than other politicians. With the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi all significant political actors once again must build on a sub-national power base.

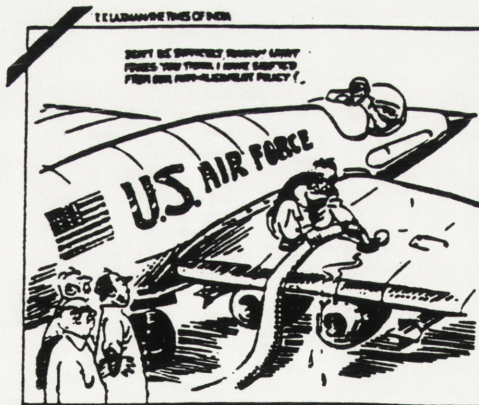
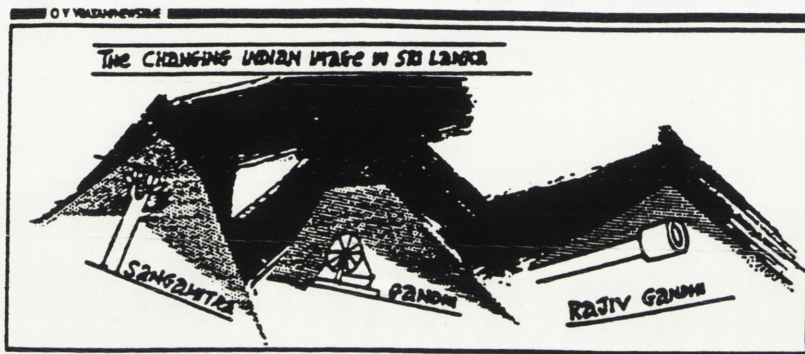
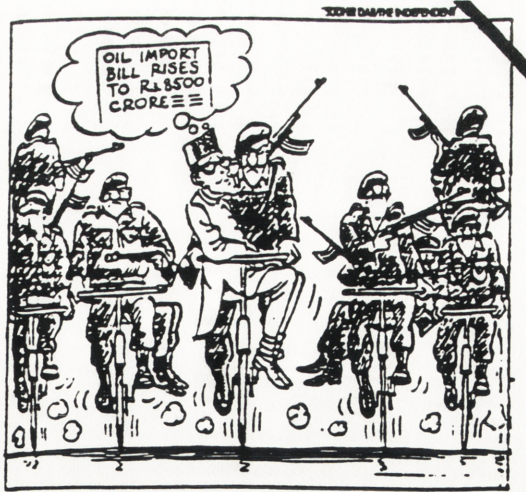
²⁷ Ole Holsti, "The Analysis of Cognitive Maps," in Robert Axelrod, *Structure of Decision: The Cognitive Maps of Political Elites*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), p. 57.

Frameworks of analysis and levels of analysis

	Global	Region	National	Group	Indiv.
I. Geo-politics	X	X	X		
II. Domestic Factors					
A. Conflict Analysis			X	X	X
B. Ethnicity				X	X
C. Indian Political Traditions			X	X	X
D. Internal/ External		X	X	X	
III. Economics	X	X	X	X	X
IV. Decision Making					
A. Psychological			X	X	X
B. National-societal		X	X	X	
C. Global	X	X			

Note: The above chart identifies the primary levels of analysis that particular aspects of the study's framework of analysis operates on. The use of differing levels of analysis is necessitated by the inextricable link between the domestic, national and international affairs of India.

The study will now proceed with its discussion of India's expanding capabilities and increasing assertiveness within the South Asian and Indian Ocean regions.



Source: Sudhir Dar, *The Illustrated Weekly of India*, 7/8/90, O.V. Vijayan, *The Illustrated Weekly of India*, 11/22/87, R.K. Laxman, *Illustrated Weekly of India*, 2/16-17/91. For an overview of the role of political cartoons see R.K. Laxman, "Freedom to Cartoon, Freedom to Speak," *Daedalus*, Fall 1989, pp. 69-91.

CHAPTER TWO

It is recognised by all that India is in a state of transition. She finds herself in the period which links the past, lived through and left behind, with the dawning future of new activities, new hopes and new aspirations.

-M.N. Roy¹ *India in Transition*, 1922

India as an emerging power 1947-92: expanding capabilities and assertiveness

A considerable body of literature has been dedicated to the debate over the proposition that India is an emerging power. India has many assets and liabilities that influence its power position. This chapter demonstrates that India has been significantly expanding its military capabilities and is becoming increasingly assertive. This trend is likely to continue, moreover, despite recent reductions in defence spending.

Before moving to present an explanatory framework for understanding the driving force behind India's expanding posture, this chapter will examine the growth of India's military and paramilitary capabilities, defence budget, and nuclear posture. Following this discussion of capabilities, an assessment of India's increasing assertiveness will be undertaken. Through such an analysis this chapter conceptualizes India's external posture as evolving through a progression of periods of transition and growth. These periods have altered India's external paradigm. To be sure, in the early 1990s India has found itself in the midst of significant reorientation. It is hoped that a better understanding of the historical progression of these periods of growth and transition will produce a better understanding of India's present and future position. The primary objective of the chronological interpretation is to demonstrate the general trend. The specific dates which delineate the periods of growth and transition are not to be interpreted rigidly but as general demarcations of shifts in India's posture.

¹ M.N. Roy, *India in Transition* 1922 as quoted in L. Gordon and P. Oldenburg eds. *India Briefing*, 1992, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1992), p. 1. Though over seventy years old this statement remains true today.

India's periods of transition and growth are today part of a general trend in its external orientation from a mixed idealist/realist² posture to one that is nationalist/realist in its outlook. These idealist/realist, or Lok-niti/Raj-niti,³ tensions of Indian state-craft have existed to greater and lesser extents throughout Indian history. The rise of the Indira-Rajiv dynasty put these forces out of balance. It is the excessive reliance on the Raj-niti model that has led India to embrace policies that have created internal dissent and external suspicion. Further, these forces are conceptualized as moving in cycles rather than in uni-directional modes. As such, while the Raj-niti/realist viewpoint is presently dominant in Indian decision-making circles, it is not interpreted as the inevitable path along which India will proceed.

20. Expanding capabilities

As India has sought to extend its hegemony over South Asia, it has similarly sought increased international recognition of its growing status. This search for status has itself been a factor fueling the arms build-up. A West European diplomat has characterised this desire for the status that comes with power in the following way: "More than anything else, India wants to be taken seriously. It wants to be viewed as a world power. That is an end in itself."⁴

The arms build-up that India has been engaged in is proactive as well as reactive. Prior to the 1971 war India was primarily reacting to threats. The Indian arms build-up is part of a desire to acquire the necessary arms to gain a level of superiority over Pakistan that will achieve that country's subordination without recourse to war. It also stems from a desire to extend India's influence beyond the subcontinent to be able to meet China as an

² J. Bandyopadhyaya identified these aspects of the Indian political tradition in *The Making of India's Foreign Policy*, pp. 69-73.

³ The concepts of Raj-niti and Lok-niti are borrowed from Ashok Kapur, "Indian Security and Defence Policies Under Indira Gandhi," in Y. Malik and D. Vajpeyi, eds. *India: The Years of Indira Gandhi*, (Leiden: E.J. Brill and Co., 1988), p. 43.

⁴ Ross H. Munroe, "India: The Awakening of an Asian Power," *Time*, 4/3/89. Concern in the West reached a high point in 1989.

equal within the Asia-Pacific region.⁵ Perceptions affected by the acquisition of certain weapons systems give India status and power in the international arena. India's decision to lease a Soviet nuclear-powered submarine, renamed the INS Chakra, is partially explicable in this way. One submarine did not, in itself, give India a militarily significant system. What it did provide was operational knowledge and recognition. The move had the desired effect of attracting widespread international attention. This type of arms acquisition, in conjunction with other events, made the world take notice of India as a rising regional power. India sought to have the world acknowledge its right to alter its global status. Much of India's frustration, however, stems from the reluctance of established powers to recognise and acknowledge India's new position.⁶ Indeed, it is interesting to consider whether the forces pushing for larger defence budgets and increased assertiveness might subside if India was given a higher profile among the significant states of the Indian Ocean region and the world.⁷

This chapter will initiate its discussion of India's expanding capabilities with an analysis of the armed forces, and then proceed to discuss nuclear issues and the defence budget.

20.1 Expansion of military and paramilitary forces

India has embarked on a programme aimed at significantly expanding its military strength. An overview of the composition and structure of the Indian navy, army, air force, paramilitary forces, nuclear and missile

⁵ For an excellent account of China's relations and objectives in the region see Y. Vertxberer, *China's Southwestern Strategy: Encirclement and Counterencirclement*, (New York: Prager Publishers, 1985).

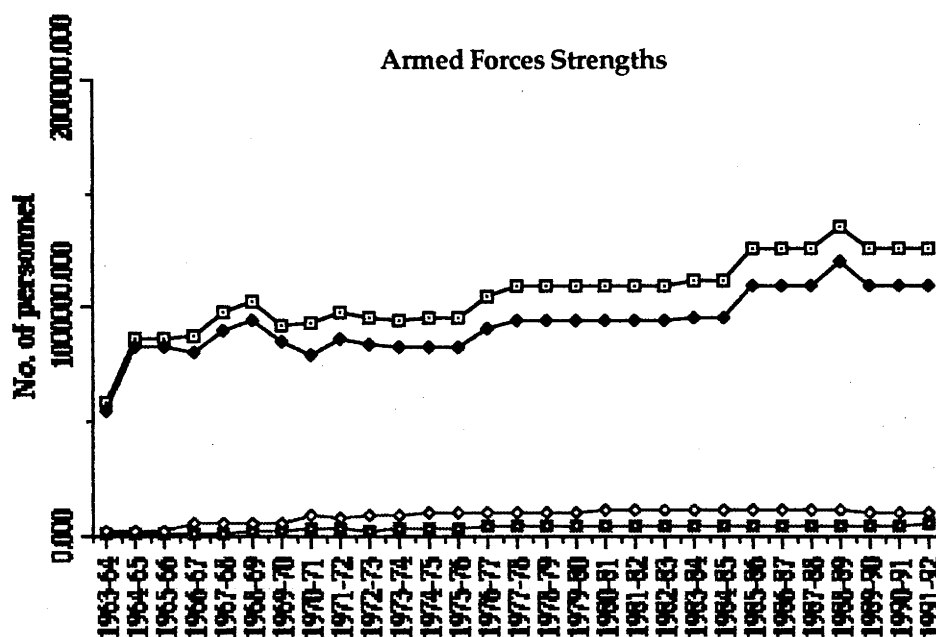
⁶ This effort to increase India's diplomatic weight through arms acquisition is not without precedent. Germany's decision to build a fleet in 1898 in hindsight seems to have been inspired by a desire to take on the accoutrements of the major actors at the time. Perceiving Germany to be a land power, the British viewed the naval build up with suspicion and felt threatened by Germany. A similar reaction has greeted India's build up of naval and ballistic missile forces during the 1980s. The Australian media in particular, and the ASEAN states in a more diplomatic and less vocal fashion, have expressed their concerns about the potential of further increase in the qualitative and quantitative growth of India's navy during the 1980s. David Ziegler, *War Peace and International Politics*, (London: Foresman and Co., 1990), p. 255.

⁷ For a later more reasoned Australian viewpoint see Sandy Gordon, "India and South Asia: Australia's Other Asia." *Current Affairs Bulletin*, 1992.

capabilities illustrates the growth of India's strategic posture.⁸ Emphasis will be placed on naval development and the paramilitary forces. This emphasis is justified, as these two areas witnessed dramatic increases in force structure and resource allocation beyond that of the overall trend during the 1980s. Further, they reflect the changes in India's security environment. India has found itself increasingly beset by internal strife at a point in its history when it has been seeking to extend its influence in the Indian Ocean Region.

The following chart of the Indian armed forces' strengths portrays the nature of their progression in the post-1962 period. The initial phase of growth levelled off in 1970-72, and was increased again in the period 1976-78. The numbers of personnel remained at this plateau until the 1984-89 expansion. Since 1989 there have been reductions, but the force strengths remain at a higher level than the force structure of the period 1978-85. Many of the troops released from the army were absorbed into the para-military forces. The dramatic increase of the paramilitary forces will be discussed below.

⁸ The bifurcation of the country, with the division of resources between India and Pakistan, and the departure of the colonial power of Britain at independence reduced India's strategic standing within the region considerably. India's strategic posture was neglected until after the 1962 border war with China.



Source: The International Institute of Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance*, (London: Brassey's Publishers, various years).

The chapter will now proceed to discuss the service branches, defence expenditure and Indian nuclear and missile programmes.

20.11 The navy

The growth of the Indian navy has figured prominently among studies concerned with the correlation of power among intra-and extra-regional powers in the Indian Ocean Region.⁹ In fact the expansion of the navy was itself the single most notable factor attracting international

⁹ For example see: Robert Bruce, ed. *The Modern Indian Navy and the Indian Ocean*, (Perth: Centre for Indian Ocean Regional Studies, 1989), Robert Bruce, ed. *Australia and the Indian Ocean*, (Perth: Centre for Indian Ocean Regional Studies, 1988), Robert Bruce, ed. *Prospects for Peace: Changes in the Indian Ocean Region*, (Perth: Indian Ocean Centre for Peace Studies, 1991), W. Dowdy and R. Trood, *The Indian Ocean: Perspectives on a Strategic Arena*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 1985), Selig Harrison, *India and the Indian Ocean: New Changes afor American Policy*, (Washington: Washington Institute for Values in Public Policy, 1986), Brian Cloughley, "Regional Superpower Flexes its Muscle," *Pacific Defence Reporter*, February 1989, pp. 43-44, Larry Bowman and Ian Clark, *The Indian Ocean in Global Politics*, (Boulder: Westview Special Studies in International Relations, 1981), Patrick Wall ed. *The Indian Ocean and the West*, (London: Stacey International Publishers, 1975) and Kim Beazley and Ian Clark, *The Politics of Intrusion*, (Sydney: Alternative Publishing Cooperative, 1979).

attention and concern in the late-1970s and the early-to mid-1980s.¹⁰ The Indian Navy has evolved from a coastal navy into a force that can project itself into the Arabian Sea, the Bay of Bengal, the Andaman Sea, and the northern reaches of the Indian Ocean.¹¹ The expanding zone of operations and fleet composition of the Indian Navy further indicates that its eventual operational objective is the Indian Ocean at large.¹²

In the absence of an Indian Defence white paper, there is a strong case to be made for analysis based on the procurement strategies of the armed forces. From this perspective, the growth of the navy is particularly interesting. The aircraft carriers, the nuclear submarine, base construction, the land based naval air arm, and the beginnings of an amphibious force have all extended the reach of India's defensive perimeter and its power projection capabilities. The ends to which these capabilities will be applied in the future may have already been foreshadowed by the Maldives operation and the Indian Peace Keeping Forces (IPKF) deployment to Sri Lanka in 1987. Future Indian intervention in such places as the Seychelles, the Comoros, or Mauritius, should not be discounted. Coup attempts, and the presence of non-resident Indians (NRIs) in countries such as Mauritius are potential openings for such intervention, as was demonstrated by the Maldives affair. The substantial ethnic Indian population living in several Indian Ocean littoral states could be the basis of future Indian involvement. If India had the capabilities to assist ethnic Indians in strife, as they have

¹⁰ The new item of concern on the Indian agenda is its progress with its nuclear and missile programs. These will be discussed below.

¹¹ Indian power projection capabilities were at times in the past considerable. In 603 AD the King of Gujarat sent his son and 5,000 followers to establish a Kingdom in Java. This 100 ship fleet established a colony and a trade route back to India. Alan Villiers, *Monsoon Seas: The Story of the Indian Ocean*, (New York: McGraw Hill, 1952), p. 108. In 1014-25 King Rajendra Chola conquered Sri Lanka, the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, the Malay Peninsula, Sumatra and lower Burma. Lieutenant S.J. Singh, "The Indian Navy is No Threat," *Proceedings of the United States Naval Institute*, March 1991, p. 76.

¹² For a sampling of writing on the Indian Ocean from the Indian and Soviet perspectives see: A. Krutskikh, *US Policies in the Indian Ocean*, (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1984), I. Redko and N. Shaskolasky, *The Indian Ocean: A Sphere of Tensions or a Zone of Peace?* (Moscow: Nauka Publishers, 1983), P.K.S. Nambodiripad, J.P. Anand and Sreedhar, *Intervention in the Indian Ocean*, (New Delhi: ABC Publishing House, 1982), Satish Chandra, *The Indian Ocean: Explorations in History, Commerce and Politics*, (New Delhi: Sage Publishers, 1987) and C.R. Mohan et. al. *Indian Ocean and US-Soviet Detente*, (New Delhi: Patriot Publishers, 1991).

been in Uganda and Fiji¹³ in the past, they would probably be more inclined to do something to support them.

Over the centuries, the Indian Ocean has periodically been viewed as a power vacuum into which external naval powers have expanded. (see routes of invasion map)¹⁴ With the close of the 15th century came the Portuguese explorer Vasco de Gama and the Viceroy d' Albuquerque. Their efforts opened the way to one hundred years of Portuguese naval supremacy in the Indian Ocean.¹⁵ This was subsequently contested by the Dutch (1624-1670), French (1666-1784), and British (1640-1968). While the French, under the command of Admiral Suffren, defeated the British fleet at Cuddalore in 1783,¹⁶ The Battle of the Nile, in 1798, and Trafalgar, in 1805, firmly established British maritime supremacy.¹⁷ Britain's naval power in the region began to wain during the Second World War, though it would not be until the announcement of the East of Suez policy in 1968 that Britain would be displaced as the key regional actor.¹⁸

¹³ The possibility of Indian support for the ethnic Indian population in Fiji will be discussed at greater length in Chapter Six. See also section 40.231 for a discussion of NRIs.

¹⁴ The Panikkar invasion route map seems to be drawn from a map drawn by Stephen Voorhies which appears inside the jacket cover to Allen Villiers, *Monsoon Seas*, which was published in 1952 three years prior to the publication to *Geographical Factors in Indian History*. In this work Panikkar points out the deficiencies of Indian cartographers. "While the Arabs and the Chinese produced most interesting maps from very early times, India has been extremely backward in this respect." In this way Panikkar draws on Western geopolitical culture to in part define an Indian one.

¹⁵ In 1508 Gujarat formed an alliance with Egypt to oppose the Portuguese. They attacked the Portuguese naval squadron off Chaul in the battle of Dabul which was inconclusive. In response the Portuguese Viceroy, Almedia, crushed the allied fleet at the battle of Diu in 1509. Subsequent alliances between the Ottomans and the Gujaratis (1536-37) and the western Indian Kingdoms and the Ottomans (1546) were similarly unsuccessful in resisting European naval power. See Alan Villiers, *Monsoon Seas*, chapters 9, 10 and 11, Admiral G.A. Ballard, *Rulers of the Indian Ocean*, (Boston: Houghton and Mifflin Co., 1928) and Ernest and Trvor Dupuy, *The Encyclopedia of Military History*, (New York: Harpers and Row Co., 1977), pp. 508-10.

¹⁶ Though distance had prevented the news from reaching the combatants peace between Britain and France had been settled five months before the battle at Cuddalore. As a result the French withdrew their fleet, despite their victory at Cuddalore, thereby opening the way for British supremacy. Admiral Ballard, *Rulers of the Indian Ocean*, (London: Duckworth Publishers, 1927), pp. 283-87.

¹⁷ M.L. Bhargava, *Indian Ocean Strategies: Through the Ages*, (Delhi: Reliance Publishing House, 1990), p. 63.

¹⁸ K.M. Panikkar, *India and the Indian Ocean*, (London: Allan and Unwin Publishers, 1962).

By the 1950s, the United States and the Soviet Union were beginning to manoeuvre for position to fill the perceived vacuum left by the British in the Indian Ocean region. The South East Asian Treaty Organisation of 1954, the Australia-New Zealand-United States (ANZUS) Treaty, the Baghdad Pact of 1955, and the Central Treaty Organisation of 1959 were all American efforts to secure areas on the littoral of the Indian Ocean from Soviet influence. Soviet regional initiatives and responses to these efforts to contain its influence included counter naval deployments, the Treaty of Peace and Friendship with India of 1971, and, most notably, the invasion of Afghanistan in 1979.¹⁹ With the collapse of the Soviet Union, and the end of the Cold War, bipolar geopolitical rivalry abated with the Soviet Navy withdrawing from the Indian Ocean after a thirty-year presence.²⁰

The next round of naval rivalry in the Indian Ocean may be between America, the weakened global power, and India, the emerging regional power. In the post-cold war world, the major naval power in the Indian Ocean remains the United States. Despite India's immediate preoccupation with Pakistan, India will remain apprehensive of American naval capabilities and presence in the Persian Gulf, and at Diego Garcia in the Chagos Archipelago. Naval planners long-term goals are to be able to deter American (or any other) naval power within the Indian Ocean.

Even if we are to be confronted by a superpower fleet, our naval strength should be such as to command due respect and in any case should be able to raise the threshold sufficiently against any interference from a foreign power attempting to violate our territorial waters, usurp our EEZ or threaten our sea-borne trade.²¹

The relationship between India and the United States Navy has been further discussed by Ashley Tellis, as told in the following.

¹⁹ The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan is here interpreted as being directed at gaining access to a warm water port and as part of the Breshnev doctrine.

²⁰ Gwynne Dyer, "India Changes Sides and Cosies Up To US," *The Canberra Times*, 3/23/92. See also Bruce Vaughn, *Bipolar Geopolitical Rivalry in the Indian Ocean*, (Ottawa: Carleton University, unpublished MA Thesis, 1987).

²¹ Former Vice Chief of the Naval Staff, Vice Admiral S. Parkash, "Background paper," *Naval Strategy in the Indian Ocean: Proceedings of a Seminar Held at USI*, (New Delhi: United Services Institution of India, 1984).

The focus of these operations, though vaguely defined as foreign powers operating in India's vicinity and often cloaked by invoking a parallelism between Soviet and American intervention in the Ocean, are generally associated with the latter - which is often perceived by both authoritative civilian and service spokesman as the primary threat.²²

Despite the economic liberalisation and joint naval manoeuvres undertaken in 1992, the Indo-US relationship will continue to be a somewhat distant one, as India will continue to pursue an independent position with regard to the American Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) and non-proliferation issues. This distance in the relationship will continue to act as an impetus for continued Indian naval expansion as economic conditions allow.

The four-fold mission of, and rationalisation for, the Indian Navy has been defined by Vice Admiral, M.P. Awati, in the following ways:

1. To safeguard the Indian coastline and vital installations in the vicinity of the coastline against both surface and submarine threats.
2. To safeguard the flow of trade into and out of Indian ports during limited war situations.
3. To restrict the naval activities of the potential adversary-in this case Pakistan-during limited war.
4. And to be in a position to assist island republics of the Indian Ocean-notably Mauritius, the Seychelles, Sri Lanka-in case they seek Indian assistance, particularly against threats of subversion. The Sri Lankan intervention beginning in 1987 illustrates this mission and the Seychelles has been subject to two coup attempts since 1982.²³

²² Ashley Tellis, "Naval Technology in the Indian Ocean Region: Present Capabilities and Future Prospects," (Chicago: University of Chicago, unpublished paper), p. 34.

²³ Vice Admiral Awati retired in 1983. He served as both Flag Officer and Commander of the Western Fleet and Commander of the Eastern Fleet. M.P. Awati, "Emerging Security Issues in the Indian Ocean," in Selig Harrison and K. Subramanyam, *Superpower Rivalry in the Indian Ocean*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), p. 104. This fourth role is more directly described as power projection by Capt. (of the INS Viraat) Arun Prakash, "A Carrier Force for the Indian Navy," *US Naval War College Review*, Autumn, 1990, p. 63. Vice Admiral Prakash has outlined the rationale for naval power to 1. Defend the homeland, 2. Build a capability to project power across the ocean to secure India's lines of communication and defend its Island territories and 3. Intervene where ever our national interests are threatened in the region. Vice Admiral Prakash, *Naval Strategy in the Indian Ocean*, p. 4.

Though articulated differently by various analysts, these four points are generally agreed to be the rationales for the Indian Navy.²⁴ They will be redefined as trade and commerce interests, sea denial, naval superiority objectives, and power projection.²⁵

India's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), its off-shore islands, oil and deep seabed mining interests, long coastline, and maritime trade, all give India a legitimate rationale for a navy of substantial size. Fifty percent of India's oil and eighty percent of its gas requirements come from the EEZ. Another thirty percent of its oil is sea borne, for the most part from the Persian Gulf. Some 97 percent of India's trade is shipped by sea. This totals \$50 billion annually.²⁶ The merchant marine has over 400 ships. India has 10 key ports, in addition to 20 of intermediate size and some 150 minor ones. India's coastline extends over 7,562 kilometres, with 351 islands.²⁷ India is not alone among Indian Ocean littoral states in only recently realizing the extent of its Indian Ocean interests. Until recently, Australia undervalued its own status as an Indian Ocean littoral state.²⁸

²⁴ Robin Jeffrey adds the interesting observation that "Politically astute Admirals, capitalising on the desire of a nationalistic middle class for symbols of power, have been able -until India's financial crisis of 1991- to press for a substantial, highly visible navy." These issues, and the issue of a East/West split inside the Indian Navy will be taken up in the decision-making chapter. Robin Jeffrey, "Political Admirals: A Neglected Aspect of the Growth of the Indian Navy," Melbourne: La Trobe University, unpublished paper, p.1. Another list of four interests can be found in Gary Sojka, "The Mission of the Indian Navy," *Naval War College Review*, Jan.-Feb. 1983, pp. 4-5.

²⁵ Economic limitations have put on hold plans to build at Cochin Shipyards a third Indian Carrier. Initially the 35,000 tonne French designed ship was to be launched in 1998. "New Aircraft Carrier to be Launched at Cochin Shipyards," *Aerospace and Defence Markets and Technology*, 7/91, p. 228 from *Reuters News Service*.

²⁶ "Interview with Admiral Ramdas," *The Far Eastern Economic Review*, p. 31.

²⁷ Lieutenant S.J. Singh, "The Indian Navy is No Threat," p. 75.

²⁸ For an overview of the Australian position see Michael McKinley, "Australia and the Indian Ocean," in F.A. Mediansky and A.C. Palfreeman, *In Pursuit of the National Interest*, (Sydney: Pergamon Press, 1988). During the late 1980s the Australian Government explored India's changing posture through a number of hearings and Senate reports see; Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade *Enquiry into Relations with India* (Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service, June 1989). Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade, *Australia India Relations, Trade and Security*, (Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service, July 1990). Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs Defence and Trade, *Reference: Australia-India Relations*, (Canberra: Official Hansard Reports of Hearings and Submissions on 4/27/89, 5/12/89, 5/16/89, 6/22/89, 7/25/89, 7/26/89, 9/6/89. During the period funding for an Indian Ocean centre for peace Studies was approved. Further in 1992-3 there was a

Various segments of the subcontinent have throughout history been conquered, subjugated and/or colonised by the Arabs, Chinese, Portuguese, Dutch, French, British and Japanese imperial powers from across the seas.²⁹ This is in part explained by the lack of a deep water naval tradition of the Aryan peoples who migrated from Central Asia to the north of India. Evidence of limited Indian seafaring is mentioned as early as 1500 BC in the Vedas. Further, the Codes of Manu provide for shipping and port dues, while Kautilya's Arthashastra, of the fourth century BC, "lays down the function of the port commissioner."³⁰ Arab and Persian Muslims had established their control over Indian Ocean trade, with settlements at the mouth of the Indus, by 800 AD. The Portuguese later established settlements at Goa, Diu and Daman, the Dutch in Ceylon, and the French in Pondicherry. The British eventually controlled virtually all of the subcontinent, either directly or indirectly, from their initial beachheads at Bombay, Madras and Bengal. During World War II, both Burma and the Andaman and Nicobar Island Group fell to the Japanese.³¹ India was spared Japanese occupation only by reverses in the Pacific theatre after the Battle of the Coral Sea.

India has been in the process of reinterpreting, re-emphasising and revising its history to create a maritime tradition that can validate and justify

submission by the Melbourne South Asian Studies Association for the establishment of a centre for South Asian Studies.

²⁹ China launched its first expeditionary force into the Indian Ocean under Zheng He in 1405. It consisted of 27,000 men in 3017 ships. During the third of seven voyages they fought the local King near Colombo in Ceylon and forced him to pay tribute to the Ming empire. These Chinese voyages had little impact on the Subcontinent. A subsequent expedition under Cheng Ho (1416-24) is thought to have extracted tribute from virtually all the major Kingdoms of the Indian Ocean. E. & T. Dupuy, *Encyclopedia of Military History*, p. 442. Inland warfare and canal construction in China brought the expeditions to a halt in 1436. Bruce Watson, *Eighth Voyage of the Dragon: A History of China's Quest for Seapower*. (Annapolis: US Naval Institute Press, 1982), pp. 33-41.

³⁰ K.M. Panikkar, *India and the Indian Ocean*, pp. 29-30.

³¹ In 1942, 5 Japanese carriers and four fast battleships sailed into the Indian Ocean to crush British naval power based out of Trincomalee and Colombo. They also seized the Andaman and Nicobar Islands to protect their supply routes to Rangoon. The Germans had also challenged British supremacy in the Indian Ocean with the raiders Konigsberg and Emden in 1914 and the Graf Spee in 1939.

recent efforts to develop a blue water navy.³² These maritime traditions have been highlighted, and somewhat embellished, by K.M. Panikkar.

The idea that Hindus had some sort of ceremonial objection to the seas, while perhaps true of the people of North India, was never true with respect of the people of the south.

From at least the fifth Century BC to the sixth Century AD this naval supremacy [from the east coast of India across the Bay of Bengal to Southeast Asia] rested with the continental powers in India.³³

The Hindu and Buddhist character of the kingdoms of Southeast Asia were the result of Indian maritime activity in the Bay of Bengal, which was based on the Sri Vijaya Empire, though the extent to which this was the result of naval supremacy is debatable.

The Navy foundation of India funded a documentary, *The Maritime Heritage of India*, "commissioned with the sole aim of making the public at large aware of India's great maritime past."³⁴ This rewriting of history is certainly aimed at enlarging the constituent base for further naval

³² Citing the "Lords of the Eastern Seas" titles of both the Mauryan (322BC - 185BC) and the Andhra (230 AD - 225 AD) empires Admiral Kohli further discusses India's maritime tradition in the following. "As regards the people's tendency for seafaring, India is not only populated by 'born sailors' along her coast but, as we know today, even those from inland areas have proven to be equally good seafarers during peace and war." Admiral S.N. Kohli, *The Indian Ocean and India's Maritime Security*, (New Delhi: Printed for the United Services Institute by Statesman Press, 1981), p. 5. The most destabilising scenario is one where this reinterpretation of India's maritime tradition is merged with a militant reinterpretation of Hinduism.

³³ K.M. Panikkar, *India and the Indian Ocean*, pp. 29 & 32. Other sources are more conservative in their estimate of the beginnings of Indian contact and trade with Southeast Asia. "While Indian vessels almost certainly reached Southeastern Asia before the end of the first millennium BC it is probable that interest in the area intensified after the emperor Vespasian, who succeeded in 69AD." Charles Higham, *The Archaeology of Mainland Southeast Asia*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 244. This discrepancy demonstrates the reinterpretive liberty that is being taken by Panikkar as he seems to have drawn his research from Indian sacred and historical texts as opposed to archaeological data. This finding is echoed in R. Smith and W. Watson, *Early Southeast Asia: Essays in Archaeology, History and Historical Geography*, (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1979), p. 354. "The Indian Literature is of little help beyond establishing that the voyages did take place. The writers are story tellers rather than the keepers of records ..."

³⁴ Yogendra Bali, "When India Ruled the Waves," *The Times of India*, 10/15/90.

expansion.³⁵ Modern India can only be considered a significant naval power from the late 1960s onwards. If one were to review Indian history to find an Indian navy that could similarly challenge Western navies' ability to operate in Indian waters, one would have to go back as far as the Zamorin of Calicut, or the Maratha Navy, under Admirals Manik Bhandari and Kanogi Angre.³⁶

The objective of denying the Indian Ocean to India's enemies, (at present primarily Pakistan), is seen as a way to prevent future foreign influences from once again gaining power over India. The continuing presence of the American facilities at Diego Garcia, and the American ability to deploy over a half million troops into the northwest quadrant of the Indian Ocean, is disturbing to many in India. India will continue to develop its navy out of fear of maritime subordination, despite the signs of improvements in the Indo-US relationship:

... it is vital that her naval force levels should be so determined as to provide a credible threshold of deterrence to any belligerent country. In arriving at these force levels it must be remembered that a threshold can not be built on vintage ships and equipment that can not match that of an aggressor.³⁷

These sentiments are echoed by the following excerpts from a speech by Indira Gandhi to the opening session of Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting. Though spoken in 1980, they remain relevant from the Indian perspective:

The ocean has brought conquerors to India in the past. Today we find it churning with danger. Even the Pacific hardly lives up to its name. The frantically increasing pace of militarisation in the Indian Ocean makes the 3,500 miles of our coast more

³⁵ For a more objective analysis of the naval performance of Indian Kingdoms and empires throughout history see, Abhijit Bhattacharyya, "The Indian Navy- Victim of History and Legend," *United Services Journal*, July-Sept. 1984.

³⁶ S.N. Kohli, *The Indian Ocean and India's Maritime Security*, p.11. and CDR Sureshwer D. Singh, "Role and Buildup of the Indian Navy," in *Naval Strategy in the Indian Ocean*, p. 18. Evidence that the Indian Navy is also coming to be a force for the Western navies to contend with is evident in a recent review of Third World submarine threats. According to Director of US Naval Intelligence, Rear Admiral Thomas Brooks, Third World navies such as India's are not necessarily third rate. India was reportedly the focus of a United States navy ASW effort. J.J. Lok, "USA Revises Third World Threat," *Janes Defence Weekly*, 3/23/91, p. 431.

³⁷ S.N. Kohli, *The Indian Ocean and India's Maritime Security*, p. 65.

vulnerable. How can we acquiesce in any theory that tries to justify the threat to our security environment or condone the existence of foreign bases and cruising fleets? *Independence implies the responsibility of deciding what is good and safe for ourselves and of charting our own course.*³⁸(italics added)

The base construction under way in the Andaman and Nicobar island group is the Indian equivalent of Portuguese Malacca or British Singapore in that it is an effort to control the eastern approaches to the Indian Ocean. Instead of Aden, Socotra, Hormuz and Muscat to control the western approaches, India will have to rely on deployments out of Bombay, Goa, Karwar and Cochin to the south.³⁹

The decision to add a new base at Karwar is a welcome one. It acquires compelling logic from the increased activities of extra-regional navies in the Arabian sea as well as from the potential Pakistani threat.⁴⁰

Indian naval developments are now aiming beyond the immediate reaches of the Northern Indian Ocean, and are targeted at countering what is intermittently seen as the neocolonial influence by the United States. The perception in India during the Gulf War was characterised by the phrase "if Baghdad today then Bombay tomorrow." India's sense of its lack of capabilities and influence builds support for augmenting military capabilities.

India has already found, as have previous masters of the Indian Ocean, that sea denial and control will involve an expanding security perimeter that will lead India to project its power farther from its shores than present.⁴¹ The Portuguese, British and Americans have been successful in establishing their naval supremacy in the Indian Ocean. The spice trade,

³⁸ Extract from the Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's address at the opening session of CHOGM 4 September 1980 as reprinted in *India's Views on the Indian Ocean*, (Delhi: External Publicity division, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, Statesman Press, 1981), p. 1.

³⁹ Indian Naval commands are as follows, Bombay (Western Fleet HQ), Goa (HQ Naval Air), Karwar; Cochin (Southern Command HQ), Viskakhapatnam (HQ Eastern Command and submarines). International Institute of Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance*, 1991-2, p. 161.

⁴⁰ M.P. Awati, "Emerging Security Issues in the Indian Ocean," p. 103.

⁴¹ In May of 1988 Defence Minister K.C. Pant remarked, "We will constantly build our navy so that persuasion is not only in words." Appan Menon, "Why a Blue Water Navy," *The Hindu*, 5/14/88.

colonial ties, and Persian Gulf oil have led these countries to seek a dominant naval position in the region. India, it would seem, would similarly like to exert its influence within the Indian Ocean region. But why does India seek this influence?

On the surface it would seem that India lacks the obvious commercial interests that led previous powers to seek naval supremacy over the Indian Ocean. Current Indian aspirations to exert a preponderant influence in the Indian Ocean beyond the shores of the subcontinent are motivated more by a desire to be free from external pressure than from a desire to exert control over the littoral states. The question for the future is this: will Indian motives/objectives change once it more clearly establishes its position in the Indian Ocean? The evolution of American influence in the Western Hemisphere under the Monroe doctrine is an interesting analogy of how India's position may evolve in the Indian Ocean region.

The geography of the Indian Ocean is such that it is largely a closed ocean. It is only in the southern reaches of the ocean that the transit routes are difficult to interdict. By controlling the strategic choke points a power can control access to the region and thereby deny it to potentially hostile powers. This logic of geography is almost as true for the Indians as it was for the Portuguese. Even if India can not directly control these points, if it can deploy force to the choke points,⁴² then it is in a position to raise the potential costs of intervention into the region. India's submarine fleet and naval air arm (stationed in Tamil Nadu, Goa, Cochin, the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, and off the carriers), already potentially constrain the United States from being able to deploy naval assets in the region as it did with the Enterprise Carrier Battle group in 1971.

One of the most disturbing aspects of power projection capabilities is an amphibious capability. When asked about India's plans to establish an amphibious warfare school near Vishakhapatnam, Chief of Naval Staff, Admiral Ramdas, responded that, "We now want to properly

⁴² The strategic choke points from which a naval power can control the sea lines of communication (SLOC) are the Horn of Africa, the Mozambique Channel, the Bab el Mandeb, the Suez Canal and the Straits of Malacca, Sunda and Lombok.

institutionalise it [the amphibious capability] by setting up a joint amphibious warfare school."⁴³ Retired Vice Admiral Awati has pointed out the "gaucherie in amphibious operations" at Cox's Bazaar during the 1971 War.⁴⁴ He further described India's amphibious capability in 1987 as the "most glaring gap" in the navy's capabilities. Between 1980 and 1989, Indian amphibious capacity doubled. While this force is not substantial it could easily be augmented by India's merchant marine and airlift capabilities.⁴⁵ The Falklands War is a recent example of the former, while India's deployments to Sri Lanka and the Maldives demonstrate the latter.

The Indian Naval build-up went through a number of key watersheds in the 1970s and the 1980s. The single most influential event was the 1971 war. The navy's success in blockading East Pakistan, its victory at Karachi harbour, and the limits to its actions imposed by the United States Carrier Battle group Enterprise, all triggered the perception that the navy must be significantly augmented. India acquired its first submarine in 1971. By 1973 the navy was receiving 49 percent of defence capital expenditures. Between 1975-76 and 1982-83 total expenditure on the Navy tripled.⁴⁶ In 1986, India bought its second aircraft carrier. In 1988, it took delivery from the USSR of the first Tu-142 maritime reconnaissance and ASW planes.⁴⁷ These planes have a range of 11,000 kms. The year 1989 witnessed the launching of the first indigenously built submarine.

India's aircraft carriers, its land based naval air arm and submarines have considerably extended India's naval reach into the Indian Ocean. The "Bear" Tu-142s, the INS Vikrant and Virat, with Sea Harrier and Sea King

⁴³ Hamish McDonald, "Interview with Admiral L. Ramdas: Credible Force," *The Far Eastern Economic Review*, 12/19/91, p. 19.

⁴⁴ M.P. Awati, "Emerging Security Issues in the Indian Ocean," p. 102. For a detailed analysis of the naval operations of the 1971 War see, Commodore Donahue, RAN, "Maritime Lessons of the 1971 Indo-Pakistan War," (Canberra: Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, Working Paper 192, 1989)

⁴⁵ India's amphibious forces do not present the region with a destabilising power projection capability at this time. If they continue to expand beyond present levels they will be viewed as such.

⁴⁶ Robin Jeffrey, "Political Admirals," p. 12.

⁴⁷ See Appa Menon, "Why a Blue Water Navy?" *The Hindu*, 5/14/88 and also Adam Kelliher, "India Acquires Ocean Eyes," *The Australian*, 4/11/88.

aircraft, and other systems allow India to deploy force farther away from its shores.

If India's navy aspires to exercise sea control or to project power, an essential prerequisite would be the domination of the airspace above and the capability to sanitize the depths below any part of the ocean which may be of interest at a given time.⁴⁸

Given that the present strength of the carrier force is insufficient for a forward strategy against Pakistan, as was employed by the Vikrant against Pakistani airfields at Cox Bazaar and Chittagong in 1971,⁴⁹ the question then arises as to what the carriers primary purpose is. The carrier's serve three purposes:

1. They are visual signs of Indian naval power even if they are operationally weak;
2. They would prove effective in projecting Indian power against an adversary that did not have the ASM capabilities that Pakistan has; and,
3. They would be effective in interdicting shipping and in ASW roles outside the Pakistani air cover.

In light of the poor cost effectiveness of using the carriers to fulfil roles one and three, the second role is the most attractive explanation as to the purpose for which the carriers are intended. The implication of the carriers' ineffectiveness against Pakistan is that they are concerned both with protecting Indian off-shore Islands and assets, and in projecting Indian power in lesser-armed regions of the Indian Ocean littoral.

In February of 1991, India returned to the Soviet Union the Charlie I Class nuclear powered submarine, which it had leased in January of 1988. India did not renounce the nuclear submarine option when it returned the INS Chakra. This foreshadowed India's SSGN programme. It seems as

⁴⁸ Capt. Arun Prakash, "A Carrier Force for the Indian Navy," *US Naval War College Review*, Fall, 1990, p. 63.

⁴⁹ The carriers Harrier aircraft are subsonic interceptors that are unable to maintain a cap against the Mirage/Harpoon combination that Pakistan would send against the carriers should they venture within the 400 nm range of ASM armed Mirages. Therefore, with a loaded strike range of only 250 nms they are of little threat to Pakistan. Ashley Tellis, "Aircraft Carriers and the Indian Navy: Assessing the Present, Discerning the Future," *The Journal of Strategic Studies*, June 1987, p. 146.

though India is pressing ahead with its own nuclear powered submarine under the Advanced Technology Vessel Programme.⁵⁰ The Indians were reportedly not allowed the degree of access to the reactor room on the Chakra that they had expected. Further, it appears as though the decision not to renew the lease was a Soviet one.⁵¹ Pakistan has also explored the possibility of purchasing a nuclear powered Han Class submarine from China.⁵²

Power is essentially a relative concept. To discuss the growth of the Indian Navy without having a sense of developments in the larger geostrategic context is insufficient for a measured assessment of India's position. The Pakistan Navy expanded from eight major surface combatants in 1987 to sixteen in 1989.⁵³ Pakistan has also been qualitatively upgrading from the old Gearing Class destroyers to Brooke, Leander and Garcia classes. The P-3 Orion Reconnaissance and ASW patrol planes, and Sea Sprite and Sea King ASW Helicopters are further qualitative upgrades. The Orions have a range of 7,500 kms. The Pakistani acquisition reflects the greater threat posed by India's subsurface fleet than its surface fleet. Moreover, the Pakistan Navy is armed with the effective Harpoon and Exocet missiles. Given the relative forces, Pakistan has sufficient assets to mount a credible citadel defence within its coastal waters and under cover of its land based naval air arm. However, Pakistan is particularly vulnerable to naval blockade, with only an estimated three to four weeks store of key stockpiles.⁵⁴ Its ability to operate outside this limited sphere is doubtful. In the event of war, the Indian Navy would find it difficult to challenge Pakistan in their immediate waters, but would be able to interdict Pakistan bound shipping farther out in the Arabian Sea.⁵⁵ What is more, if Pakistan

⁵⁰ Rozalina Mohd Radzi, "Advanced Technology Vessel Programme," *Asian Defence Journal*, 3/92, pp. 91-2. Rahul Bedi, "India Returns Soviet SSGN," *Janes Defence Weekly*, 2/23/91, p. 254. The possibility of an Indian nuclear powered submarine project is hinted at in Manoj Joshi, "Indian Navy: Unsteady Course," *Frontline*, 1/19-2/1/91, p. 93.

⁵¹ Hamish McDonald, "Slow Speed Ahead," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 10/10/91, p. 22.

⁵² "Nuclear Deal on Han," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 9/6/90, p. 20.

⁵³ C.U. Bhaskar, "Asymmetry in Indo-Pak Navies," *Business and Political Observer*, 12/23/89.

⁵⁴ Pakistan imports 120,000 barrels of oil each day across the seas. CDR. S.A. Nadeem, "Blockade as Maritime Strategy," *Globe* (Karachi) Oct. 1990, p. 55.

⁵⁵ Ashley Tellis, "New Aquisition in the Subcontinent," *Naval Forces*, Vol. XI No.II, pp. 64-70. It should be noted that if the Pakistani air cover collapses so too would its navy.

is able to build its submarine fleet it may attain the capability of being able to break out to attack the Indian rear. Relative assessment of India's present capabilities, compared to its situation in 1971, suggests that despite the significant increase in its fighting power, it is less than certain that India has established a larger margin of superiority. Viewed against the situation in 1965, however, it certainly has.

The creation of the Coast Guard in August 1978 can be understood as part of the transition from a brown water to a blue water navy. The Coast Guard's primary function is to patrol the immediate off shore maritime zone. This assignment entails such responsibilities as, "preventing poaching and smuggling; ... protection of maritime environment; search and rescue missions; ... and replenishment of vessels in the seas."⁵⁶ According to Coast Guard Chief, Vice Admiral S.W. Lakhkar, the Coast Guard was also involved with the interdiction of LTTE militants who were operating across the Palk strait between Tamil Nadu and Sri Lanka.⁵⁷ By assuming these functions, the Coast Guard frees naval assets for other duties farther from shore. Virtually all the ships deployed by the Coast Guard are built in India.

Arguments have been put forward for the creation of a third fleet in the south. At present, the Eastern Command and the Western Command "are responsible for all operational functions ... The Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief Southern Naval Command is responsible for the entire training functions of the Navy."⁵⁸ A third fleet would be responsible for the protection of the Lakshadweep Island group, and the projection of Indian naval power into the southern reaches of the Indian Ocean. Former Chief of Naval Staff has made the case for a third fleet in the following way:

⁵⁶ Institute of Regional Studies, "Indian Navy in the 1980s," (Islamabad: IRS Spotlight on Regional Affairs Series, December 1988), p. 16.

⁵⁷ "Coast Guard Comes of Age," *Times of India*, 2/1/91.

⁵⁸ S. Baranwal, *Military Yearbook, 1987-88*, p. 275.

Current development indicates the need for a third fleet based at Tuticorin or Cochin ... A southern based fleet would be able to cover our southern approaches, better protect our Lakshadweep group of Islands and quickly reinforce the other two fleets.⁵⁹

In the present climate of economic reform capital outlays will not be forthcoming for the dramatic expansion of the Indian Navy that was envisaged in the late 1980s. In time, economic reforms will once again create an atmosphere that will enable future expansion of the navy. The manner in which this is undertaken will be a key indicator not only of the direction in which the Indian Navy is headed, but indeed of the nation itself.

Indian Naval Forces: 1992

Personnel		Principal surface combatants		Patrol, coastal combatants and minesweepers	
Naval	49,000	Carriers	2	Corvettes	13
Naval Air	5,000	Destroyers	5	Missile craft	9
Marines	1,000	Frigates	21	Patrol Craft	18
				Mine-sweepers	<u>22</u>
total	<u>55,000</u>		<u>28</u>		52
Submarines		Amphibious & Landing craft		Naval Air force	
Sindhughosh (Soviet Kilo)	8	LST	1	Combat aircraft	46
Shishumar (GE T-209/1500)	2	LSM	8	Helicopters	75
Kursura (Soviet Foxtrot)	7	LCU	7		
total	17		16		121

Source: International Institute of Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance, 1991-2*, (London: Brassey's Publishers, 1992), pp. 162-3.

⁵⁹ Admiral S.J. Kholi, as quoted in R. Tomar, "Development of the Indian Navy: An Overstated Case?" (Canberra: Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, Working Paper No. 26, 1980), p. 22.

Indian Naval Bases: Locations and key purposes

Arakkonam	Naval Air Station, Tu-142s
Bombay	Commander in Chief Western Command, 2 carrier berths, Mazagon docks, sub pens under construction
Calcutta	Shipyards
Cochin	Commander in Chief Southern Command, Naval Air Station, repair yard, training station
Delhi	Naval Headquarters
Ezhimala	Naval Academy
Goa	HQ Flag Officer, Naval Air Station, Shipyards
Karanja	Naval Warfare College
Karwar	Under construction, carrier berths and Naval Air Station
Lakshadweep	Patrol craft base
Madras	Shipyards
Port Blair	Floating docks, Naval Air Station under construction
Ramanathapuram	Naval Air Station, Tu-142s
Vijayaragharapuram	Very low frequency W/T station
Vishakapatnam	Commander in Chief of Eastern Command, sub base and school, dockyards, new entry training

Sources: Capt. Richard Sharpe ed. *Janes Fighting Ships 1991-2*. (London: Butler and Tanner Printers, 1992), Sandy Gordon, "India's Strategic Posture: Look East-Look West," (Canberra: SDSC Working Paper No. 225, 1991), and Hamesh McDonald, "Slow Speed Ahead," *The Far Eastern Economic Review*, 10/10/91, p. 20.

As mentioned, India's naval assets are divided primarily between the Western and Eastern Commands. Of these, the Western is recognised to be the more important. This indicates the continuing importance of Pakistan and Indian interests to the West. Pakistan remains the primary contingency for naval planners.⁶⁰ The naval assets are primarily dispersed among the four major ports of Bombay, Goa, Cochin, and Vishakhapatnam. The first three of these, located on the West and South of the Indian peninsula, are home to a majority of the Navy.⁶¹ On the east coast, Vishakhapatnam

⁶⁰ Chinese defence arrangements with Burma may increase the importance of the Eastern naval sphere of operations.

⁶¹ Evidently the major surface combatants are rotated frequently between commands. see Sandy Gordon, "India's Strategic Posture 'Look East' or 'Look West'?" *Working Paper No.225*, (Canberra: Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, 1991), p. 7.

serves as the repair and maintenance facility for Soviet constructed or designed ships.

The expansion of the navy has left the key naval ports congested. Construction of an additional port facility south of Goa at Karwar began in 1986. The completion of the majority of the complex was to be achieved within ten years. This date has been put back due to limited resources and the higher priority of projects at the Bombay and Vishakhapatnam facilities.⁶²

Naval development projects in the east are of secondary importance. While Karwar has taken a back seat to upgrading port facilities in Bombay and Vishakhapatnam, the plans to significantly expand Port Blair, in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, have been allocated a lower priority to that of Karwar. Despite this, there have been a number of measures to upgrade the facilities on the islands. A new naval airfield and a dry dock have been installed. Reportedly there were plans initiated in 1986 to construct a large airfield on Great Nicobar Island, which were cancelled at the behest of the Indonesians.⁶³

Another recent development is the establishment of a very low frequency (VLF) site, code named *Project Skylark*, in the Tirunelveli District of Tamil Nadu. This facility will give the Eastern Command expanded communications capabilities, as well as enable India to communicate with its submarines across the Indian Ocean.⁶⁴ A further naval air station, capable of handling Bear Maritime Reconnaissance planes, has been constructed near Madras at Arakkonam.⁶⁵ Evidently, Bear aircraft were moved to Tamil Nadu after the facilities were completed.

There are also reports that India approached Vietnam concerning the use of Cam Ranh Bay facilities when the Soviets began to withdraw from the

⁶² S. Gordon, "India's Strategic Posture," p. 8.

⁶³ S. Gordon, "India's Strategic Posture," p. 8. Indonesia reportedly offered to assist Pakistan in its conflict with India by annexing the islands.

⁶⁴ "India," *The Pacific Defence Reporter*, August 1990, p. 25.

⁶⁵ Ashley Tellis, "Securing the Barrack: The Logic, Structure and Objectives of India's Naval Expansion" in Robert Bruce ed. *The Modern Indian Navy and the Indian Ocean*, (Perth: Centre for Indian Ocean Regional Studies, 1989), p. 35.

former American base. If this was/is true, Indian naval planners would seem to be heeding the advice of K.M. Panikkar:

The position of Vietnam should also not be forgotten in this connection. Strategically this new state is of great importance since its position enables it to control the South China Seas ... it will have far reaching effects on the defence of the Indian Ocean.⁶⁶

China's uneasy relations with Southeast Asia may give India an opportunity to engage China in a non-South Asian context. The potential for large oil and natural gas discoveries in the South China Sea, and the opportunity to develop a relationship with Vietnam, another traditional rival with China, could make such a future scenario attractive to India. This would be a possible counter to increasing Chinese influence in Burma. Despite this, the likely scenario in the near term is a continued western focus for the Indian Navy. Substantial augmentation of the Eastern and Southern commands, while remaining a long term goal, will in the immediate future remain a secondary priority. These goals will most probably be resumed when economic conditions permit. Following from this discussion of the Indian navy the chapter will now turn to focus on the evolution of India's army.

20.12 The army

The Indian army has undergone a number of transformations since independence. Its association as an adjunct of the Raj, and the fear of pretorian rule has led independent India to curtail severely the army's status and power since independence. Its bifurcation at independence into Pakistani and Indian armies also undermined the army's strength. Moreover, the imperatives of economic growth diverted resources away from the defence forces until the humiliation of the 1962 War. Consequently, the Indian Army had been neglected. With the virtual doubling of the army after 1963, a number of changes have taken place.

The character of the Indian Officer Corps has been changing from one of an aristocratic British tradition to a more middle class, Indian one. In

⁶⁶ K.M. Panikkar, *India and the Indian Ocean*, p. 86.

seeking to move the army away from loyalty to the regiment, to loyalty to the nation, Defence Minister Chavan put forward the notion that Indians were "all Kashatriyas now."⁶⁷ While formerly, officers' sons would follow their fathers into the service, they are now more likely to go into private sector jobs.

The role of the army in aiding civil authority has also been changing.⁶⁸ Its use by the political authorities of the Raj was quite widespread. Independent India has unsuccessfully sought to avoid this. In the years immediately following independence India was more successful in keeping the military out of civil disturbances than it has been in the last decade. In an effort to insulate the army from such a quasi-political role, India's paramilitary forces were greatly expanded during the 1980s. Despite this, the army has been increasingly utilised in counter insurgency and internal security roles in support of centre rule in disturbed areas.

Another interesting development is the shift in recruitment patterns. Stephen Cohen has described this development in his book, *The Indian Army*, as the trend away from "pure" units to "mixed" ones. Pure units are those, such as the Sikh and Gorkha and Mahar (ex-untouchables) regiments, that recruit only a specific communal group into a particular unit. The second type is the mixed company regiment. Examples of these types of units are the Hindu and Sikh companies of Punjab Regiment, or the Jat and Muslim companies of the Rajputana Rifles, or the Bengali and Rajput companies of the Rajput Rifles. Finally, there are the all mixed units, such as the parachute units and the Madras Regiment. The particularly northern-Indian bias of the army is a continuation of recruitment patterns established by the British. The revolt of some Sikh units, as a result of the storming of

⁶⁷ S. Cohen, *The Indian Army*, p. 190. Kashatriyas are the most marshal caste of Hinduism. The other three Hindu castes are Brahmins, Vaishas and Sudras. Untouchables are without caste.

⁶⁸ For a comprehensive listing of Indian army deployments in aid of the civil authorities for the period 1973 to 1984 see Stephen Cohen, "The Military and Indian Democracy," pp.125-7. A similar listing for the period 1979 to 1980 is provided by J. Elkin and W. Ritzel, "Military Role Expansion in India," p. 492.

the Golden Temple at Amritsar in 1984, added impetus to the trend to move away from pure unit recruitment strategies.⁶⁹

The army's involvement in Sri Lanka and in counter-insurgency operations in Assam and Kashmir have highlighted the deficiencies of military intelligence. It is likely that it will seek to address this problem in the early to mid 1990s. The army had inadequate intelligence on the strength and morale of the Tamil forces it was confronting in Sri Lanka during the Indian Peace Keeping Forces deployment. In addition, the army feels that its national image is undermined when it can not counter the image of its forces as "rapists and plunderers."

This is because no military intelligence, which includes gauging terrorist morale, quantum of support and sympathy for them among the locals, their religious and ethnic gradation, is available to the security forces to meet the challenge on the psychological front.⁷⁰

The primary problem limiting the effectiveness of the army today is its involvement in internal counter insurgency operations.⁷¹ Even if the figure is inflated, it is enough to reduce training and undermine morale to a significant degree. It also opens the prospect of the creeping politicisation of the army. While these developments threaten the army's integrity, it appears to be the single most loyal institution to the foundation ideology of the Indian state. The corruption and malaise found in the bureaucracy and amongst politicians is largely absent from the military. These issues, and the problem of the changing background of recruits, are taken up in greater detail in the civil military section of Chapter Six.

Two additional problems which presently limit the effectiveness of the Indian Army are the "teeth to tail" ratio and the average age of both officers and jawans. In 1991 India had 8,829 soldiers per division in non-combat roles, as opposed to 2,307 for Pakistan and 1,274 for China. This ratio highlights the inefficiency of the Indian Army's operations relative to its

⁶⁹ S. Cohen, *The Indian Army*, p. 190.

⁷⁰ Pravin Sawhney, "Low Intensity War new Ball Game for the Army," *The Business and Political Observer*, 1/16/91.

⁷¹ It has been speculated that up to half of the Indian Army is involved in internal operations.

most likely opponents. The average age of Indian officers is closer to 45 than 35. Already there are many jawans in their thirties.⁷² Plans to retire jawans after one seven-year term have been opposed for fear of annually releasing large numbers of trained soldiers into the ranks of the unemployed. This problem seems to have been overcome by inducting many of them into the paramilitary forces. Once the paramilitary forces are brought up to full strength the problem of an aging army may again resurface. The chapter will now proceed to assess the role of the air force.

20.13 The air force

Air power will be crucial in any future conflict between India and Pakistan. The success of both the army and the navy in accomplishing their missions is in large part dependent on the control of the skies under which they operate. This is reflected in the importance that both sides have given to the procurement of state of the art aircraft. India has made significant progress in the indigenous production under licence of Soviet designed aircraft. India's designs for an indigenously developed combat aircraft have encountered many difficulties, but should eventually prove fruitful. The decline in the American-Pakistani relationship will lead Pakistan to seek an alternative source for its combat aircraft. Without American military assistance Pakistan will not be able to purchase as effective an air force as it has been able to in the past.

The Indian Air Force was slow to evolve into an effective fighting force. At independence India received six and a half squadrons to Pakistan's three. During the first Indo-Pakistani war, their role was largely confined to air supply of the army in Kashmir. The Indian Air Force's role in the 1962 conflict was similarly minimal. In that war there were only two poor runways in proximity to sectors of the border where the fighting was taking place. India was reluctant to introduce the air force into the conflict for fear that China could more than counter the move with its air force. By the 1965 War with Pakistan, India had in its inventory Hunter fighters and Canberra bombers, as well as indigenously produced under license Gnat aircraft. In

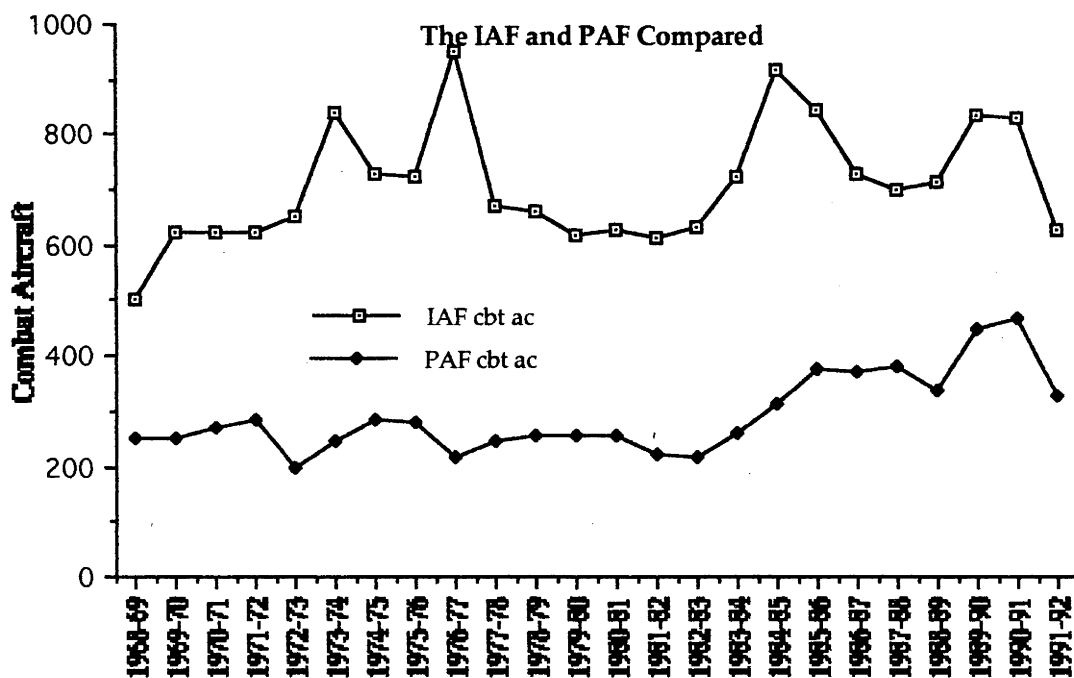
⁷² Shekhar Gupta, "Defence Forces Heading for a Crisis," *India Today*, 2/28/89, pp. 90-4.

this war, the minimal role of the air force was attributed to poor coordination between the air force and the army. The air force saw its primary role as the attainment of air superiority. Close air support was a secondary consideration. Coordination between the services was much improved during the 1971 War. After the initial unsuccessful attempt by the Pakistani Air Force (PAF) to make a pre-emptive strike, the Indian Air Force (IAF) was successful, especially in the East, in suppressing the PAF. The IAF was also coordinated somewhat with the navy in the attack on Karachi harbour.⁷³

The margin of superiority that India has maintained over Pakistan in quantitative terms has remained fairly constant over the years. Such quantitative analysis does not take into account such factors as Pakistan's lack of territorial depth, or the qualitative aspects of the differing airframes, ordinance or electronic countermeasure (ECM) packages that these planes carry.⁷⁴ The deterioration of the US-Pakistani relationship will eventually lead to a qualitative edge of the IAF over the PAF.

⁷³ Raju Thomas, *Indian Security Policy*, pp. 144-51.

⁷⁴ For more information and analysis on the relative air balance from a quantitative and qualitative perspective see Ashley Tellis, "The Air Balance in the Indian Subcontinent: Trends, Constants and Contexts," *Defence Analysis*, v.2, # 4, pp. 263-89.



Source: *The Military Balance*, (London: International Institute of Strategic Studies, various years)

The deterioration of relations between the United States and Pakistan over Pakistan's nuclear weapons programme has cast doubt on whether Pakistan will receive the 60 additional F-16 aircraft that it purchased from the United States. In light of this doubt, Pakistan has begun to search for an alternative source of top line aircraft. Pakistani Defence production Minister, Mir Hazar Khan Bijrani, has stated that "Owing to the delay of the delivery of the F-16s, Pakistan has to look for other options."⁷⁵ Pakistan was considering the Su-27, MiG-29, Mirage 2000, and the Rafale in September of 1992. If Pakistan orders a significant number in the near future India may also seek an interim fighter to augment its inventory while it develops the Light Combat Aircraft (LCA). Currently, India has in its inventory Jaguars, Mirage 2000s, MiG-21s, 23s, 27s, and 29s, while Pakistan has F-16s, Mirage IIs and J-6s and J-7s.

⁷⁵ "Pakistan Seeking New Suppliers to Update Airforce," *Reuters News Service*, 9/6/92. How Pakistan will pay for a new airforce is a significant barrier to further purchases. If the Indian economy achieves its target growth rates India will be in a position to outspend Pakistan in an arms race.

The collapse of the Soviet Union has led India to seek to diversify its sources of arms procurement and technology. In June of 1992, India announced its intention to seal a \$1.8 billion deal with British aerospace to purchase 100 Hawk trainers for the air force.⁷⁶ There is also evidence that Rolls Royce will be sharing with Hindustan Aeronautics the Adour engine for the Goshawk aircraft.⁷⁷ However tentatively, cooperation with the United States on the LCA project has been moving forward. India has been aiming to have two prototypes ready for flight trials by 1995-6.⁷⁸ With discussion of the navy, army and air force complete the chapter now turns to focus on India's paramilitary forces.

20.14 Para-military forces

In addition to its military forces, India has a sizable paramilitary force. These paramilitary forces are divided into a number of organisations, which are engaged in law and order activities in support of the civil administration as well as border operations. In the event of war, these forces have been utilised in support of the regular military. The para-military forces were created to insulate the regular military from having to deal with internal disturbances, and thereby become politicised. Former Chief of Army Staff, General Rodrigues, has taken the view that India's main threat had become "the siege within."⁷⁹ Despite the rapid growth of paramilitary formations, these organisations have not been able to handle India's internal insurgencies on their own. This has meant that the army has not been spared the job of internal security as planned. At present, up to fifty percent of the armed forces are occupied in counter insurgency roles.⁸⁰

⁷⁶ "India to Buy British Aerospace Hawk Jet Trainer," *Reuters News Service*, 6/3/92.

⁷⁷ "Rolls-Royce Offers Knowhow to HAL," *The Economic Times*, 5/1/92.

⁷⁸ "Military Affairs India," *Air International*, 9/91.

⁷⁹ Samina Ahmed, "Civil-Military Relations in India," *Regional Studies*, (Islamabad) summer 1992, p.40. General Rodrigues also evoked the wrath of Parliament for breaking standing orders by publically speaking out against the way in which the military was used in domestic situations.

⁸⁰ This costs India \$6.4 million per day. Some of the forces are in dual roles such as the 200,000 troops deployed along the line of control in Kashmir. There they act to stop the cross border flow of assistance to the insurgents as well as act in the role of border defence. "Where Politicians Fear to Tread," *Asia Week*, 6/19/92, p. 28.

Indian para-military forces

1. Coast Guard Organization	2,500
2. Defence Security Force	30,000
3. Border Security Force	140,000
4. Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF reserves)	100,000 250,000
5. Assam Rifles	15,000
6. Ladakh Scouts	5,000
7. Indo-Tibetan Border Police	22,000
8. Special Frontier Force	10,000
9. Central Industrial Security Force	55,000
10. National Security Guards	5,000
11. Railway Protection Force	60,000
12 Provincial Armed Constabulary	250,000
13. Rashtriya Rifles (formed in 1991) ⁸¹	<u>10,000</u>
total	954,500 ⁸²

The jurisdiction of these forces falls into different categories. The Ministry of Defence retains control over the Coast Guard, the Ladakh Scouts and the Defence Security Force. The Provincial Armed Constabulary is administered at the state level of government, as are the Home Guards which have been excluded from the above list.⁸³ The National Security Guards (NSG) have been described as an "anti-terrorist contingency deployment force," whose actual control may reside in the organizations from which the forces are drawn.⁸⁴ The Minister of the Railways has jurisdiction over the Railway Security Forces, and the Ministry of Home Affairs oversees the balance of the forces mentioned above.⁸⁵

81 "Join the Rashtriya Rifles," *The Employment News*, 12/15-21/90, p.26. Up to 75% of the new force is to be drawn from ex-servicemen. Rajan Nayar, "Security Forces Stretched to the Limit," *Sunday Mail*, 11/11/90.

82 Institute of Strategic Studies, *Military Balance 1991-92* (London: Brassey's Publishers, 1990), p. 163.

83 The strength of the Home Guards is 448,081. This force has been excluded because only a small part of its forces are engaged in paramilitary style activities, such as Home Guard assistance to Border Security Forces (BSF). The Home Guards have been likened to the Peoples Liberation Army of China. Raju Thomas, *Indian Security Policy*, (Princeton: Princeton University press, 1986), p. 76.

84 Sukhdeo Prasad Baranwal, ed. *Military Yearbook*, p. 392.

85 "The Ministry of Home Affairs, however, oversees matters relating to internal security of the country and also the trends and developments in the law and order situation and communal matters and provides guidance and assistance to the states as necessary. The Union Territories

The Border Security Force and the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) are the two most significant bodies of para-military force in India. Elements of both these forces have been used in India's operations in Jammu and Kashmir,⁸⁶ as well as in other politically sensitive operations. In addition to seeing action on India's borders, the BSF took part in *Operation Bluestar* to suppress Sikh extremists ensconced around the Golden Temple of Amritsar in Punjab.⁸⁷ The BSF has also been deployed in counter-insurgency operation in Tripura and Mizoram. The BSF continued in its border security role in the coastal areas Tamil Nadu in 1990, and in Rajasthan.⁸⁸ The CRPF has seen action against both the Pakistanis and the Chinese, as well as against insurgents in Punjab, Kashmir, Manipur and Mizoram. In 1965, in the Ran of Kutch, and again in 1971 in Bangladesh, the CRPF saw action against Pakistani regulars.⁸⁹

Based on the data and reports, it appears that a decision was taken in 1987 to expand the paramilitary forces significantly. It was also in 1987 that the situation in Kashmir deteriorated. The decision to expand the percentage of paramilitary forces of the total security force structure reflects the centre's response to the increased threat posed by internal dissent. The operational distinction between paramilitary and regular military forces has become blurred, as regulars have been deployed in paramilitary roles as needed. Furthermore, the most recent paramilitary organisation, the

are also the responsibility of this Ministry. It is also assigned the work of keeping a watch that the administration in the States is carried on in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution and the relations between the Centre and the States develop as envisaged in the Constitution." From The Ministry of Home Affairs, *Annual Report, 1990-91*, (New Delhi: Annual Report, 1991), p. 1.

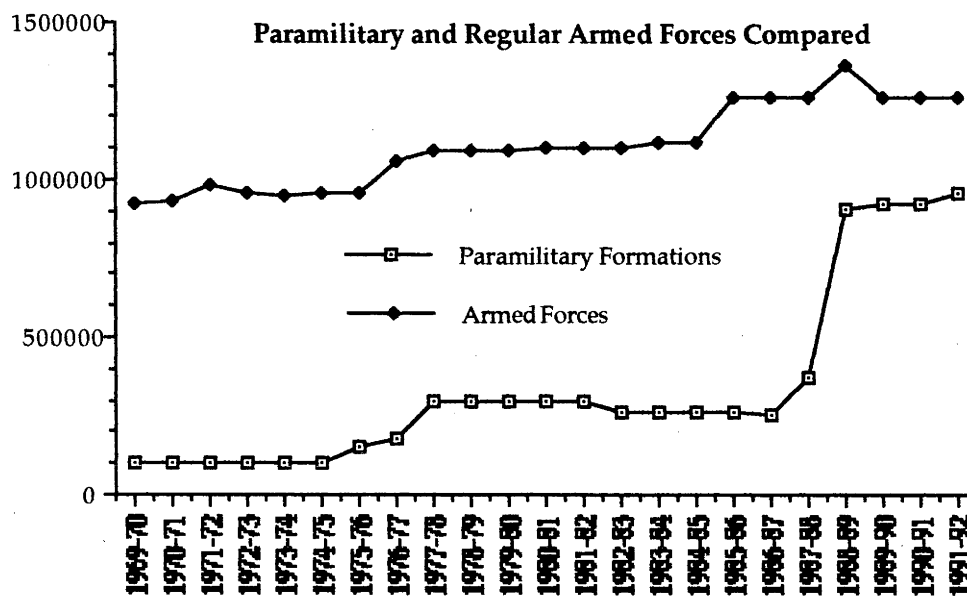
⁸⁶ For a detailed inquiry into human rights abuse in Kashmir see Asia Watch, *Kashmir Under Siege: Human Rights in India*, (Washington: Human Rights Watch, 1991) and Bruce Vaughn, "The Coercive Arm of the State in India," *The Indian Ocean Review*, Dec. 1992.

⁸⁷ The NSG was established as a special anti-terrorist commando force which has subsequently been diverted to the protection of VVIPs. They have been deployed in such operations as *Operation Black Thunder* at the Golden Temple in Amritsar. See Mark Tully, *No Full Stops in India*, (New Delhi: Penguin Books, 1991), pp. 153-180. The SPG is delegated the responsibility of protecting the Prime Minister and was based on the American Secret Intelligence Service.

⁸⁸ Ajay Bharadwaj, "BSF Plan to Beef-up Border Security," *The Times of India*, 3/1/91. "BSF for TN Coastal Districts," *The Hindu*, 12/18/90.

⁸⁹ Raju Thomas, *Indian Security Policy*, pp. 72-85.

Rashtriya Rifles, was initially formed by six army battalions on secondment. The force is eventually to be drawn largely from ex-servicemen.⁹⁰



Source: International Institute of Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance*, (London: IISS Publishers, various years)

The dramatic increase in the numbers of troops in paramilitary formations has similarly been reflected in the number of battalions and in budget allocations. Between 1986 and 1991, the Border Security Force was planned to increase from 90 to 139 battalions, the Central Reserve Police Force from 80 to 116, the Assam rifles from 20 to 39, and other groups from 116 to 183 battalions. During the same period, the budget for all paramilitary groups was to increase from 956 crore Rs to 1922 crores. Further, some of the costs have been defrayed to the states by the centre. For each CRPF battalion deployed to a state, the state must pay Rs two lakh per month.⁹¹

Constant deployment to multiple locations, a lack of training for the roles in which they are deployed, and a lack of success in their operations have undermined the morale of many of the military and paramilitary units

⁹⁰ "Special Force to Combat Internal Strife," *The Business and Political Observer*, 9/15/90.

⁹¹ Shekhar Gupta, "Paramilitary Forces: The Tired Trouble Shooters," *India Today*, 2/15/88, p. 146. It was during this same period that India significantly augmented its internal security forces, apparently as a consequence of a survey of paramilitary forces conducted by the Home Ministry in 1987.

engaged in counter-insurgency roles. One CRPF unit had 64 deployments in two years. Many of the paramilitary formations were established to fulfil specific specialised duties; few are now involved in activities other than internal security.⁹²

There are differences between fighting international wars and internal insurgencies. India's international wars have been short, its insurgencies protracted. Also one BSF officer described the role of paramilitary forces: "ours is a war to which one can foresee no end."⁹³ This perception undermines morale and leads to the abuse of power by forces who see no way out. Given that India has been countering the mounting insurgency with escalating levels of armed force, and that the situation has nonetheless continued to deteriorate, the question then arises; how long can the centre sustain its efforts. Undoubtedly, the resource drain and detrimental effect to national security of these conflicts detracts from India's relative power position within the region. As such, insurgency movements cut into India's aspirations to great power status.

The situation in Kashmir began to deteriorate significantly in 1987, when India was intent to extend its influence in the South Asian region. The Indo-Sri Lankan Accord, the Maldives intervention, *Operation Brass Tacks* and *Operation Checkerboard*, and continuing conflict on the Siachen Glacier, were all taking place in 1987 and 1988. It is difficult to establish a firm causal relationship between Indian external policy and the rising levels of internal dissent. Nevertheless, it appears as though India's more assertive external policy in the years 1987-89 led Pakistan to incite and abet Kashmiri and Punjabi militants.

⁹² The Assam Rifles were established in 1835 to protect the British tea gardens of Assam. Many of the formations were designed to patrol India's borders. Now they are tied down in internal security roles. The Indo-Tibetan Border Police were created after 1962 to patrol the border with China; now they are also guarding banks in Kashmir, and are deployed as far away from the Himalayas as Rajasthan. The National Security Guards were created to operate as an elite anti-terrorist commando force; now they guard VIPs. An additional 2,500 members of the CRPF are also occupied in VIP protection in Delhi. The nature of counterinsurgency work necessitate multiple deployments of small units. This then places in the field decision-making in the hands of relatively untrained NCO commanders. K.R.K Prasad, "Police in Combat," *The Statesman*, 7/23/92.

⁹³ Shekhar Gupta, "Paramilitary Forces," pp. 146-7.

Thus, Pakistan's indirect opposition to India's efforts to increase its regional influence in the 1980s differs from its more open confrontational approach in 1965. This reflects Pakistan's realization that it can no longer hope to confront India successfully in an open conventional war. The fact that war was averted in 1987, and again in the spring of 1990, supports this interpretation of Pakistani perceptions of the security equation. In this way, internal strife and abuse are a corollary of India's attempts to expand its regional influence. While Pakistan and the insurgents continue to defy India, Indian aspirations for a greater international role will be hampered.

The danger of future war now hinges on Indian frustrations with Pakistani meddlings in Kashmir and Punjab. The reactive policies employed and reliance on paramilitary and regular military forces have not only failed to suppress the militants, but have served to further polarise the conflict. A senior Home Ministry official stated that, "The pity is that even after so much money and men are committed, [to internal security operations] we would hardly be living in a more secure environment."⁹⁴ As existing efforts are increasingly seen as ineffectual, India will seek to address the problem at what it sees as its source. Rather than perceiving these secessionist and autonomous movements as groups that are seeking their own sense of identity, they are perceived as being the pawns of Pakistan. It is through such a scenario that India and Pakistan will go to war unless a way is found to defuse the situation.

Communalist violence, Hindu fundamentalism, centre-state tensions, inter-caste disharmony, economic reform, secessionist and autonomous movements and threats emanating from beyond India's borders are all undermining India's security by pulling apart India's social cohesion. The practice of using police intelligence organs to buttress the state against challenges to its authority dates back to the colonial Raj. Political surveillance developed originally as a special branch of the police forces. In 1887, the Thugi and Dakaiti Department was created to collect information on political and social movements. The department's role was eventually assumed by the Central Intelligence Department (CID). This trend towards a

94 Shekhar Gupta, "Paramilitary Forces," p. 147.

political intelligence role for the police was mirrored at the provincial level, where similar special branches were established. In 1907, the CID in Simla was renamed the Intelligence Bureau (IB).⁹⁵ The role and importance of the police grew during the civil disobedience campaigns of the 1930s, as the state came to rely on them to maintain its position. The transfer of power to the Congress ironically did not result in the reform of the role of the police. Instead they came to use the same methods in support of the new regime. As a result, "the equation of force with authority and opposition with crime" has become entrenched. In addition, the frequent resort to violence by the state has "bred a surprising degree of complacency in the general public and among politicians." Counter-intuitively, the police did not become more accountable to the rule of law after independence. Instead, the police "have fallen increasingly under the politicians sway. The politicians are the new masters to whom the police show deference and obey."⁹⁶ During elections, police are used to capture polling booths in some areas. The view that the police are corrupt is widely held. One survey found that 33.2% of respondents thought that there was a great deal of corruption among police, while only 3.5% said that there was none.⁹⁷ This chapter will now move on from a service based analysis of India's expanding capabilities to consider nuclear and missile programmes.

20.2 Indian nuclear and missile programmes

India's nuclear and missile programmes are closely linked with its desire to change the world's perception of India's position, to prevent Pakistan from gaining a nuclear advantage, and to counter the nuclear strength of China. India has undoubtedly been influenced by the dynamics of competition in the bi-polar age. During this period the role of nuclear weapons and missiles in the correlations of power was paramount. Within this context, it is not surprising that India, in seeking to be perceived as a force to be reckoned with, would seek to develop a nuclear capability. India

⁹⁵ The role of the intelligence agencies will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Six.

⁹⁶ This and the previous two quotes are drawn from, David Arnold, *Police Power and Colonial Rule: Madras 1859-1947*, (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1986), pp. 186-7

⁹⁷ David Bayley, *The Police and Political Development in India*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), p. 284.

has invested much into such an effort. It has been estimated that nuclear programmes consume 25 percent of India's research and development funds.⁹⁸

20.21 The Nuclear environment

There are several avenues of nuclear proliferation which are likely to remain open to South Asia. In the first instance, the extension of nuclear programmes in the region can be seen as related to the China-India-Pakistan security nexus. India and the United States signed an agreement over the Tarapur atomic station in 1963. The 1964 Chinese nuclear test at Lop Nor confirmed India's move to develop a nuclear option. Former Defence Minister K. C. Pant made the case for opening the "option strategy" of a nuclear deterrent.⁹⁹ By 1974, India was able to conduct its own nuclear explosion at Pokhran as part of this option policy. Pakistan undoubtedly felt that it had no choice but to respond to the Indian programme. The result is a situation where both India and Pakistan are on the brink of openly deploying nuclear weapons. Neither side has, as of yet, crossed the deployed weapons threshold, though India and Pakistan are, should they choose, both thought to be within weeks of some level of capability. In this way there is a subtle difference between India's "substantial technological option" and a capability.¹⁰⁰ The lack of a deep targeting doctrine for nuclear or missile programmes in either India or Pakistan is another indication of their level of nuclear war fighting capability.

The existing Sino-Indian border disputes, and the rivalry between India and China, will also predispose India to acquire a capability to offset the

⁹⁸ Given this and the fact that nuclear power accounts for only 2% of power output in India, India "must have some ulterior motive [or a] hidden agenda ... to produce nuclear weapons." Dharendra Sharma, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi as interviewed on "Nuclear India," Yorkshire Television. It is estimated that India has between 40 and 60 nuclear weapons. Some estimates run as high as 203 weapons. See Michael McKinley, "Indian Naval Developments and Australian Naval Strategy, in the Indian Ocean," in Robert Bruce ed. *The Modern Indian Navy and the Indian Ocean*, (Perth: Centre for Indian Ocean Regional Studies, 1989), p. 150.

⁹⁹ Stephen Phillip Cohen, *Nuclear Proliferation in South Asia: The Prospects for Arms Control*, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1991), p. 7.

¹⁰⁰ Manoj Joshi, Seminar on Nuclear and Missile Capabilities given at the Australian National University, 12/92.

present Chinese advantage. A Sino-Soviet summit in 1989 led to a joint communique, which now places India outside the Soviet nuclear umbrella.¹⁰¹ This makes India more reliant on its own nuclear deterrent to deter future Chinese pressure.¹⁰² A measure of good will between India and China has been created by the visit of Prime Minister Li Peng to Delhi on 11 December 1991.¹⁰³ This marks the continuing positive tone of the relationship in the public eye, and can be viewed as a response to the Rajiv Gandhi visit of 1988, which did much to diffuse tensions between the two countries. The Rajiv Gandhi visit was the first at the Prime Ministerial level since the border clash of 1962. The previous visit by a Chinese Prime Minister to India was made by Chou en-Lai in 1960. Relations with China seem to be at least in a holding pattern, if not cordial. Prime Minister Rao's Defence Minister, Sharad Pawar, was the first Indian Defence Minister to visit China. His visit, in July of 1992, was believed to be aimed at adding impetus to the Joint Working Group on Border Disputes between the two countries, and was seen as a further confidence building measure.¹⁰⁴ Despite these attempts to improve the atmosphere of relations substantial differences and rivalry remain between the two countries.

India has refused to bow to Western pressure to join the MTCR, the NPT, or other regional non-proliferation arrangements.¹⁰⁵ To do so would be to lock it into an inferior position relative to China, and the West. India's nuclear programme is in the first instance aimed at countering Chinese capabilities.¹⁰⁶ China has chosen to signal India with actions rather than words as its means of expressing its displeasure over India's advances with missile technology. India successfully launched a Rohini class satellite on

¹⁰¹ This was provided by article nine of the Indo-Soviet Treaty of 1971.

¹⁰² S. Cohen, *Nuclear Proliferation in South Asia*, p. 8.

¹⁰³ Christopher Thomas, "Li's Visit First in 31 Years," *Sydney Morning Herald*, 11/27/91.

¹⁰⁴ "Talks with China Useful: Pawar," *The Sunday Statesman*, 7/26/92.

¹⁰⁵ There are reports that India is seeking uranium in Central Asia as a way to avoid Western controls. It has similarly been reported that Iran has purchased uranium and boric acid pellets from Kazakhstan. *Frontline* television programme, 4/13/93.

¹⁰⁶ United States intelligence reports indicated that in early 1993 China shipped components of the nuclear capable, 300 mile range M-11 missile to Pakistan. This was done despite Chinese pledges in 1992 that it would not transfer such technology. This is further evidence of a continuing China-Pakistan axis in South Asia. Douglas Lehl, "China Breaking Missile Pledge," *The New York Times*, 5/6/93.

board an indigenously produced Augmented Satellite Launch Vehicle on 20 May 1992. The next day, while the Indian President was still in China, China detonated its largest ever nuclear device. This manner of conveying international signals has been employed by China before. China timed the launching of a punitive border war against Vietnam to coincide with a visit by India's Foreign Secretary, Vajpayee. The similarities between the 1979 Sino-Vietnamese border war and the 1962 Indo-Chinese border war sent a signal that demonstrated China's continuing resolve on border issues. The 21 May nuclear explosion, and increasing Chinese nuclear relations with Southwest Asia, are similarly a signal of China's resolve against Indian nuclear and missile programmes.

India's continuing efforts to develop its missile programme indicates its intentions to continue to seek a deterrent to Chinese capabilities despite the improved tenor of their relationship. India and China seem to have agreed, at least for the moment, that neither of them are at present interested in compounding internal unrest by opening up border disputes with cross border implications.

A second likely avenue of proliferation is the Pakistani response to India's increased conventional capability. Pakistan could come to the perception that Indian capabilities had reached a level that threatened Pakistan's ability to adequately defend itself with conventional systems. If Pakistan were to openly deploy nuclear weapons to deter India, India would feel compelled to respond similarly. This second avenue is overshadowed by India's rivalry with China.

United Nations inspections in Iraq in 1991 uncovered information indicating a nuclear relationship between Iraq and Pakistan. The UN inspector's report believed that Pakistan was used as a transshipment country for Iraq's uranium which was supplied by China. The report further concluded that Iraq's Al Furat centrifuge production facility was established with "substantial help from outside Iraq ... the centrifuge enrichment

programme was definitely not an indigenous development effort."¹⁰⁷ Centrifuges are needed for the enrichment of uranium to be used for nuclear weapons. The centrifuges were found to "bear a striking resemblance to those ... sold to Pakistan." It was further asserted that there was a "clear technological link between nuclear programmes in Pakistan and Iraq."¹⁰⁸ Though India had been exploring a nuclear link with Iran, it was to China that Iran turned to establish its nuclear programme in September of 1992.

It has been argued that the border tensions in the spring of 1990 were dangerously close to escalating to nuclear war. Former White House National Security Adviser Robert Gates who was sent to Islamabad and Delhi to diffuse tensions at the time has stated that "Pakistan and India seemed to be caught in a cycle that they could not break out of. I was convinced that if a war started it would go nuclear."¹⁰⁹ The Seymour Hersh article makes the case that Pakistani nuclear programmes were allowed to proceed with tacit approval by the Reagan/Bush Administrations and that this information was withheld from Congress for fear that the Solarz and Pressler Amendments would be invoked. This was viewed by those involved as the necessary price for continued Pakistani support against the Soviets in Afghanistan.

The implications of the breakup of the Soviet Union could have a significant impact on nuclear proliferation in South and Southwest Asia. The Iranian opposition has stated that Iran successfully purchased four nuclear warheads from Kazakhstan.¹¹⁰ On 23 May 1992, Kazakhstan joined Belorussia, the Ukraine and Russia in signing a protocol on the previously negotiated Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START) agreement. By so doing, President Nursultan Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan affirmed his intentions to dispose of all strategic nuclear weapons and to join the non-proliferation regime. Whether Kazakhstan will follow through on this

107 Excerpt drawn from the United Nations Inspector's Report to the Security Council on Nuclear Weapons Programmes in Iraq as quoted in Douglas Davis, "Proof of Nuclear Market Found in Iraq," *The Australian*, 11/27/91.

108 Douglas Davis, "Proof of Nuclear Market Found in Iraq,"

109 Robert Gates as quoted in Seymour Hersh, "On the Nuclear Edge," *The New Yorker*, 3/29/93, pp. 56-73.

110 *Frontline* television programme, 4/13/93.

pledge remains to be seen. Strategic nuclear weapons give Kazakhstan a strong bargaining position. To relinquish this with no quid pro quo seems unlikely. The shorter range nuclear systems on Kazakhstan soil had previously been withdrawn. In January of 1992 it was thought that Kazakhstan retained 1,400 strategic nuclear weapons, or five percent of the previous Soviet total.¹¹¹ Kazakhstan has on its soil silo-based missiles at Derzhavinsk and Zhangiz-Tobzhur, a missile test range at Tyuratam, a nuclear test site and a heavy bomber base at Semipalatinsk and an anti ballistic missile test site and an early warning radar site at Sary Shagan.¹¹² The 38% ethnic Russian composition of Kazakhstan is employed in many of the more technical positions within the economy and military.

The alternative path of proliferation from the former Soviet Union is through a brain drain. The Central Intelligence Agency has estimated that 900,000 people had clearances to work with Soviet nuclear projects. Of this number, some 2,000 would have knowledge of weapons design, while 3,000 to 5,000 would have experience with uranium enrichment or plutonium production.¹¹³ Soviet scientists average wage in early 1992 was reportedly 1,000 rubles, or \$10 a month. Reports have already emerged of some 60 or more former Soviet nuclear scientists working for India, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan and Brazil where they can earn \$36,000-75,000 annually.¹¹⁴ Such an outflow of expertise will greatly enhance Pakistan's and India's ability to develop and deploy nuclear weapons systems.

A further potential opening for nuclear proliferation stems from the Indian domestic milieu. There are those within India who espouse a nuclear path for India on the grounds that India, as a significant power, should have nuclear weapons in order for it to be taken seriously on the international arena. Such sentiment is a reaction of India to the overall environment rather than in response to a specific threat. The BJP advocates

¹¹¹ Robert Norris, "The Soviet Nuclear Archipelago," *Arms Control Today*, Jan./Feb. 1992, p. 25.

¹¹² Robert Norris, "The Soviet Nuclear Archipelago," pp. 28-9.

¹¹³ Elaine Sciolino, "US Report Warns of Risk of Spread of Nuclear Skills," *The New York Times*, 1/1/92, as referenced in Robert Norris, "The Soviet Nuclear Archipelago," p. 26.

¹¹⁴ Dunbar Lockwood, "US Seeks to Avert Ex-Soviet Brain Drain," *Arms Control Today*, Jan./Feb., 1992, p. 40.

a policy of giving the armed forces "nuclear teeth." This is inspired by a psychological need to acquire a nuclear potential to make India a force to be considered and to be taken seriously. Nuclear arms would allow India to deal with the world's major powers on more equal footing. This status-seeking need for India to take its self-perceived rightful place among the significant states of the world, and to no longer be in the position of having to bow to the dictates of others, will continue to increase as India continues to develop its military and economic potential.

There has been much debate over the question of just how far off India and Pakistan are from deploying nuclear weapons. One study concluded that India could produce enough fissile material for up to 53 nuclear warheads per year. In 1990 Pakistan's potential has similarly been estimated to be 21 warheads per year.¹¹⁵

20.22 Delivery systems

India and Pakistan both have nuclear capable aircraft and missiles. India's MiG 23, 25, 27, Jaguar and Mirage 2000 aircraft, and Pakistan's Mirage III, V and F-16 aircraft, are all nuclear capable.¹¹⁶ It has been reported that Pakistan prepared a nuclear weapon to drop on India in 1990.¹¹⁷ Reportedly Pakistan distributed its nuclear weapons from a storage facility in Baluchistan to airbases around the country during the 1990 crisis.¹¹⁸

India and Pakistan have both made significant progress with missile systems that will eventually be nuclear capable - India most recently in 1989 with the *Prithvi*, and in 1992 with the *Agni*, and Pakistan in 1990 with the *Haft-1* and 2.¹¹⁹ In addition to trying to limit the spread of nuclear weapons

115 S. Rashid Naim, "Aadhi Raat Ke Baad (After Midnight), in S. Cohen, *Nuclear Proliferation in South Asia*, p. 32.

116 It appears that Pakistan had configured a bomb that would fit onto their F-16s by the time of the spring 1990 crisis. See Seymour Hersh, "On the Nuclear Edge,"

117 "Bhutto Tells of Plan for N-Bomb Attack," *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 12/4/92. In this account the deployment aircraft at that time was to have been a C-130 cargo plane.

118 Seymour Hersh, "On the Nuclear Edge," p. 64.

119 The *Haft-I* has a 80 km range. The *Haft-2* is thought to be able to carry a 500 kg warhead over 300 km. Roy Braybrook, "Ballistic Missile Proliferation Causes Concern," *Pacific Defence Reporter*, 1990 Annual edition, p.72. Reportedly Pakistan has extended the range of the *Haft-*

through the NPT, the US and the West have sought to limit the spread of ballistic missile technology through the Missile Technology Control Regime. The efforts of the MTCR will be less successful than the NPT, as an estimated nine additional countries will soon join the existing six to seven states which already possess their own missile production capability.¹²⁰ China has undermined the MTCR efforts through its sales of missiles to Pakistan, Iran and Saudi Arabia.¹²¹ The regime has been viewed in the Indian press as a "stick" to maintain a first world "techopoly" as part of the "West's deliberate resistance to the [third world's] efforts at development."¹²² The MTCR, Super 301, the IMF and the NPT are all seen from the Indian perspective as neocolonial efforts to maintain the subordination of the third world.

Ballistic missile technology and deep strike nuclear capable aircraft have been acquired by the Indian armed forces as a means of dealing with its on-going security concerns with Pakistan and China, as well as for dealing with potentialities which could arise in the Indian Ocean region. By acquiring and developing nuclear capable systems, India is in a position to deploy nuclear armed forces in a very short time.

In addition to the missile's potential military value, it becomes part of the psychology of India's reconceptualisation of itself. One of the key aspects of the *Agni* test flight, as portrayed in the Indian press, was how through the test India had joined the exclusive club of the US, Russia, France, China and Israel in possessing an indigenously developed intermediate range ballistic missile (IRBM). This is indicative of the Indian need to be accepted as one of the significant players on the international arena. Abdul Kalam, director of Defence Research and Development Laboratory (DRDL) which oversaw the *Agni* programme, when queried as to why India needed the missile commented that "It is a technological strength. Strength respects strength.

2. Mazida Kamaruddin, "Delhi Rests Its Case," *Asian Defence Journal*, 7/89, p. 100. See also Manoj Joshi, "The Significance of Agni," *The Hindu*, 5/19/89.

120 Aabha Dixit, "Missiles: India Might Come Under Pressure," *The Hindustan Times*, 7/18/90.

121 Douglas Jehl, "China Breaking Missile Pledge," *The New York Times*, 5/5/93.

122 D. Sen, "Missile Proliferation: Third World Bogey," *The Hindustan Times*, 7/19/92.

Weaklings are not honoured. So we should be strong."¹²³ In regard to the *Agni* K. Subramanyam has described its "role as a weapon as the least of its roles. It is a confidence builder and a symbol of India's assertion of self reliance, not merely in defence, but in the broader international political arena as well."¹²⁴ Rajiv Gandhi's comments on the *Agni* acknowledged both the psychological and potential military utility of the weapon system for India. He stated that "we must remember that technological backwardness leads to subjugation [and that] the technologies proved in *Agni* are deeply significant for evolving national security options."¹²⁵

The greatest gains in Indian theatre forces and indigenously produced armaments in the last decade have been in its missile technology. India is a leader in indigenous ballistic missile technology in the Third World where some 13 to 20 states have similarly acquired, or are acquiring, missile systems. The Gulf War has clearly established that in the face of a concentrated advanced air force, Third World countries have little option for striking the enemy by air other than missiles.¹²⁶ The ability to strike core areas of the enemy, while not necessarily militarily significant, is at a minimum of importance in symbolic terms, as was made evident by Iraqi Scud missile attacks on Israel and Saudi Arabia during the Gulf War. An Indian capability to threaten US facilities on Diego Garcia would certainly figure into any equation if the two nations were to come into conflict with one another.

Indian advances in the missile production area are part of India's overall drive for arms independence. This is itself part of the larger goals of self sufficiency and non-alignment. In 1958, the Defence Science Organisation and the Technical Development Establishment, were amalgamated into the Defence Research and Development Organisation

123 Interview with Abdul Kalam in Dilip Bobb and A. K. Menon, "Agni: Chariot of Fire," *India Today*, 6/15/89, p. 31.

124 K. Subramanyam as quoted in Andrew Hull, "The Role of Ballistic Missiles in Third World Defence Strategies," *Jane's Intelligence Review*, October 1991, p. 465.

125 Dilip Bobb and A. K. Menon, "Agni: Chariot of Fire," *India Today*, 6/15/89, p. 29.

126 This had earlier been established by a study conducted on the performance of the Syrian Airforce in operations in the 1982 Lebanon War where it experienced a 30% loss rate. Andrew Hull, "The Role of Ballistic Missiles in Third World Defence Strategies," *Jane's Intelligence Review*, October 1991, pp. 464-70.

(DRDO). The DRDO is administered by the Department of Defence Research and Development (DDRDL).¹²⁷ Credit for India's missile programme goes to the DRDO and the DRDL. It is the DRDL in Hyderabad and the Imaaraat Research Centre which form the core of the guided missile development programme.¹²⁸ An Indian designed and built satellite, the Aryabhata, was launched for India by the Soviets in 1975.¹²⁹ By 1980, India had advanced to become the Third World's largest arms manufacturer with 31 percent of Third World production between 1950 and 1984.¹³⁰ Further, in 1980 India became the sixth state to place a satellite into orbit, with the launch of the Augmented Space Launcher Vehicle (ASLV).¹³¹ In 1983, India initiated the Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme as part of its on-going efforts to develop indigenous arms. It was funded at a rate of \$1.3 billion for a ten year period and developed the *Agni*, *Akash*, *Trishul*, *Prithvi*, *Nag*, and *Astra* missiles.¹³² The *Prithvi* was successfully test fired in 1988. The *Agni*, which attracted widespread international attention, was test fired in May of 1989. The *Agni* is generally considered to carry a one tonne payload a distance of 2,500 km. It has been speculated that the relative success of the missile programmes over the space launcher programme reflects the precedence of defence uses over civilian in the development of rocket technology.¹³³

¹²⁷ The DRDO has also been overseeing the LCA and MBT. S. Baranawal, *The Military Yearbook 1978*, pp. 235-50.

¹²⁸ Pravin Sawhney, "Indigenous Missile Plan Increases Firepower," *The Business and Political Observer*, 12/12/90.

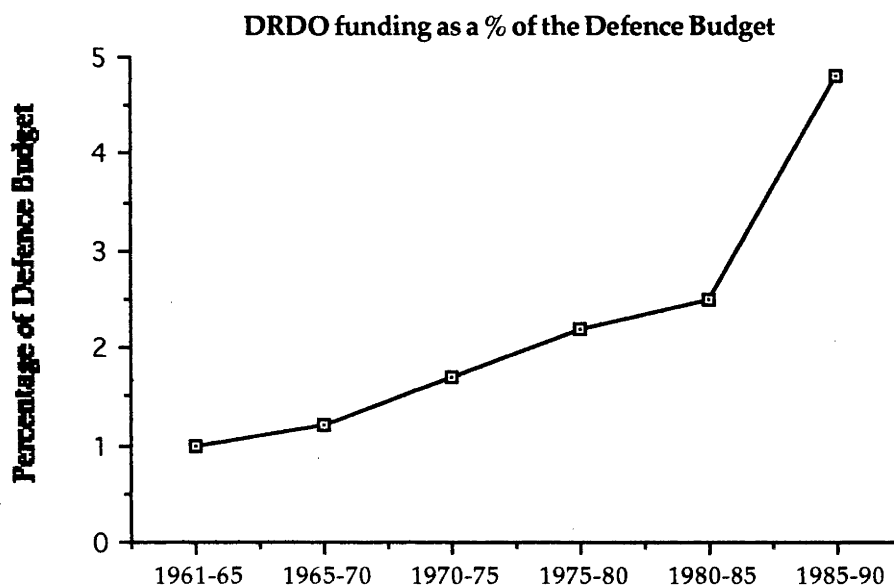
¹²⁹ Surjit Mansingh, *India and the Superpowers: 1966-84*, in Y. Malik and D. Vajpeyi, "India: The Years of Indira Gandhi," p. 140.

¹³⁰ Dr S. Bilveer, "India Fires into the Missile Age," *Asian Defence Review*, 9/89, p. 71. Despite this India is a small exporter of weapons. This may have been related to its NAM posture. India is now seeking to increase its arms exports.

¹³¹ On May 20 1992 India was successful in launching 330lb Rohini Class satellite into orbit. The programme while largely successful has had its set backs. ASLV launches in 1987 and 1988 ended in failure. "India Launches Space Satellite," *Reuters News Service*, 5/20/92.

¹³² The *Agni* is a 1500-3000 km surface to surface IRBM. The *Akash* is a 27 km surface to air missile. The *Trishul*, a 25 km truck mounted surface to air missile was first test fired in 1987. The *Prithvi*, a surface to surface missile, has an estimated range of 250 km and has a tactical battlefield role. The *Nag* is guided anti tank missile while the *Astra* is a air to air missile currently under design. Dr S. Bilveer, "India Fires into the Missile Age," *Asian Defence Review*, 9/89, p.71.

¹³³ A.K. Menon, "Space Launchers in a Tail Spin," *India Today*, 5/31/92, p.141.



Source: Statistics drawn from "Agni Chariot of Fire," *India Today*, 6/15/89, p. 31.

In addition to the *Prithvi* and the *Agni*, it is thought that India is in the process of developing a missile with excess of a 5,000 km range. This would give it the beginnings of a nuclear deterrent vis a vis China.¹³⁴ Given the high degree of uncertainty over Pakistan's nuclear position,¹³⁵ and due to domestic political forces India may be tempted to adopt an open nuclear policy when it develops an effective IRBM. This will provide a true deterrent to China. These plans will likely go ahead despite the current positive nature of the Sino-Indian relationship. The atmospherics of the relationship do not compensate for the underlying rivalry and unresolved border.

¹³⁴ The press trust of India quoted scientist at the DRDO as stating that after the *Agni* the next objective was to develop a missile with more than double the range. Mazida Kamaruddin, *Asian Defence Journal*, 7/89. See also Seth Carus, "Ballistic Missiles in Modern Conflict," as cited in Andrew Hull, "The Role of Ballistic Missiles in Third World Defence Strategies," *Jane's Intelligence Review*, October 1991, p. 468.

¹³⁵ In 1990 Pakistani Prime Minister Bhutto was alerted by the CIA of the military's plans to potentially use nuclear weapons. At the time tensions had been mounting over the Kashmir border. The Prime Minister stated, "I have no proof for this but I feel that someone may have turned on the [nuclear] switch in the Spring of 1990 to justify the dismissal of my government and, now, having done that, does not know how to turn that switch off." "Bhutto Tells of Plan for N-Bomb Attack," *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 12/4/92.

The prospects for better relations between the United States and India, which had been showing signs of improvement, were dampened by the Indian and Russian decision to proceed with a US \$250 million deal, first made in 1990, transferring sophisticated rocket engine technology. Despite denials by the Chairman of India's Space and Research Organisation, U.R. Rao, that the cryogenic liquid hydrogen rocket booster technology would not be used for military purposes, the United States remained apprehensive and threatened to cut Russia and India off from future technology transfers unless they desisted. The immediate repercussions of the deal was the holding up the delivery of a second Cray computer. This later became a full two year ban on exports to Glavakosmos, the Russian arms agency concerned, and the Indian Space Research Organization.¹³⁶ India launched its ASLV ten days after the sanctions were announced. The sanctions further led to calls, from across the political spectrum, in the Indian Parliament for the cancellation of joint naval exercises with the United States, which were planned for 26 May 1992.¹³⁷ While the naval manoeuvres went ahead, India took the opportunity to make its second test of the *Agni* coincide with the naval manoeuvres. This clearly sent a signal to the United States of India's continuing desire to independently develop its missile programme.

India continued during this period to test its short and long range missiles, and to resist attempts by the United States to have India join in talks with Pakistan on non-proliferation issues in the subcontinent.¹³⁸ M.M. Joshi, President of the BJP, in reaction to the United States moves to prevent missile technology transfers, called for India "to go in for manufacture of nuclear weapons as a means of self protection."¹³⁹ In this way, the lack of consensus on strategic issues in the areas of non-proliferation and missile technology control serve to undermine the prospect of improved relations between India and the West. It was the Soviet's disengagement from

136 Barbara Crosette, "Russia's Rocket Deal with India Leads U.S. to Impose Trade Bans," *The New York Times*, 5/12/92.

137 "Spokesman's Response to Queries Regarding US decision Relating to Sanctions Against ISRO," *India News*, 5/18/92, p. 4.

138 Sanjoy Hazarika, "Moscow Affirms Sale of Technology to India," *The New York Times*, 5/7/92.

139 "Joshi Has Urged the Gov. to go in for Nuclear Weapons," *India News*, 5/18/92, p. 6.

Afghanistan, and the liberalization of trade practices in India, which created the prospect for improved relations between India and the West.

20.3 Overall assessment of the trend in force structure

India's force structure has expanded significantly since independence. There have been aberrations in the yearly budgets, but analysis of defence expenditures indicates a concerted effort to augment existing capabilities since 1962. The 1980s also witnessed another significant push to develop force structure. Internal political turmoil and economic restructuring forced existing plans to be put off in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Unless India's perceptions of its strategic environment are fundamentally altered, on a level of significance similar to the 1962 transformation, the upward trend in defence expenditure will return with the resumption of increasing economic growth.

In 1992 real defence expenditure dropped by over five percent despite nominal increases in budget allocations. Budget allocations for the military services were increased by 1150 crore¹⁴⁰ over the 1991 allocation of 16350 crore. This seven percent increase was over taken by the 12 percent inflation rate for the same period. This will continue to affect the capital outlays for imported ordnance. The 1992 20 percent devaluation of the Rupee further diminished the buying power of the armed forces. Given this phenomena, and the fact that the debt service allocation is the only other allocation in the national budget that exceeds the defence allocation, the impetus for indigenous defence production and exports of military equipment will grow as a more cost effective means of financing the military's requirements.¹⁴¹

20.31 Trends in defence expenditure

Indian defence expenditure grew both in current and constant figures during the 1962-87 period. India's posture also grew relative to its neighbours. During its peak, Indian defence expenditure exceeded that of Pakistan and China combined. There are, however, problems in trying to

¹⁴⁰ One crore equals ten million.

¹⁴¹ K. Subramanyam, "Defence Expenditure in the Budget," *Link*, 3/22/92, p. 26.

derive a relative sense of military power by looking at defence expenditures alone. Exchange rates and relative buying power of currencies in their own respective countries make direct comparisons less than perfect. Nonetheless, such figures are an important source of information for beginning to develop a sense of the general trends of a nation's defence efforts.

What can be concluded from the data presented in the charts below is that India has, since 1962, been steadily developing its military potential, and that this was most dramatic in the mid-to late-1980s. The defence build-up of the 1980s, as measured in constant 1988 prices and exchange rates, began to abate in 1987. It is interesting to note that this is the same period that witnessed a number of increasingly assertive gestures on the part of India, such as *Operations Brass Tacks* and *Checkerboard*, the Maldives intervention, the Trade and Transit dispute with Nepal, and the IPKF's expedition to Sri Lanka.

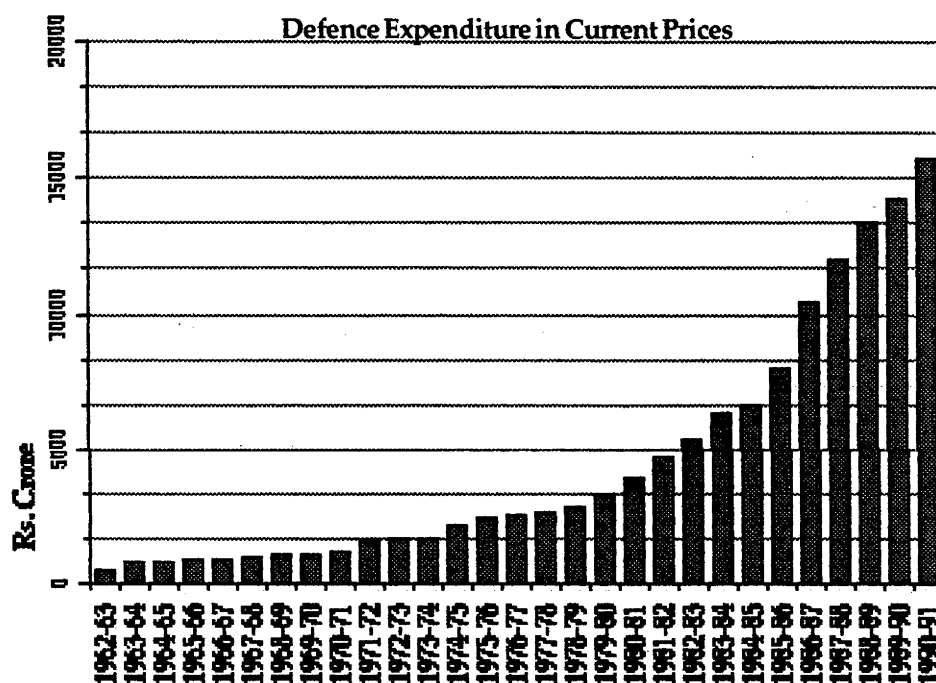
That the navy's share of net capital expenditures rose significantly during the 1980s is also of interest. Naval forces are generally more power projection oriented forces than are infantry units. There is a qualitative difference between the defensively oriented build up of mountain units in the aftermath of the 1962 war in the Himalaya and the beginnings of a blue water capability in the 1980s.

In addition to its significant indigenous arms industry, India became the world's number one importer of arms in the 1980s. For the period of 1985-89 India was "by far the largest arms importer of major weapons in the world."¹⁴² Afghanistan and Pakistan also ranked in the top twelve for the same period at seventh and twelfth respectively.

Despite short term fluctuations, the long term trend in defence expenditure has been for steadily increasing defence budgets in constant figures. When measured from the available data as a percentage of Gross National Product (GNP) the defence expenditure is much more stable at just under four percent of GNP. From this perspective, based both on past

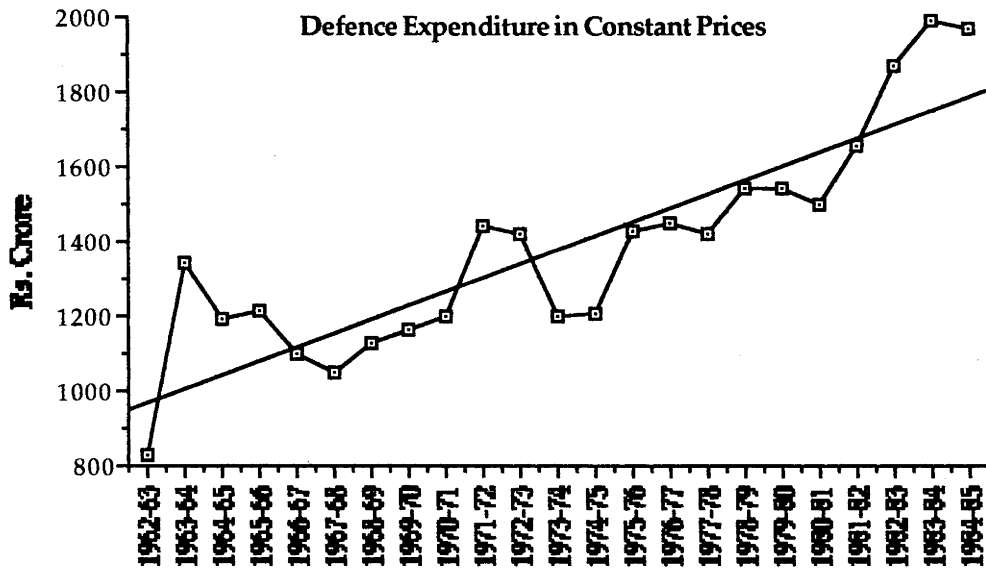
¹⁴² Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, *SIPRI Yearbook 1990: World Armaments and Disarmament*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1990), p. 228.

allocations and the position of the Ministry of Finance in the decision-making structure, future increases in the defence budget would seem to be contingent on a rising GNP. Conversely, a decline in GNP growth would ostensibly lead to declining defence expenditures. The average annual growth rate for 1971-91 was seven percent. If the economic reforms of Narasimha Rao are effective, India could regain and surpass this earlier level of growth. In this case, defence expenditures, if they continue to be tied to a fixed level of GNP, may also return to or exceed the earlier levels of expenditure.¹⁴³ The influence of economics on India's international position will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Five.

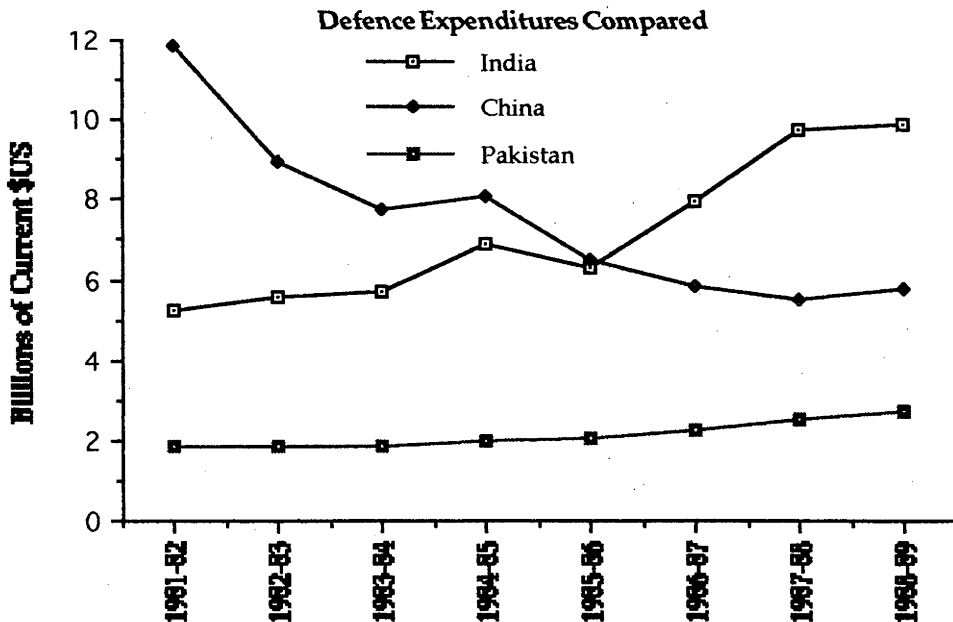


Source: Ministry of Defence, *Defence Service Estimates*, (Delhi: Government of India Press, various years)

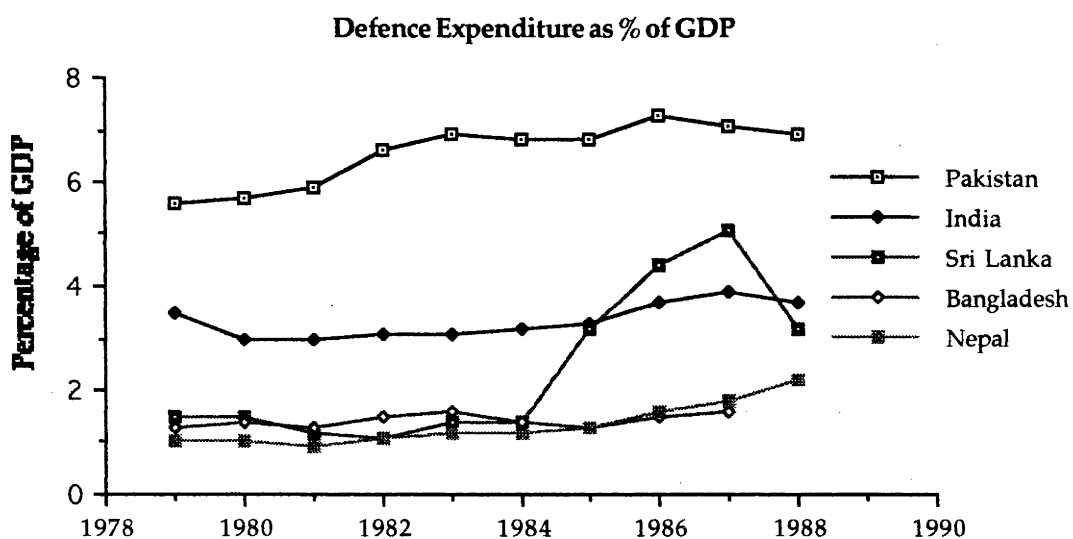
¹⁴³ Two factors that will act against this are the unlikelihood that India will be able to replace the Soviet Union with an alternative source of inexpensive first rate military equipment and the rising costs of military manpower after the implementation of the recommendations of the fourth paycommission's report. Nearly 60% of the army's budget is either directly or indirectly related to manpower. Lt. General Hazari, "The Resource Crunch and Defence Management," *Indian Defence Review*, Jan. 1992, p. 47.



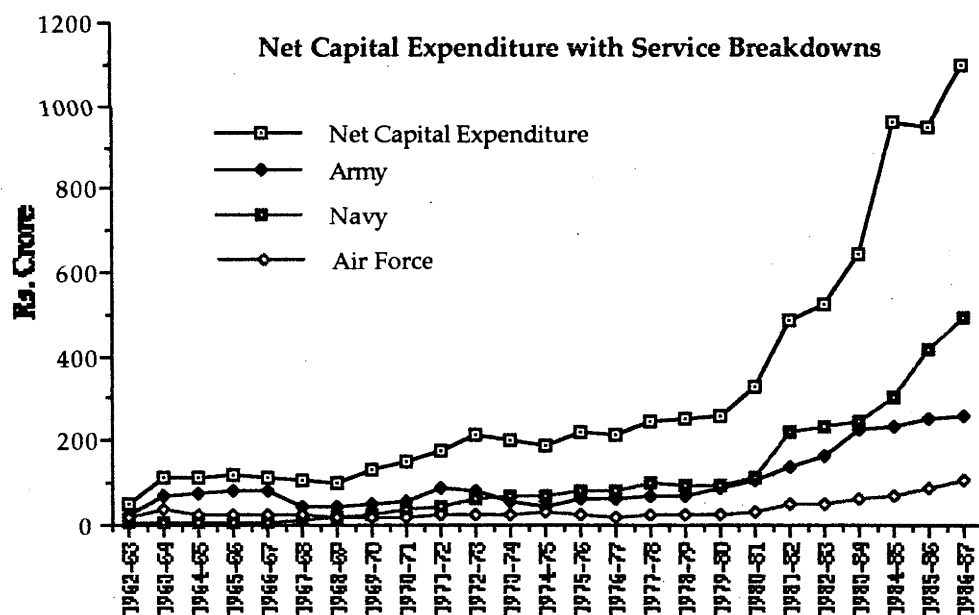
Source: The statistics are drawn from Y. Lakshmi, *Trends in India's Defence Expenditure*, (Delhi: Institute of Defence Studies and Analysis, 1988)



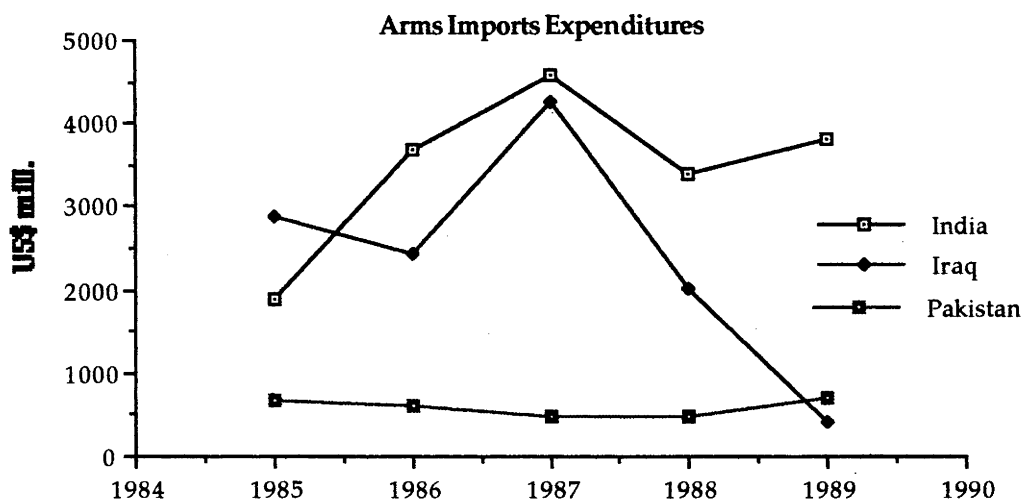
Source: The International Institute of Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance*, (London: Brassey's Publishers, various years).



Source: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, *SIPRI Year Book 1990: World Armaments and Disarmament*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), pp.196-7.



Source: The statistics are drawn from Y. Lakshmi, *Trends in India's Defence Expenditure*, (Delhi: Institute of Defence Studies and Analysis, 1988) Note: Between 1962 and 1987 capital defence expenditure averaged 10.93% of total defence expenditure. The figures are in current prices. The definition of what constituted capital expenditure changed in 1984. This in part accounts for the rise at that time.



Source: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, *SIPRI Year Book 1990: World Armaments and Disarmament*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), pp.228-9. Note: figures are in constant 1985 prices.¹⁴⁴

20.32 Concealed aspects of the defence budget

In the attempt to minimise attention to the expanding defence budget, a number of significant allocations have been concealed. This practice seems to have been started with the build up of the 1980s. The defence budget in India includes revenue expenditures on the Army, Navy, Air Force and defence production plus the capital expenditures on these services. Expenditures on the Ministry of Defence and pensions for retired personnel are not included in the budget. The budget figures for the ministry and for pensions are not kept secret. What is important is that when citing India's defence budget these areas are generally left out. This has reduced the real expenditure in perceived terms by up to ten percent.¹⁴⁵ In this way, general perceptions have successfully been misdirected.

¹⁴⁴ These figures have been challenged. See G. Balachandran, "India's Defence Expenditure: Widely Varying Estimates," *Strategic Analysis*, vol. XIV, no. 9, December 1991, pp. 1053-7.

¹⁴⁵ The suggestion that the Indian government is "not being entirely frank with the public, and that defence expenditure and the burden of defence on the economy is considerably more than commonly realized." is articulated in Ravi Rikhye "Indian Defence Budget: Fact and Fantasy," *Economic and Political Weekly*, April 29 1989, p. 905.

A further manner of obfuscation are the above-mentioned paramilitary forces whose budgets are drawn from different ministry sources. These forces are budgeted under ministries other than defence, such as the Home Ministry or the Ministry of Surface Transport. Their deployments are also in part paid for by the states where they are deployed. The defence budgets are most scrutinised when they are released in March. At this time there is a certain amount of debate over the defence allocation. Defence estimates are consistently revised upward. The 1988-89 budget exceeded budget estimates by 4%. The budget for the atomic energy programme and ballistic missile research are under the budgets of the Department of Atomic Energy. The government also purchases military equipment under civilian government budget headings. In 1961 the acquisition of the Soviet transport aircraft An-12 was achieved through the border roads budget. In addition, air defence ground control environment equipment has been purchased under the Civil Aviation Ministry.¹⁴⁶

The arms and trade relationship with the Soviet Union, having been based on balanced trade, could have been used as a conduit for off-budget military acquisitions. During the 1980s India tended to run trade surpluses in its account with the Soviets. It has been speculated that "the logical mechanism to balance is to import Soviet arms."¹⁴⁷ When such diversions of expenses and hidden aspects of the defence budget are taken into account, the defence budget during its peak in the 1980s may have been closer to 5% of GNP rather than the 3 to 4 % figure.

21. Chronological conceptualization of the increasing assertiveness of modern India's external posture

With this discussion of hidden aspects of the defence budget concluded the chapter now moves on from its focus on expanding capabilities to examine India's increased assertiveness. For heuristic purposes the chronology of India's evolving posture is interpreted as having undergone 4 periods of transition and 3 periods of growth. These are

¹⁴⁶ Ravi Rikhye "Indian Defence Budget." p. 905. India has integrated military air control with its civilian air traffic control.

¹⁴⁷ Ravi Rikhye "Indian Defence Budget." p. 905.

outlined in the table below. These seven periods correspond to the periods of transition and growth which are subjectively depicted below in a graphic interpretation of India's external posture.¹⁴⁸

Suppositions of national security during periods of growth and transition

	Period	Dominant foreign policy concepts	Dominant characteristics
I	1947-49	Territorial consolidation	freedom struggle
II.	1949-62	Panchsheela/NAM	secular-idealistic
III.	1962-69	Defensive/NAM	secular-realist
IV.	1969-77	Real politik/NAM	secular-realist
V.	1977-80	Neutralist/NAM	communal-realist
VI.	1980-89	Nationalist/NAM	communal-realist
VII.	1989- ...	Nationalist/international	communal-realist

In its first phase prior to the 1962 border war Nehru had largely based India's security in a belief in the idealistic policies of Panchsheel¹⁴⁹ or peaceful coexistence. During this period, the status of the military was neglected as resources were allocated to economic development and away from a force previously associated with the maintenance of colonial order.¹⁵⁰ The 1962 war shattered these idealistic hopes and caused a reflective period of transition where India became convinced of the need for a military build-up to a level commensurate with a more realistic assessment of its security

¹⁴⁸ This graph, and the table below, are not to be viewed narrowly. Their purpose is to assist in the development of a general understanding of the progression of India's external posture.

¹⁴⁹ The concept was first formulated in the preamble to an agreement with China signed on 4/29/54. They are 1. Mutual respect for each others territorial integrity and sovereignty, 2. Mutual non-aggression, 3. Mutual non-interference in each others internal affairs, 4. Equality and mutual benefit, 5. Peaceful coexistence. See Jawaharlal Nehru, from a speech in the Lok Sabha on 9/17/55 as reproduced in *India's Foreign Policy: Select Speeches, Sept. 1946-April 1961*. Delhi: The Publications Division of the Government of India, 1961.

¹⁵⁰ During the Second World War the British Indian Army had reached a strength of 2.7 million and fought on behalf of the British in a number of different theatres of operations including North Africa, the Mid-East, the Far East and South Asia.

needs. After the 1962 War, India has moved from a position of reacting to potential threats, to a situation where it had the nascent capacity to project power and exert influence within its immediate region.

In the second phase of growth of India's strategic posture, India moved from an emphasis on repelling an attack by Pakistan, to being able to simultaneously fight a two front war along the length of the Pakistani border and in the Himalaya against China. Having attained this capability by 1971 and established a relationship with the Soviets through the Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation in 1971, India was in a position to begin neutralizing threats to its security. An opportunity to do this was presented by events in 1971 which led to the bifurcation of Pakistan in the 1971 War.¹⁵¹

The deployments in the later part of the 1980s into Sri Lanka and the Maldives, as well as the asymmetrical relationships with Nepal and Bhutan, bear out India's capability and willingness to play a more prominent role within her immediate region. Further, the expansion of indigenous arms production capability, the qualitative build-up of naval and air assets, and the development of the Agni missile, further demonstrated the extended reach of India within South Asia. India has been caught between both a situation of domestic turmoil and confusion, and the fundamental restructuring of the international correlation of power. The shift to accommodate the new realities has been a difficult and contentious one as India's vacillating response to the Gulf War and the 1992 NAM summit indicates.

As here depicted, India's self-image has undergone a number of permutations since 1947. Any attempt to analyse the construction of images,

¹⁵¹ This conceptualization of India's security policy in having undergone these three phases has been covered effectively by Onkar Marwah and Raju Thomas in the following works. Onkar Marwah, "India's Military Power and Policy," in O. Marwah and J. Pollack eds. *Military Power and Policy in Asian States: China, India and Japan*, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1980), Onkar Marwah, "National Security and Military Policy in India," in L. Ziring, ed. *The Subcontinent in World Politics*, (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1982), Raju Thomas, "Defence Planning in India," in S. Newman, ed. *Defence Planning in Less Industrialized States*, (Lexington: Lexington Books, 1984) and Raju Thomas, *Indian Security Policy*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986).

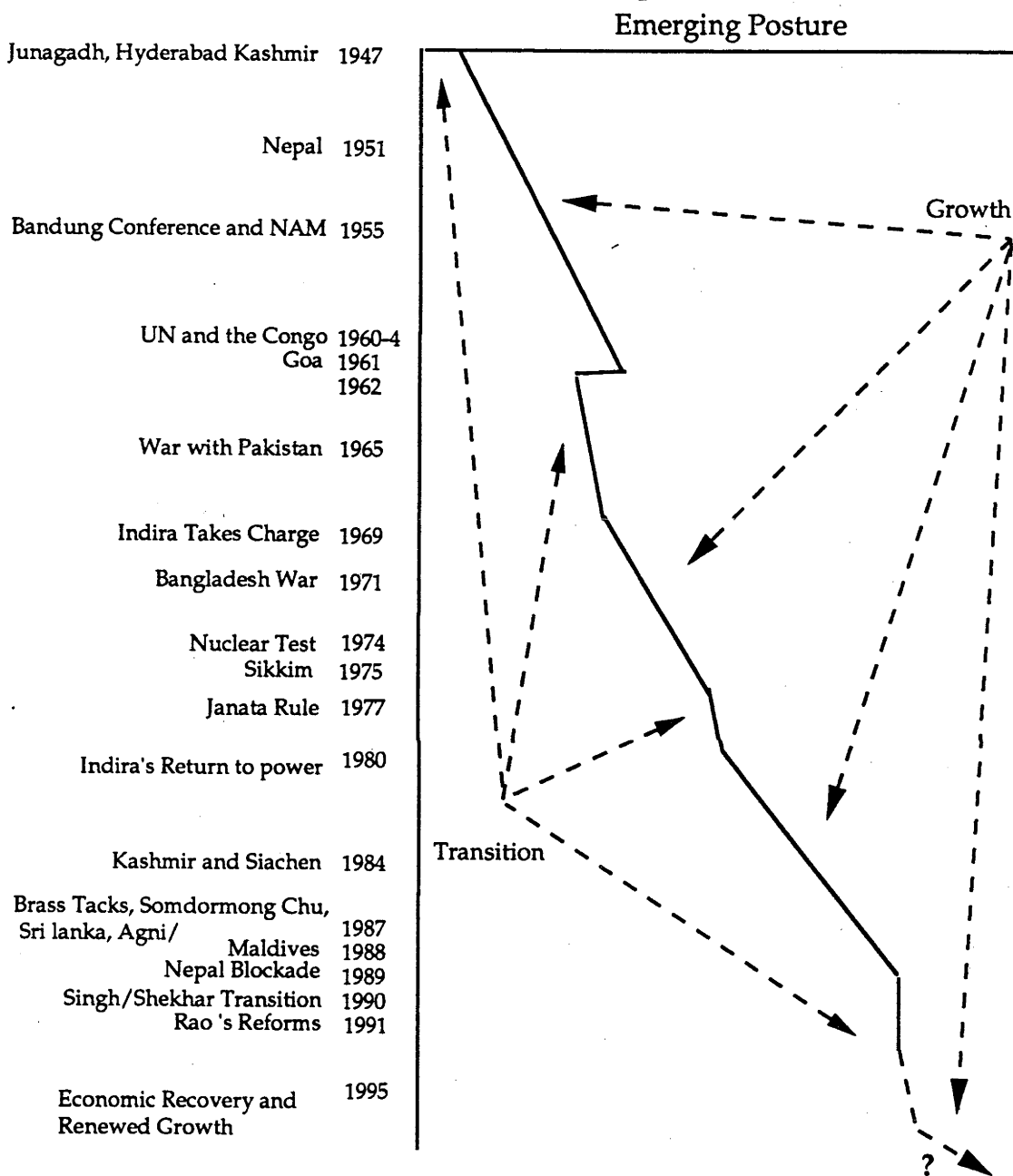
whether they be self-perceived or projected, involves an assessment of the cultural psychology which underlies the more transparent plane of political action. The major influences on Indian political culture are most basically divided into Western and Hindu.¹⁵² Hindu influences can further be subdivided into Bramin and Kashatriya influences. Similarly there are idealist and realist aspects of the Western idiom. These influences have led to two key political orientations within India which can be conceptualised as realist and idealist elements.¹⁵³ During India's evolution since independence these influences have had varying degrees of impact on the conduct of both internal and external politics.

Through this conceptual lens, three separate periods of growth in India's external orientation are discernible. During these times India's international posture has expanded. Each of these periods has been preceded by a time of transition, during which India's political culture and international paradigm was altered to the extent that it had an effect on the way that country perceived its external environment. In the early 1990s, India has found itself once again in a period of reorientation and transition. This chronological interpretation suggests a trend from youthful idealism toward a more pragmatic and self assertive realpolitik. The present transitional phase will most probably be followed by yet another period of growth of India's external posture. The justification for this assertion will be discussed in following chapters. This evolving posture is interpreted somewhat subjectively and intuitively in the following graph. The remainder of the Chapter will discuss these periods of growth and transition in India's external posture.

¹⁵² India has also been influenced by Persian-Moghul influences, though to a lesser extent.

¹⁵³ See J. Bandyopadhyaya, *India's Foreign Policy*.

A subjective interpretation of India's external posture



Note: External posture is subjectively assessed as being made up of a multiplicity of factors. Posture implies the perception of India and as such is not quantifiable in objective terms. This subjective interpretation is based on, but not limited to, military capabilities, political leadership, relative power within the region, the larger geopolitical sphere, political cohesion and economic strength. These components will be treated in more detail in subsequent chapters.

21.1 The first transition: The end of the Raj to 1949; and the birth of modern India

Independence was a period of monumental transition for the people of India. Consequently, India's international paradigm also changed. Prior to independence, the subcontinental external gaze was a construct of the Raj. With independence came the need to create a new world view. This was largely left to Jawaharlal Nehru. Against this background Nehru brought India out onto the world stage. He mixed both elements of idealism and realism.¹⁵⁴ Under Nehru, India assumed a leadership role within the NAM, and clearly defined a place for itself among the nations of the world.

During the initial Nehru period the themes of the consolidation of the Indian state, Panchsheela, and the Non-Aligned Movement pervaded India's external policy. These themes served to project India onto the global arena in a new way. The 1962 war with China, the death of Nehru, and the 1965 war with Pakistan, led to a lessening of the idealistic aspect of India's international policies and a sense of uncertainty and suspicion of the world environment. The collapse of the policy of Panchsheela and the Chinese invasion of 1962, left Jawaharlal Nehru a broken man. His world view, which was tantamount to India's, was crushed. Nehru himself must be seen as a pragmatic-idealist, as opposed to the more pure idealism of Mahatma Gandhi. During WWII, Mahatma Gandhi advocated the use of satyagraha against the Japanese. Since the time of Nehru and Mahatma Gandhi, the influence of idealism in Indian politics has declined as compared with the pragmatic-realist view.

Having recently gained its own independence through a freedom struggle, India looked on national independence movements of Asia in a fraternal way. The Asian Relations Conference of March 1947, and the Conference on Indonesia in January of 1949, were intended to support anti colonial struggles in general, and the Indonesians fight against the Dutch in

¹⁵⁴ The term realism is here used in the Indian context which would most easily, though somewhat simply, be identified with Chanakya as well as with a Western understanding of the term. Jawaharlal Nehru, *India's Foreign Policy: Select Speeches, Sept. 1946-April 1961*, (Delhi: The Publications Division of the Government of India, 1961).

particular. It is in this way that newly independent India made its international debut. India readily identified with former colonial states. The phenomenon of the end of the colonial period coincided with the emergence of the cold war. This is what led India, and the other newly independent states, to adopt a third alternative in the form of the Non Aligned Movement.

The NAM was an idealistic organisation which India joined to further its own national interests in a world of two superpower blocs. While the NAM was adopted as a means to promote the ends of Indian interests, its ideological appeal to India had the effect of reifying NAM as an end rather than as a means of policy. The process of transformation of the NAM begun in Jakarta in 1992. This was in response of the movement's need to try to adjust to the new realities of the post Cold War world. India's changed role within the new NAM is an example of the general progression of Indian policy from an idealist to a pragmatist approach. Nehru was also instrumental in setting India's agenda with regard to the former princely states.

A comparison of India's reactions to the events in Hyderabad, Junagadh and Kashmir in the immediate post-independence period is necessary to appreciate that Nehru's foreign policy was not entirely driven by idealism. Prior to independence there were 550 Princely states. All save Hyderabad, Junagadh and Kashmir were either incorporated into Pakistan or persuaded to accede to India. In the case of Hyderabad and Junagadh, the Nizam and Nawab were Muslim rulers of predominantly Hindu states. In the case of Kashmir, Maharaja Hari Singh was a Hindu, Dogra, Rajput ruler of a population which at that time was three quarters Muslim. Today Kashmir's population is almost entirely Muslim.

According to the census of 1941, Hyderabad's population was some 16 million. Of this number, 13 % were Muslims, 81 % were Hindus and the remainder were of other denominations. The pre-independence Nizam was a descendant of the Governor, Asaf Jah, who ruled the territory under the

suzerainty of Aurangzeb.¹⁵⁵ The principles who constituted the ruling class were predominantly Muslims.

At the Lahore session of the Muslim league of March 1940, Jinnah commented that "the only course open to us all is to allow the major nations separate homelands by dividing India into autonomous national states."¹⁵⁶ Among the six different proposals to come from the session was a proposal for the creation not of one or two separate Muslim states but for the creation of three. The three states were to be centred on the northwest Muslim areas, the Muslim dominant portions of Bengal to the east of the subcontinent, and a southern Muslim state of Usmanistan.¹⁵⁷ After much bloodshed the first two achieved independent statehood while the third was absorbed into India.

The fate of the Princely kingdoms of India was addressed by the stand-still agreement of November 1947. Despite negotiations prior to independence, an accession agreement for Hyderabad had not been settled by 15 August 1947. The Nizam stood by his assertion that with the removal of British control he was now sovereign of the land. Delhi had offered to allow him a degree of autonomy and the right to remain as Nizam, but he refused. A compromise was reached in the stand-still agreement that ratified the status quo for the period of a year. Under the agreement, signed by India and the Nizam, India was not allowed to station troops in Hyderabad. During the period relations and negotiations between the Nizam's delegation and India deteriorated over future sovereignty of the land. During 1948, India began an economic blockade of Hyderabad. The Nizam responded with threats that India's actions would provoke the uprising of the Muslim fifth column in India.

¹⁵⁵ At independence the feudal structure was still largely intact, despite British colonial rule. Surrounding the Nizam were some 1,100 vassals who had four million tenants working their estates of some 26,000 square miles. Through his 50 % control of state enterprises, the Nizam was able to further patronise the Muslim community. Wilfred Cantwell Smith, "Hyderabad: Muslim Tragedy," in Omar Khalidi, *Hyderabad: After the Fall*, (Wichita: Hyderabad Historical Society, 1988), p. 3.

¹⁵⁶ Jinnah as quoted in S. Wolpert, *A New History of India*, p. 330.

¹⁵⁷ Usmanistan is a derivative of the family name of the Nizam of Hyderabad.

On 15 June 1948, Delhi came forward with a new proposal for a plebiscite to determine the accession or independence of the state. The proposal came forward with the threat of military intervention if it was not agreed to. India intervened on 13 September 1948 in a "police" action code named *Operation Polo*. In less than a week, two divisions of the Indian Army had occupied Hyderabad and suppressed any resistance. Thousands of Muslims were killed in retribution for the strong-arm tactics that Razakaris had used against the Hindus during their brief period of independence under the stand-still agreement.¹⁵⁸ Following the action, Nehru was resoundingly welcomed by the people of Hyderabad. This action was one of liberation that had the effect of bringing a more democratic, less discriminating form of government and an attendant redistribution of wealth along more equitable lines.

The Indian government's call for a plebiscite as its source of legitimacy in the Hyderabad affair is inconsistent with the course of events in Kashmir. This demonstrates Nehru's willingness to indulge in realpolitik when confronted with an issue threatening the territorial integrity of India. The influence of realist politics is thereby demonstrated even at India's beginnings when the rhetoric of idealism was much stronger than it is today. The current social fabric is less reliant on the idealism of Gandhian thought than it was in the late 1940s. In this way Gandhi's ponderings on the possible future role of power politics in India, as mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, were already being answered by 1948.

The situation in Junagadh unfolded in a similar manner to that of Hyderabad. Like the Nizam of Hyderabad, the Muslim Nawab ruled a predominantly Hindu populace. Unlike the Nizam, the Nawab, rather than proclaiming his independence, decided to accede to Pakistan on 15 August 1947. Junagadh's position on the Kathiawar peninsula, of present day Gujarat, was not so distant from Pakistan to rule out its decision to accede based on geographic factors alone. The decision of the Nawab was overturned by an Indian liberation army.

¹⁵⁸ Estimates, sourced with the Hyderabad Historical society, of the numbers of Muslims killed range from between 50,000 and 200,000. This is thought to be ten times the number of killings committed by the Razakaris. W. C. Smith, "Hyderabad," p. 20.

In the cases of Hyderabad and Junagadh, we observe India's assertion of the democratic principle of self determination construed as being of sufficient importance to justify actions which ran counter to agreements and principles that India had entered into in the lead up to independence. These actions are indeed justifiable by democratic principles of self determination. In these two cases India could justify its actions both in terms of self determination and national interest. The importance of the two incidents stems from the perspective which they provide on the moral component of the Indian claim on Kashmir. The interplay between the idealistic, moral component and the more realist aspect of foreign and defence policy is demonstrated through the juxtaposition of the cases.

On 26 October 1947, Maharaja Hari Singh, facing an advancing army of Pathan tribesmen, formally requested to accede to India. The following morning, India flew in military support, thus beginning the first of three wars between India and Pakistan. This unresolved territorial dispute continues to threaten the unstable peace that exists between the two countries. The on-going discontent in Kashmir is discussed in greater detail in Appendix II.

21.2 The first period of growth: 1949-62, Nehru, Mahatma Gandhi, Panchsheela, and the mixed idealist/realist posture

Jawaharlal Nehru was one of the few individuals of any generation who was able to make a seminal contribution to their world. Not only would his campaigns lead India to freedom from colonial oppression, but his economic and socio-political perspectives, and articulation of India's international position in the non-aligned movement, would become one with India's identity.

Nehru's origins were to influence his actions in later life. He was born to Motilal and Swaruprani Nehru in Allahabad in 1889. He was a descendant of Kashmiri Brahmins who had some generations before moved to the south. Nehru's formative years were to have a lasting impact on his political outlook. His tutor, F.T. Brooks, was a member of the Fabian Society and a theosophist. Later as Prime Minister, Nehru was able to impose his view of state intervention as the means for attaining both social equity and

economic growth. While Nehru's economic vision has unintentionally brought India to the verge of bankruptcy, his secular course for the country is still the only viable path which can accommodate India's diversity. Educated at Harrow and Cambridge, Nehru interacted with international socialists in Europe on such occasions as the Brussels league against imperialism in 1927 where he met among others. On his subsequent trip to Moscow, Nehru was exposed to European ideas while retaining his Indian roots.¹⁵⁹

Fabian socialist views and an increasingly anti-colonialist position did not mean that Nehru would be allowed to entirely break with his cultural traditions. The general marriage patterns in the Nehru household support a predominantly secular approach.¹⁶⁰ Regarding "religious communalism as a cancer that needed to be erased from India," and thinking that "Hindu communalism as the Indian version of fascism,"¹⁶¹ Nehru was adamant not to have a religious funeral. Despite his emphatic wishes, Indira gave him religious rites.

Mahatma Gandhi posed a threat to both the Westernised intelligentsia and the traditional Hindu elites. His threat to Hinduism extended to both the Brahman and the Kashatriya castes. Mahatma Gandhi was a threat because through his synthesis of concepts drawn from both Hinduism and the West, he sought to make India's periphery the centre of Hindu politics. This was not in either the interest of the Westernised or the Hindu elites. He sought to achieve a just transformation of society by politicising the periphery of Hindu society, its rural peasants and Harijans, while also

¹⁵⁹ Jawaharlal Nehru, *An Autobiography: With Musings on Recent Events in India*, (London: John Lane, The Bodley Head, 1936), pp. 161-5.

¹⁶⁰ Jawaharlal's sisters married outside the Kashmiri Brahmin fold. Two of Indira Gandhi's cousins married Muslims, while another married a Hungarian Jew. Indira herself married a Parsi though she did have a religious marriage ceremony.

¹⁶¹ The term "communalism" is laden with meanings. Gyanendra Pandey has identified the term as being "part of the colonialist knowledge." In this study the term is used as it is commonly in India. Pandey has defined the Indian usage of the term to refer "to a condition of suspicion, fear and hostility between members of different religious communities." The term is not thought of as limited to use in South Asia in the authors view. It is also some times used in reference in the context of ethnic communities as well religious. Gyanendra Pandey, *The Construction of Comunalism in North India*, (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1992), p. 6. The quote is drawn from Tariq Ali, *An Indian Dynasty: The Story of the Nehru-Gandhi Family*, (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1985), p. 108.

seeking to deintellectualise politics. This threat put Mahatma Gandhi's interests in opposition to the elites once the binding goal of independence from British colonial rule had been lifted. Of the two centres of power, Gandhi's views posed a greater threat to the traditional Hindu elites. While the periphery were being mobilised against imperialism, they were also becoming politically active to the extent that their new-found power of mass action had given them a degree of self-awareness that threatened to "remould the entire cultural stratarchy within Hinduism."¹⁶²

On 30 January 1948, Nathuram Vinayak Godse shot Mahatma Gandhi dead while he was on his way to pray. Godse was part of a conspiracy that perceived the threat which Gandhi posed to their traditional value structure. Godse was a member of the Chitpavans, who, through the combination of Brahmin prerogatives with the martial traditions of the Kashatriyas, represented a synthesis of the two dominate castes of Hindu society. These Maharashtrian Brahmins also had a long history of struggle against the Muslim overlords of Hindu India.

[B]y the beginning of the twentieth century, the Maharashtrian Brahmins had reinterpreted their history in terms of the needs of Hindu nationalism. They saw themselves as the upholders of a tradition of Hindu resistance against the Muslim occupation of India.¹⁶³

By emphasising Ahimsa, Gandhi went against the martial values of the Kashatriyas, and due to their unique history, the Chitpavans. This theme has also been discussed by the influential Indian diplomat and geopolitical thinker, K.M. Panikkar:¹⁶⁴

Our vision has been obscured by an un-Indian wave of pacifism. *Ahimsa* is no doubt a great religious creed, but that is a creed which India rejected when she refused to follow

¹⁶² Ashis Nandy, *At the Edge of Psychology: Essays in Politics and Culture*, (Bombay: Oxford University Press, 1980), p. 72

¹⁶³ Ashis Nandy, *At the Edge of Psychology*, p. 77

¹⁶⁴ K.M. Panikkar was India's Ambassador to China, Egypt and France during the period 1948 to 1959. Many aspects of his policy recommendations seem to be taken seriously by elements within the decision-making elite in Delhi. One suggestion, which was not pursued, was his recommendation that India create an independant Tibetan state during the Chinese civil war. See Nihal Singh, *The Yogi and the Bear*, (London: Mansell Publishing Ltd., 1986), p. 11.

Gautama Buddha. The Hindu theory at all times, especially in the periods of India's historic greatness was one of active assertion of rights, if necessary through force of arms.¹⁶⁵

Godse was a member of the Hindu Mahasabha and the Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh. These groups sought to articulate a Hindu revival based on values which emphasised the Kashatriya traditions. Because he felt that the Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh (RSS) was not sufficiently militant, Godse broke away to form his own organisation, the Hindu Rashtra Dal. The Dal sought to make Hinduism powerful through the renunciation of the synthetic and accommodating aspects of the religion, in favour of an organised and ideologically closed religion, oriented for self preservation and defence.

The religious and ideological background of Mahatma Gandhi's assassin is important for exposing the limits of the freedom struggles' appeal to more traditional Indian elites. It also demonstrates the presence of the realist element in the Indian political milieu, though during this phase it was subordinate to the idealists, as represented by Mahatma Gandhi and to a lesser extent Jawaharlal Nehru. While the Mahatma synthesized elements of Hinduism and Christianity to revolutionise politics in India, Nehru brought Western secular values to bear. Both ran counter to the basically conservative nature of traditional Hinduism, and have encountered stiff opposition because of that.

The extent to which the government felt threatened by these conservative values, even at the peak of India's idealism in the immediate post-independence phase, is marked by the suppression of the comments made by Godse at his trial. These were not made public at the time for fear that they would inflame the communal situation and lead to sympathy for the cause of Godse.

I felt that the Indian politics in the absence of Gandhiji would surely be practical, able to retaliate, and would be powerful with the armed forces... People may even call me and dub me as devoid of any sense or foolish, but the nation would be free to

¹⁶⁵ K.M. Panikkar, *India and the Indian Ocean*, p. 16.

follow the course founded on reason which I consider to be necessary for sound nation building.¹⁶⁶

This perception that the idealism of the freedom struggle is no longer suitable for the establishment of a strong Hindu India has come to the forefront of contemporary Indian politics in the 1990s. In this way, Godse's trial speech foreshadows the decline of the idealism of Gandhi and Nehru, and the rise of the realpolitik of Hindu fundamentalism. As this cycle turns, so too may it in time return to a more tolerant incarnation of the state.

The idealistic values of Gandhi and Nehru have slowly been eroded by the course of Indian history since independence. This erosion is a consequence of a gradual reassertion of traditional Hindu values as they have come to be reinterpreted in such a way as to emphasise the Kashatriya aspect. This can be viewed as a reaction to the more tolerant and accommodating aspects of the Brahman tradition which Gandhi synthesized into his message. These internal social and political processes have had a direct effect on the way in which India has engaged its international environment. The political culture which stems from the larger culture is directly linked to the formulation of external relations. This is effected through the perceptions of the elites who occupy the decision-making structure as well as by the general political milieu that influences the political process in a less direct sense.

Indian foreign policy towards China began with the idealistic principles of Panchsheel, and concluded with the perception of the necessity of a realpolitik approach. India militarily occupied Ladakh in 1948. This, and rivalry over Sikkim, Bhutan, Nepal and Tibet, threatened China, who responded with the annexation of Tibet in the late 1950s out of fear for its lines of communication with its western province of Sinkiang. China accused India of supporting the Khampa rebels from a base at Kalimpong in India.¹⁶⁷ After the suppression of the rebellion, the Dalai Lama was given

¹⁶⁶Ashis Nandy, *At the Edge of Psychology*, p. 83

¹⁶⁷Noor Hussein, "India's Regional Policy: Strategic and Security Dimensions," in Stephen Cohen, *The Security of South Asia*, pp. 37-40.

refuge in India.¹⁶⁸ This support has now turned full circle with India being careful not to be perceived by China as supporting the Tibetan's cause.

India's manner of dealing with China over both the outstanding border dispute and the issue of Tibet was a turning point of Indian foreign policy. Having tried the policy of Panchsheela to no avail India increasingly turned to more realpolitik approaches. With defeat in 1962 came the more pragmatic conclusion that idealism needed to be supported by the force of arms.

It is unlikely that India was ignorant of the CIA's and the Kuomintang's India-based support for the Khampa rebels.¹⁶⁹ During his visit to Delhi in November of 1956, Chou En-lai complained to Nehru that the Tibetan resistance was receiving support from abroad through the Tibetan community relocated in Kalimpong, that they were led by the Dalai Lama's brother.¹⁷⁰ Nehru felt obliged in a statement before the Rajya Sabha in 1959 to dismiss accusations that the Tibetans and Khampas were operating out of Kalimpong and Mussorie on Indian territory.¹⁷¹ While India may not have wished to be associated with the rebels (as it was promoting the policy of Panchsheela), this decision was the idealist component of a dual track policy of dealing with China. With the shift to the forward policy, support for the Khampas may have been initiated at a higher level of Indian involvement. In this, India would have been joining the CIA, KGB and the

¹⁶⁸ See "Prime Minister's Statement on the Situation in Tibet 4/27/59." in Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, *The Chinese Threat*, (Delhi: Government of India Press, 1964), p.75. This is also an excellent source for Indian maps of the Sino-Indian border.

¹⁶⁹ "Topay Pangdatshang began to smuggle recruits for training out of Tibet. [sometime after 1955] These recruits would mix up with smuggler caravans, proceed to Gauhati, and on to Calcutta from where CIA or KMT chartered civilian airplanes would slip them out under the very noses of Indian intelligence." The rebellion spanned the years 1955 to 1974. IDR Research Team, "The Tibetan Rebellion," *Indian Defence Review*, July, 1988, p. 70.

¹⁷⁰ Subimal Dutt, *With Nehru in the Foreign Office*, (Calcutta: Minerva Publications, 1977), pp. 140-43.

¹⁷¹ "Of course we are charged with as having connived at Kalimpong; of Kalimpong being the commanding centre -this is the word they used, I think- of this rebellion in Tibet I know words have lost their meaning because I find it very difficult to deal with these charges." J. Nehru, "The Prime Minister's Statement Before the Rajya Sabha on the Situation in Tibet, May 4th 1959," as reprinted in External Publicity Division, Ministry of External Affairs, *Prime Minister on Sino-Indian Relations*, (New Delhi: Government of India Press, statements from the period March 1959 to April 1961), p. 43.

Kuomintang.¹⁷² Michael Pissels is of the opinion that Indian support began after the 1962 war. It is likely that India was giving at least the minimum support of the use of their territory from an earlier date.¹⁷³

By following the details of Indian position on Tibet and the border, we can see the gradual development of the decision to abandon the policy of Panchsheela in favour of the more realpolitik practices of the forward policy. In this, the post 1962 metamorphosis was presaged by events beginning in the late 1950s. Since this period the idealism of Panchsheela was focussed on the Non-Aligned Movement. Despite this emphasis on NAM, Indian foreign policy is increasingly realist in character and less idealist inspired.

The importance of the above review of the Sino-Indian relationship is not to condemn India for its position on the border, or for its support of the Tibetans, but to demonstrate that India was not adverse to shifting its international paradigm by returning to the geopolitical intrigues that it inherited from the Raj. This it did in response to a threat to its territorial integrity. Tibet would, in all likelihood, have found a larger degree of autonomy under Indian rule than it has under the Chinese. Despite articulating the policy of Panchsheela in 1954, India was wary of China's influence in the Asia-Pacific region. The communist take-over of Tibet made this evident to India in 1950. China's "conciliatory approach towards Western-aligned Pakistan" at the Bandung Afro-Asian Conference in 1955 made India more suspicious of China's motives.¹⁷⁴ A further example of India's assertive realist approach is that of Goa.

In December of 1961, Indian forces incorporated the former Portuguese Colonies of Goa, Daman and Diu within Indian territory. This action ended

¹⁷² V. Marchetti and Marks, *The CIA and the Cult of Intelligence*, (London: Jonathan Cape Publishers, 1974), pp. 116,146 and Michael Pissels, *The Cavaliers of Kham: The Secret War in Tibet*, (London: Heinaman Publishers, 1972), p. 234. Pissels states that by 1966 Khampa exiles were "being openly recruited and incorporated into special Indian brigades armed in part by Russia." p. 234. See also Neville Maxwell, *India's China War*, p. 104.

¹⁷³ Michael Pissels, *The Cavaliers of Kham*;, pp. 200-1. For further information on the rebellion which led to the death of 1.2 million Tibetans see George Patterson, *Requiem for Tibet*, (London: Arum Press, 1990) and George Patterson, *Tibet in Revolt*, (London: Faber and Faber, 1960).

¹⁷⁴ For a copy of the Text of the Asian-African Conference Final Communique see *Foreign Policy of India: Text of Documents*, (New Delhi: Lok Sabha Secretariat, 1959), p.173.

almost 500 years of Portuguese presence in India. Goa is similarly important to demonstrate the existence of the realist political side of Indian politics, even in its early idealistic phase. In a letter to Nehru of 14 December 1961 President Kennedy strongly appealed to Prime Minister Nehru to refrain from the use of force as a means to resolve the dispute. Ambassador Galbraith called on the foreign secretary numerous times in the lead-up to the action of 17 December, seeking to persuade India from resorting to force as a means of resolution. The United States promised to help India by organising pressure against Portugal to give up the colonies on the subcontinent. Nehru proceeded with the knowledge that the military action would tarnish India's image. Through the action, India asserted the legitimisation of the means by reference to the ends of the elimination of colonialism in India. This pragmatic approach ran counter to the idealist strain as handed down by the Mahatma. In the following remark by Nehru we can see his awareness of both elements of foreign policy:

I hope there is nothing immoral about the part I have played in our foreign policy. In any case, I want no moralizing, especially about this. We should use our good sense as much as possible. Idealism alone will not do. What exactly is idealism? Surely it is not something so insubstantial as to elude one's grasp! Idealism is the realism of tomorrow...The practical person, the realist, looks at the tip of his nose and sees little beyond; the result is that he is stumbling all the time.¹⁷⁵

The 1962 war with China brought these conflicting visions into focus. A more realist outlook was to be the result of the second period of transition.

21.3 The second transition: 1962 to 1969; the 1962 and 1965 border wars with China and Pakistan, introspective transition, and the metamorphosis of India's self-image

Prior to the 1962 border war, India had, by pursuing the policy of Panchsheela, avoided significant defence expenditure. During this period, India was not spending sufficiently on defence to support its international position. To bring defence in line with India's desired posture, military

¹⁷⁵ Jawaharlal Nehru, from a reply to debate in the Parliament 12/7/50 as reproduced in *India's Foreign Policy: Select Speeches, Sept. 1946-April 1961*. (Delhi: The Publications Division of the Government of India, 1961).

expenditure grew by a significant 133% from 1960 to 1965.¹⁷⁶ Once established, the trend in increasing defence expenditure has been generally continued.

To a large extent, the failure of Indian diplomacy over the Chinese frontier was due to the sycophantic character of the decision making structure. This in itself, as Richard Ned Lebow has pointed out, is not enough to fully explain the reasons for India's inability to read the signals China was sending India over its decision to pursue a forward policy on the border question.¹⁷⁷ The excessive optimism of Nehru and the Indian decision-making elite, was made possible by their self-perceived image of India having a special relationship with the Chinese. Through Panchsheel India perceived itself as the embodiment of a new morality of politics based on the Upanishadic value of Ahimsa as manifested through Gandhian Satyagraha and Nehruvian non-alignment. This self-image of moral rectitude was responsible for India's indulgence in dangerous levels of wishful thinking vis a vis China, which culminated in its defeat in the Himalayas. The disillusionment that ensued as a result of the 1962 war began a process of transformation, both of India's image of itself and how it perceived the external environment. This transformation was to de-emphasize idealist conceptions of foreign policy in favour of realist ones. These images and perceptions are still evolving.

The circumstances of Indian involvement in Tibet influenced the Chinese decision to attack in 1962. Despite the long and convoluted history of the border between the British Raj, Tibet and China, the new communist regime of China began the process of integrating Tibet into its national territory when they marched into Tibet on 7 October 1950 and defeated the

¹⁷⁶ G.L.Wood, "Civil Military Relations in Post Colonial India," p. 274.

¹⁷⁷ R.N. Lebow attributes the cognitive closure among Indian strategic planners, which led to the 1962 debacle, to three interrelated causal factors. Lebow interprets the politicisation of the decision making bureaucracy, the wishful thinking on the part of Nehru and the decision making elite and the national self image of India as all combining to form a perceptual distortion which lead to the misinterpretation of the Chinese reaction to the forward policy. Richard Ned Lebow, *Between Peace and War: The Nature of International Crisis*, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981), pp. 222-8

small Tibetan army at Chambo.¹⁷⁸ With this, the Tibetan government collapsed.

Despite Zhou Enlai's visit, and the signing of a Sino-Indian Agreement on Tibet in April of 1954,¹⁷⁹ which recognised Tibet as part of China, tensions continued to mount. After the meeting, Zhou Enlai stated, "the talks did not result in resolving the differences that had arisen."¹⁸⁰ China began border incursions into Indian claimed territory in July and August of 1954. Communist reforms subsequently led the Tibetans to revolt in 1956. The Gartok to Yarkand road was begun at approximately the same time. The positive atmospherics of the Zhou Enlai visit did not prevent the Chinese from pursuing a strong position on the ground. This is to be remembered when considering the positive atmosphere that started to develop between the two countries after 1987.

In July of 1958, the Chinese made another incursion into Ladakh at Khurnak, where they arrested an Indian patrol. In August and October of 1959, Chinese troops opened fire on Indian patrols near the Longju in the NEFA, and at the Kongan Pass, killing nine. By 1959, the revolt peaked with the shelling of the Potala palace in Lhasa, and the departure of the Dalai Lama and 14,000 of his followers to India. On 22 April 1959, the Chinese *Peoples Daily* accused the Indian Government of expansionist ambitions, and of being responsible for the rebellion in Tibet.¹⁸¹ The Nehru-Chou En Lai summit of 1960 failed to resolve the issue.

This then led India to adopt the forward policy. By mid-1962, India had established over forty new border posts in Ladakh. By July, the clashes started to build to the massive Chinese attacks on 20 October. Nehru then appealed to the United States and Britain for assistance, and the Chinese announced their unilateral withdrawal. Poor relations continued for some time after this.

¹⁷⁸ Jamyang Norbu, *The Warriors of Tibet: The Story of Aten and the Khampas Fight*, (Dharamsala: Central Tibetan Secretariat, 1979), p. 80.

¹⁷⁹ The Lok Sabha Secretariat, "Sino-Indian Agreement on Tibet," in *Foreign Policy of India: Text of Documents*, (New Delhi: Government of India Press, 1959), p. 101.

¹⁸⁰ G.P. Deshpande, "China, An Unfriendly Neighbour," *World Focus*, Nov./Dec. 1987, p. 65.

¹⁸¹ A. Appadorai and M.S. Rajan, *India's Foreign Policy and Relations*, p. 127.

In 1979 External Affairs Minister Vajpayee was in Beijing discussing China's support for the Naga and Mizo insurgents¹⁸² when China launched a border war against Vietnam. The parallel with 1962, and the timing, indicate that it was also meant as a message to India. Evidence of India's return to the forward policy on the border began in 1984/5 with Intelligence Bureau patrols up to the border areas.¹⁸³ In 1987, tensions once again mounted to high levels.¹⁸⁴ Over 400,000 troops were mobilised by India and China in the Sumdorong Chu area of Arunachal Pradesh and across the border in Tibet. Tensions were apparently abated by the visit of Rajiv Gandhi to Beijing in 1988.¹⁸⁵ This confidence was reassured by Chinese Premier Li Peng's visit to Delhi in December of 1991,¹⁸⁶ and Indian Defence Minister Pawar's visit to Peking in July of 1992.

Such a treatment of the progression of the border dispute provides the historical context of Indo-Chinese relations. India's support for the Dalai Lama was interpreted as a challenge to China's claims on Tibet. To China India's involvement was an expansionist move. The border war was meant to send India the message not to seek to extend its influence into China's sphere of influence.

The 1962 border war with China was a consequence of Indian misperceptions of how China would react to its advances. These misperceptions stemmed from a decision-making process which led to intelligence inputs which reinforced the perceptions of the political leadership, irrespective of independent accounts of events as they transpired. This tendency was a direct result of the politician's concern that the military be under firm political control. These perceptual distortions, when

¹⁸² A. Appadorai and M.S. Rajan, *India's Foreign Policy and Relations*, p. 618.

¹⁸³ Ravi Rikhye, *The Militarisation of Mother India*, (New Delhi: Chanakya Publishers, 1990), p. 17.

¹⁸⁴ Manoj Joshi, "Quiet Activity on Border," *The Hindu*, 5/26/87, and Mohan Malik, "Tensions Reduced but Settlement distant," *The Pacific Defence Reporter*, July 1988, pp. 28,30.

¹⁸⁵ Since the visit India has removed three of its eleven mountain divisions from the border area. Reportedly China has reciprocated. Dilip Mukerjee, "India After the Cold War," *The Far Eastern Economic Review*, p. 19.

¹⁸⁶ This was the first visit since that of Chou En Lai in 1960. Christopher Thomas, "Li's Delhi Visit First in 31 Years," *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 11/27/91.

combined with unrealistic political objectives, triggered the Chinese response.

In 1960, Nehru and his advisers decided to adopt a forward policy on the Indo-Chinese border. The first attempts to implement this policy in 1961 were resisted by elements within the military. The most outspoken critics were replaced by "men who lacked the courage to oppose Nehru's foolhardy policy."¹⁸⁷ This situation was created by the rise of Brij Mohan Kaul, a favourite of Nehru and Krishna Menon, to the Chief of General Staff. Kaul surrounded himself with sycophants, and undermined those who did not support his policies. By so doing, the potential for intelligence feedback, which would have opened the possibility for the decision makers to re-evaluate their policy as it began to founder, did not arise. Outnumbered, and operating at as far forward a position as possible, the soldiers of Nehru's forward policy became something more than a Satyagraha and something less than a military manoeuvre.

India's experience in the 1965 war with Pakistan also served to reinforce the perceived utility of an expanded military. As India expanded its military Pakistan feared that a window of opportunity for confronting India would be closing. After a period of rising tension in the Rann of Kutch fighting erupted in Kashmir. The result of the war was to teach Pakistan the limits of its position with India.

The parameters of debate over the national identity have shifted away from the idealistic notions which were dominant prior to the 1962 war. India's pre-1962 mantle of sanctimony, based on its moral principles of non-violence and non-alignment, have been tarnished by the wars of 1962, 1965 and 1971, the on-going internal communalist violence, mercenary politics, military alliance and intervention, and the corruption of its leaders. Though 1962 was a resounding defeat for India, it did serve as a catalyst for the implementation of reforms and programmes which have subsequently strengthened the Indian state. The intelligence disaster precipitated reviews of intelligence gathering, which began the process of reorganisation of

¹⁸⁷ R.N. Lebow, *Between Peace and War*, p. 166

intelligence collection, processing and analysis. While these reforms have not substantially changed the subordination of the military to political control, they have become cognisant of the need to effectively gather and analyse intelligence on an increasingly expanded basis. The creation and expansion of the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) activities has, with mixed results, sought to address India's past intelligence failures. The speed with which Panchsheel collapsed highlighted the necessity of backing diplomatic initiatives with military strength.

21.4 The second period of growth: 1969 to 1977, Indira, the 1971 Bangladesh war and the new regionalism

The uncertainty of the late-1960s gave way to a second phase of external engagement. The rise of Indira Gandhi in 1969, and the implementation of the Indira doctrine in South Asia, led India to assert itself within its immediate region. The 1971 war with Pakistan over Bangladesh established India's predominance in the region. The absorption of Sikkim in 1974-76, like Junagadh, Hyderabad and Goa before, can be viewed as part of the drive to establish India's territorial integrity in the subcontinent. The domestic turmoil following the emergency of 1975, and the subsequent Janata rule, from 1977 to 1979, created a transitional period between the regionalism of the 1970s and India's flirtation with extra-regional expansionism under Indira, and later under Rajiv after her death.

Following on from her defeat of the Syndicate in 1971, Indira's mandate from the people gave her the confidence necessary to deal with events in Bangladesh in a bold fashion. Fifteen days after the March 1971 election results were tallied, the new Congress Government was tested by events unfolding in East Pakistan. Congress gained 352, of 518 seats, in that election. Indira's electoral success was based on her campaign of Gharibi Hatao (remove poverty). There was fear that the Communists might gain the upper hand over the Awami League in East Pakistan, and that as a result, West Bengal would be drawn away from India by the prospect of reunification of Bengal.¹⁸⁸ While Indira had made substantial gains in the

¹⁸⁸ R. Sisson and L. Rose, *War and Secession*, p. 179.

elections, so too had the Communist Party of India (Marxist). They had increased their representation in Parliament from 19 to 25 seats.

With her electoral mandate Indira actively engaged the situation, and turned this minor potential threat into an opportunity to deal with Pakistan conclusively. Indira first sought to secure international support for her plan by traveling abroad. During Indira's visit to the Soviet Union in September, she was successful in gaining Soviet guarantees for her proposed line of action. The necessary prerequisite support Indira found in the 1971 Treaty of Peace and Friendship with the Soviet Union. This ensured a counter to any moves that China or the United States would make against India's initiative.¹⁸⁹ The Soviets vetoed three cease fire motions in the security council. The Soviets assured India that an attack by the Chinese would be diverted by a Soviet action in Xinjiang. Reportedly, the Soviet Ambassador in Nepal told the Chinese Ambassador that any action would be countered.¹⁹⁰

After the fall of Dacca, and the collapse of Pakistani resistance in East Pakistan, Indira called an emergency meeting of Cabinet. Reportedly, Indira describes the sentiment of the Cabinet Ministers as insisting "that the war be fought to a finish [and that India should proceed to] crush the enemy permanently." This view was echoed by the military high command, where they "choked and spluttered" at the idea of having to halt their plans for the total defeat of Pakistan.¹⁹¹ The reason for her hesitance in the face of overwhelming support of her Cabinet and military high command, and her own desires to carry the war to a conclusive victory, are most plausibly explained by limits to the Soviet guarantee. American President Nixon and Secretary of State Kissinger had used the cancelling of arms negotiations as a

¹⁸⁹ According to Henry Kissinger, Indira had aimed at the liberation of Azad Kashmir and the destruction of the West Pakistan State and that the Soviets had promised to take appropriate counter action to any Chinese "sabre rattling." Henry Kissinger, *White House Years*, (Boston: Little, Brown and Co. 1979), p. 901.

¹⁹⁰ Jack Anderson, *The Anderson Papers*, (New York: Random House, 1973) as referenced in Ramesh Thakur and Carlyle Thayer, *Soviet Relations with India and Vietnam*, (London: Macmillan, 1992), p. 37. During the Great Game Russia had been involved in numerous attempts to annex Kashgaria and other parts of Xinkiang.

¹⁹¹ The above two quotes by Indira Gandhi were drawn from an interview with Tariq Ali in January of 1984. T.Ali, *An Indian Dynasty*, p. 175.

means of convincing the Soviets to exert pressure on the Indians to stop their plans of invasion of West Pakistan.¹⁹²

This brinkmanship, further developed with the sailing of the United States Enterprise Carrier Battle Group into the Bay of Bengal, forced the Soviets to modify their support, which Indira thought she had secured. As a result India had to back down from designs on Azad Kashmir and the West of Pakistan. Unbeknownst to the Soviets, or the Indians for that matter, Pakistan was at that time of extreme importance to the United States because of its role in the Nixon initiative to open a dialogue with China. "Pakistan was our only channel to China; we had no other means of communicating with Peking."¹⁹³ India's hesitation before Lahore marked a halt to significant military advances and plans to carry the war with Pakistan to a final conclusion. Indira's decision not to carry on the fight to a conclusive victory in West Pakistan would seem to have been made in reaction to the Soviet guarantee having been redefined, and limited to, support of Indian moves in the East as a result of American protestations of further attacks against West Pakistan.

American support for Pakistan's continued existence was intimately involved with the global geopolitical correlation of power. In 1971, the United States was in the process of trying to disengage from the Vietnam War. As such it was necessary to prevent the appearance that American security guarantees had been irrevocably undermined by the Vietnam experience. At the same time, Pakistan was serving as the back channel for playing the China option.

On 23 November 1971, General Yahya Khan informed Washington that the Indian military had gained the upper hand in East Pakistan. It was on the same day that Kissinger had his first secret meeting with the Chinese permanent representative to the United Nations, Huang Hua in New York.

¹⁹² J. Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), p. 300.

¹⁹³ The channel to China had been opened, after signals in the media, by President Nixon through President Yahya Khan whom he met in Washington on October 25th, and by Chou En-lai who similarly conveyed a desire to open communication through a message which he entrusted to President Khan while he was visiting Peking between November 10th and the 15th of 1970. H. Kissinger, *White House Years*, pp. 699-701, 913.

Kissinger was concerned to re-establish America's credentials as an international power.

We strove to preserve *West* Pakistan as an independent state, since we judged India's real aim was to encompass its disintegration. We sought to prevent a demonstration that Soviet arms and diplomatic support were inevitably decisive in crises.¹⁹⁴

To have allowed India to destroy Pakistan would have marked a further significant blow to America's international geopolitical situation. In this way the Bay of Bengal incident, from the American perspective at the time, is best understood as being ultimately aimed at sending the USSR a signal of American resolve, as opposed to a move specifically designed to undermine India's position. This hypothesis is supported by the subsequent improvement of relations between the United States and India in the wake of Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan and the subcontinent. The victory over Pakistan earned Indira the image of Durga, the Hindu goddess of war. Indira, however, was to have more difficulty in raising her image to that of a deity with regards to domestic issues.

Indira's success in centralizing policy making under her personal control leads us to focus on Indira, and the office of the Prime Minister and cabinet, as we seek to understand India. Indira's psychological profile was such that she sought power "primarily as an instrument in the service of self-defined national goal attainment which would satisfy ultimately her need for esteem and self-fulfillment."¹⁹⁵ Indira's need to assert herself to sustain her self esteem helps explain the perception of India as a status-seeking power. Indira was not guided by a firm ideological conviction as was her father.

¹⁹⁴ H. Kissinger, *White House Years*, pp. 886-7.

¹⁹⁵ Y. Malik, "Indira Gandhi: Personality, Political Power and Party Politics," in Y. Malik and D. Vajpeyi *India: The Years of Indira Gandhi*, p. 9. It is of interest that Indira Gandhi's role model early in life was Joan of Arc.

India's national interest is with independent decision-making in international affairs, economic development at home, and the exclusion of India and its neighbourhood in southern Asia and the Indian Ocean from either the American or the Soviet sphere of influence.¹⁹⁶

The decline of Indira's popularity, her imposition of emergency rule, and the excesses of her heir apparent, Sanjay Gandhi, all led to her electoral defeat by the Janata coalition. This domestic change had implications for India's external posture. The internal turmoil and transition weakened India's external position. Once the Janata government was in power it sought to reinterpret the direction of Indian foreign policy as articulated by Indira.

21.5 The third transition: 1977 to 1980, the Janata Government

The Janata Government was a creation of the leading non-communist opposition parties. They joined forces in the wake of The Emergency, together with defectors from the Congress Party, to oust Congress and Indira Gandhi from office. This alliance was one of convenience for the mutually shared goal of ousting Indira. Its ideology, borrowed from Charan Singh and the Socialists, was to include self sufficiency, agrarian values and small scale industry, in addition to the agenda of the restoration of the civil liberties which had been suspended. Other than the binding objective of gaining office, there was little that stood to keep these divergent parties bound to one another after they were successful in removing Indira. The infighting between Charan Singh and Morarji Desai, over the Prime Minister's chair, eventually broke the coalition in July of 1979. At that point, Charan Singh of the Lok Dal, a Jat from Uttar Pradesh, who represented the backward and middle peasant proprietor castes, replaced Morarji Desai for three weeks to become India's fifth Prime Minister before elections were called. The elections led to the return of Indira as Prime Minister in 1980.

¹⁹⁶ Surjit Mansingh, "India and the Superpowers: 1966-84," in Y. Malik and D. Vajpeyi, *India: The Years of Indira Gandhi*, p. 133.

While the departures of Janata rule are significant enough to warrant conceptualizing the period as one of transition, these departures were not radical departures from the overall consensus of foreign policy, they were adjustments. Morarji Desai, a Gujarati Brahmin, who was unanimously elected to lead the Janata coalition government, was himself a "product of the Congress culture."¹⁹⁷ He held the finance portfolio, and was Deputy Prime Minister under Nehru and Indira Gandhi. Indira had jailed Desai for his opposition to her policies during the emergency. In domestic and international politics, the era of Janata rule was inspired by a view that India needed to be put back on track. On the domestic scene, this involved a return to civil liberties and press freedom, while on the international scene, it was to entail a return to "true non-alignment."

It was felt by the Janata coalition that India, under Indira, had drifted too far into the Soviet camp under the Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation, signed in August of 1971. The Soviets had made their preference clear in the run-up to the elections, as *Izvestia* had labeled the Janata coalition as "a reactionary conglomeration supported by the imperialists."¹⁹⁸ Once in office, Foreign Minister A. B. Vajpayee sought to reassure the apprehensive Soviets. What the new government was seeking was a policy that would allow them to be both close with the Soviets without being prevented from equally establishing contacts with the West. To reassure the Soviets of this, Desai travelled to the Soviet Union in October of 1977. This was followed by the meeting of the fourth session of the Indo-Soviet Joint Commission on Economic, Scientific and Technical Cooperation, headed by Foreign Minister A. B. Vajpayee and Deputy Prime Minister Arkhipov, which concluded a long term cooperative agreement.¹⁹⁹

There was a sense of optimism surrounding the return to "true non-alignment" with regard to relations with the West, in part because it was felt that the administration of President Jimmy Carter, with its emphasis on

¹⁹⁷ Craig Baxter, Y. K. Malik, C. H. Kennedy and R. C. Orberst, *Government and Politics in South Asia*, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1987).

¹⁹⁸ *Izvestia* as quoted in A. Appadorai and M. S. Rajan *India's Foreign Policy and Relations*, (New Delhi: South Asian Publishers, 1985), p. 603.

¹⁹⁹ A. Appadorai and M.S. Rajan, *India's Foreign Policy and Relations*, p. 604.

human rights, would be sympathetic to the needs of India. The visit to India of Deputy Secretary of State, Warren Christopher, in July of 1977, and the return visit by Foreign Minister Vajpayee to Washington in September of that year set the stage for improved relations. During President Carter's visit to India in January of 1978, some improvements to the relationship were made by the Indo-US joint Commission. The Carter visit was in turn followed by Desai's visit to Washington in June of 1978. As a result, United States (US) assistance, which had been suspended during the 1971 war, was resumed. Despite these gains, American concern remained over India's nuclear programme. The issue centred on the supply of enriched uranium to the Tarapur reactor which the Desai government saw the US as having committed to supplying regardless of the provisions of the US Nuclear Non-Proliferation Act of 1978.

In relation to states closer to home, there was a genuine effort by the Janata Government to come to terms on a more equitable basis than had been the case under Indira's Congress Government. This A. Appadorai has labeled the "Good Neighbour Policy." "Thus, even at the cost of seeming conciliatory or even if at times at some 'loss' to India, outstanding problems with neighbouring countries were mutually resolved."²⁰⁰ The Indo-Bangladesh agreement, on the sharing of the waters of the Ganga river at Farakka signed in Dacca in November of 1977, as well as the April 1978 agreement with Pakistan on the Salal hydro-electric plant, and the policy of non-interference, are examples of the Good Neighbour Policy.²⁰¹

The Janata Government's overtures to the Chinese did not fare as well as others. While Foreign Minister Vajpayee had gone to China in the hope of resolving lingering border disputes between the two countries, China decided to use his visit to send a message. The visit coincided with its punitive border war with Vietnam in 1979. On 18 February, Desai expressed his shock over the Chinese invasion while Vajpayee was still in China. The parallel with 1962 could not have been unintended. The Chinese action in

²⁰⁰ A. Appadorai and M.S. Rajan, *India's Foreign Policy and Relations*, p. 610.

²⁰¹ Statement of A. B. Vajpayee before the Lok Sabha in the *Foreign Affairs Record*, July 5 1977, p. 130.

Vietnam indicates, as A. Appadorai observed, that China did not accept the Janata government's independence from the Soviet sphere. It was a further demonstration of China's determination to resist what it saw as its geopolitical encirclement by the Soviet Union and its allies. During these talks, India had raised its concerns with China over the construction of the Karakorum highway. This, along with Chinese support for Northeast insurgents and continuing occupation of the Aksai Chin area against the protests of India, made China's motives in the region suspect.²⁰²

Charan Singh was ambitious to become Prime Minister. He felt that he had been cheated of the position by the selection of Morarji Desai by unanimous vote at the insistence of Jaya Prakash Narayan. This eventually led to his defection along with other disaffected members of the Janata coalition. With the support of the Congress party he was able to assert his brief control of Parliament. His dreams of being Prime Minister were short lived. The Janata coalition was split as Congress removed its support, and as a result, Prime Minister Charan Singh had to go to the polls. This tactic of splitting the opposition was later employed by Rajiv in strikingly similar circumstances in 1991, when Chandra Shekhar broke from the Janata Dal. He too, would find Congress support to be fleeting.

While the Janata government experienced set backs in its attempt to redefine its notion of true non-alignment, in terms of its relations with the United States and China, it did experience a relative degree of success within its neighbourhood. To an extent this can be seen as an attempt to depart from the course which Congress had, under Indira, initiated. This departure was an attempt to return to India's earlier ideals rather than the growing assertive regionalism which had begun to emerge under Indira. Despite the

²⁰² While the old silk route is now referred to as "the Karakorum highway" the use of the term highway is indeed a misnomer. The highway, which works its way through some of the most inhospitable terrain in the world, is in reality a road which winds and twists its way up through the Himalaya from Pakistan to Sinkiang. From there it is linked to Tibet and the rest of China via Aksai Chin. This connecting section of road traverses the relatively better route through the high desert of Aksai Chin which the Chinese are loath to return to India. The Aksai Chin sector is 750 miles long and was completed in 1957. The Indians only discovered this in 1958. See Mahnaz Z. Isphahani, *Roads and Rivals: The Political Uses of Access in the Borderlands of Asia*, (Ithica: Cornell University Press, 1989), p. 168.

past record of Foreign Minister Vajpayee, it is uncertain that the moderate stance would be duplicated in a future non-Congress government.

21.6 The third period of growth: 1980-89: the Indira-Rajiv flirtation with communalism, expansionism and regional hegemony

With the return of Indira and Congress rule in the 1980s India exhibited external behaviour which was both assertive and in some aspects expansionistic. The perception that India was an expanding power in the 1980s is the outcome of demonstrations of both India's military capabilities and its willingness to use such capabilities in pursuit of its interests in the region. These incidents were a departure from previous international involvements in that they had the appearance of exhibiting a desire to more firmly establish India's preponderant influence in the immediate region and to venture beyond what has traditionally and conventionally been considered India's region. This expanded notion of what constitutes India's region is an example of the changing perceptions among the foreign policy elite, which would seem to indicate a continued desire, to expand India's international and regional posture. These issues will be discussed further in Chapter Four. Despite this growing desire, the present internal situation is forcing India to focus on domestic politics and to seek an accommodation with the international economic order.

The differences in Jawaharlal's and Indira's upbringing provides some insight into the differences in their style and substance as rulers of India. Jawaharlal was brought up by his father, Motilal Nehru, in a very Westernised Indian household. Through the influence of her mother Kamala, Indira was exposed to a more traditional outlook. Kamala, who had been given English lessons only after her engagement to Jawaharlal, saw to it that Indira "was not simply interested in religion, but also at home in India, unlike her aunts who had been brought up in a completely English style."²⁰³ During her schooling, Indira was equally happy with the International

²⁰³ Tariq Ali, *An Indian Dynasty*, p. 116. After her return from England Indira sought successfully to marry Feroze Gandhi who had been at University with her. After beginning their family in Lucknow, Indira eventually moved to Delhi to be close to her father. Feroze became a member of Parliament. Despite his move to Delhi, Indira and the children remained at Teen Murti house with Nehru.

School in Geneva and the Santiniketan Academy of Rabindranath Tagore. After attending the Badminton School in Bristol, Indira went on to Somerville College, Oxford.

While living with Nehru, Indira developed a degree of political acumen, which she eventually was to use in her own right. In 1957, she was elected to the party's central committee. In 1958, she advanced to the Congress Parliamentary Board, and in 1959, to the Presidency of the Party. Nehru's idealism motivated him to want to take part in the political process to see his values come to fruition. For Indira, being born into politics, it was a different matter. Indira was from the outset to demonstrate a proclivity for the pragmatic approach to politics rather than the idealistic.

This [the Congress demise of the CPI Government in Kerala] was a classic case of pragmatism before principles. Once it is accepted that power is to be held at all costs, then it becomes impossible to defend any basic principle. Secularism remains a paper pledge and communalism walks in through the back door, deliberately left unlocked.²⁰⁴

Indira Gandhi's deviation from the secularist path outlined by her father opened a Pandora's box from which communalist tendencies have re-emerged to threaten the very unity of post-independence India. Indira exchanged the idealistic vision of her father for a "power at any cost" approach to politics. In the words of Salman Rushdie, Indira Gandhi

was clearly suffering from the grandiloquent, l'etat-c'est moi delusions of a Louis XIV. Her cult of the mother -of Hindu mother goddess symbols and allusions- and of the idea of shakti, of the fact that the dynamic element of the Hindu pantheon is represented as female- was calculated and shrewd ...²⁰⁵

Indira lacked the intellect of Nehru, and also suffered from a psychological need to assert herself through politics to have a feeling of control over her

²⁰⁴ Tariq Ali, *An Indian Dynasty*, p. 140.

²⁰⁵ From Salman Rushdie's introduction to Tariq Ali, *An Indian Dynasty*, p. xv.

environment.²⁰⁶ By drawing on notions of Hindu identity, she brought religion, and hence divisive communalism, back into politics.

In the lead up to the 1985 elections, there was a distinct possibility that Indira Gandhi would not win an outright majority of the Lok Sabha seats. Her old election slogan of *garabi hatao* had not come to fruition. Having been unable to deliver on the issue of poverty, Indira was in need of a new election issue to be able to carve out a winning vote bank. To do this, "Indira Gandhi sought to mobilise support around the issue of Hindu versus Indian minorities."²⁰⁷ This marked the first time since independence that religious issues were politicised to this extent. For the reason of political expediency, Indira Gandhi was to threaten the very secularist vision of India which her father devoted his life to establish. These flirtations with communalist rhetoric and politics were further pursued by her son Rajiv when he assumed office upon her death. Indira's death was a direct result of the elevated position of religious politics which stemmed from her politics of expediency in the Punjab.

Rajiv Gandhi was not groomed to be the leader of India as was his brother Sanjay. Due to Sanjay's death in an air crash, and the assassination of his mother by Sikh security guards, Rajiv found himself thrust into the centre stage of Indian politics. One of Rajiv's assets was his status as a political outsider. As a result, he was not tainted in the public eye as a corrupt insider. The Indian public reacted sympathetically to Rajiv, and gave him an overwhelming vote of confidence in the election following Indira's assassination. This image only serves to highlight the depths to which Rajiv's administration sank in the US \$1.4 billion Bofors gun scandal. It was alleged that US \$38.4 million was paid out in commissions by Bofors to Indian officials to secure the deal.

²⁰⁶ Y. Malik and D. Vajpeyi discuss the Marxist and psychoanalytical critiques of Indira Gandhi's rule in *India: The Years of Indira Gandhi*. For a detailed discussion of the psychoanalytical perspective of Indira see Henry Hart, "Indira Gandhi: Determined not to be Hurt," in Henry Hart, ed. *Indira Gandhi's India*, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1976).

²⁰⁷ Atul Kohli, "From Majority to Minority Rule: Making Sense of the 'New' Indian Politics," in M. Bouton and P. Oldenburg, eds. *India Briefing, 1990*, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1990), p. 4.

Rajiv Gandhi, who won 77 percent of the seats in the Lok Sabha election of 1984, was not an ideologically inspired leader, but rather was thought of more as a technocrat and an innocent. Rajiv subsequently went on to link Indira's assertive regionalism with a new internationalism. Through this, India began the process of re-engaging the world beyond its immediate sphere, though in a different way than Nehru had done before. "What stands out as a vital strain in Rajiv Gandhi's psycho-personality is a thrust for integrated political architecture within India and the World abroad."²⁰⁸

Rajiv Gandhi's fall from power can in part be linked to his failure to balance the demands of communalism and events within the region. Rajiv Gandhi found himself caught between his inability to placate the increasingly mobilized Hindu fundamentalist sentiment and an atrophied level of support within the Muslim community. Congress, in its adoption of politically expedient policies under Indira Gandhi, broke with its past-inspired leadership of Nehru and failed to resist the temptation to opt for short-term political gains. In this way Congress can be held responsible for its own demise and the present instability of the country. This was competently and successfully exploited in 1991-92 by national and regional opposition parties across the Hindi belt. This was done by highlighting the Bofors scandal and orchestrating incidents at Ayodhya. These events served to undermine both Rajiv Gandhi's individual integrity as well as the legitimacy and appeal of the Congress party in general. A serious threat is being mounted against the secular nature of the Indian state by fundamentalism and caste politics. If this threat continues to grow secularism may find itself displaced. A divided India would serve to exacerbate an already destabilized security situation within South Asia.

21.7 The fourth transition: 1989- paralysis of the system

The key events of the fourth transition period, from 1989 to the present, stem from the three determinants of India's external posture.

²⁰⁸ This and the above quote are drawn from; Bhabani Sen Gupta, "At Ease With The World," *Seminar* 358, June 1989, p. 27. Rajiv Gandhi traveled to 48 countries in the first four years of his Prime Ministership.

Within the domestic sphere, the implementation of the Mandal Commission Report on increased reservations for backward castes, and the Babri-Masjid/Ramjanmboomi Temple at Ayodhya, dominated internal politics and contributed to continuing deteriorating relations between castes and religious groups. The geopolitical situation in Kashmir, Punjab and Assam continued to undermine India's national security from within. The recent economic reforms implemented by the Rao government will also have far reaching effects on India. These themes will be developed in some detail throughout Chapters Three, Four and Five.

On the domestic side, India has been hindered in its ability to deal with autonomist and secessionist tendencies in Kashmir, Punjab, the northeast and in Tamil Nadu. The ability of the centre to deal with these domestic problems on the periphery has further been weakened by communalist stress, which is being exacerbated by the BJP through their emphasis on the Bari-Masjid/Ramjanmboomi issue, and the Mandal commission's divisive effect on the caste coherence of the society. To further compound this, the political parties have sought to create vote banks for themselves out of these issues, thereby furthering the cleavages within the society and in the government. This has led to coalition and minority governments, a general weakness, if not paralysis, at the centre, and the demise of the Congress Party.

Out of a total 545 Lok Sabha seats, 525 were up for election in November of 1989.²⁰⁹ The BJP increased its mandate from 2 to 88 seats. In the state elections of March 1990, the BJP increased its strength and position by picking up a mandate to rule in three of the eight states that went to the polls. In coming to power in Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan, the BJP came to rule in state government for the first time. The rise of communalist violence and the electoral popularity of the BJP threatens the status of India's 110 million Muslims.²¹⁰ Pakistan, Iran and Saudi Arabia all reacted strongly against events at the Ayodhya site. Then

²⁰⁹ Two of the seats which were not up for election are nominative seats. An additional 14 are seats in Assam in which elections were not held.

²¹⁰ India has one of the worlds largest Muslim population.

Prime Minister Bhutto lamented the situation as a "willful desecration of an Islamic Holy place."²¹¹

The key forces of Indian foreign policy are divided between the traditionalists, who would hang on to the idealist rhetoric of the NAM, and the pragmatists, who would have India take a sober view of its place in the post cold war world, determine India's national interests, and then pursue policies which would maximise its interests.²¹² Under Prime Minister Rao, the latter have the upper hand. Prime Minister Rao told his Minister of Finance, Manmohan Singh, to "think big." With this mandate, Mr. Singh embarked on sweeping reforms which, if fully implemented, would bring India more closely in line with the Western economic order.²¹³

The Chandra Shekhar government's decision to allow US cargo planes to refuel in and overfly Indian territory during the Gulf War became controversial to the extent that it became the centre of Parliamentary and media debate. As a result Rajiv Gandhi threatened to withdraw Congress support for the government unless the Chandra Shekhar government reversed its policies. The War hurt India economically, and this added a more tangible element to the ideological debate as India tried to reconcile her foreign policy tradition of the Non-Aligned Movement with current international realities. As India comes to terms with the increasing irrelevance of the Non-Aligned Movement it must redefine its new place on the world stage.

Out of this uncertainty stems much speculation as to what future long-term role India will play within her region. Indeed, the very notion of what is India's region is contested. To more clearly understand where India

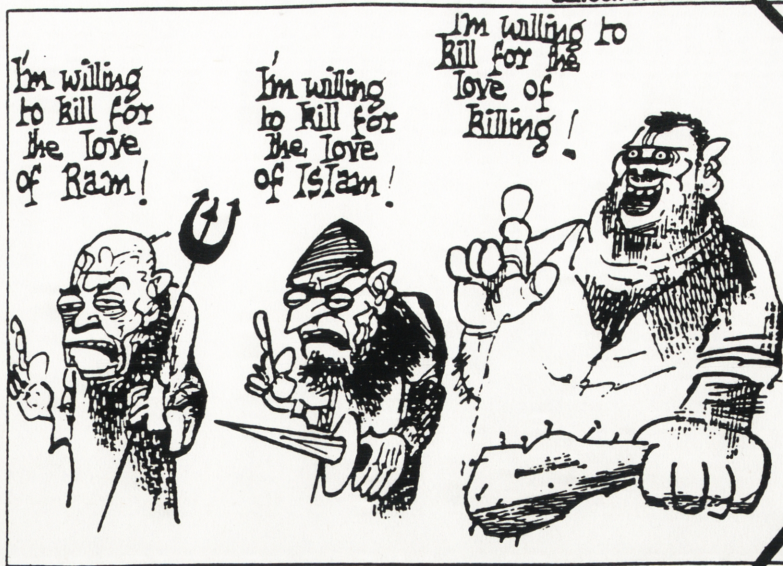
²¹¹ "Shrine on Hold After Rampage," *The Australian*, 11/14/89.

²¹² J. Mohan Malik has conceived of the two camps in terms of traditionalists and realists in his article "India's Response to the Gulf Crisis," published in *Asian Survey*. The term pragmatist is here used as opposed to realist because the majority of those belonging to this group would support the previous idealist policies of Non-Alignment if they felt they were still effective tactics for the promotion of India's interests and values. The traditionalists tend to view the concepts and ideals of the Non-Aligned Movement as ends in and of themselves rather than as the tactics to be employed in support of the national strategy.

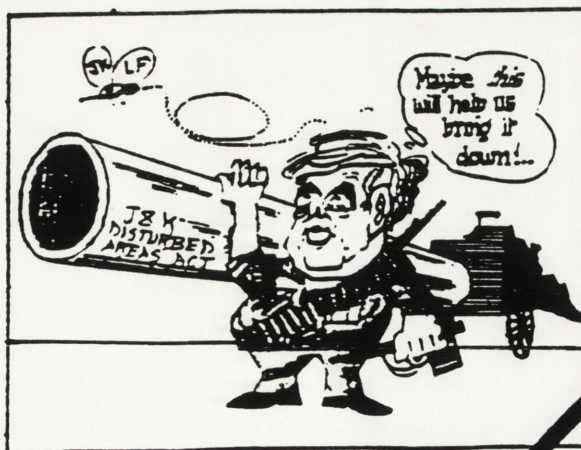
²¹³ Christopher Thomas, "Broke India Hopes for Capitalist Salvation," *The Australian*, 9/1/91.

is heading, this inquiry will turn to the determinants of India's strategic and international relations. It is from these determinants and the decision-making process that India's external relations stem. This will be undertaken in tandem with analysis of India's position on the international arena.

As India is in the midst of this domestic turmoil, it is also grappling with its international identity. Within this context the period 1989 to 1991 must be viewed as possibly India's most significant turning point. India is experiencing a growing paralysis at the centre, the end of the Nehru dynasty, the advent of coalition politics, and a distancing from the secularism of Nehru and the founding fathers. India is trying to come to terms with a world which it perceives as uni-polar. Having based so much on a policy of non-alignment, India will have no rational choice but to adjust as this concept becomes increasingly outdated. The current domestic upheaval, when coupled with India's experience with the realities of the Gulf War will lead to this paradigm shift. India was comfortable with a bi-polar world. Just where this leader of the Non-Aligned Movement will go in a uni-polar world, is a cause of concern and soul searching in India. What the nature of the new external policy will be is dependent on a number of domestic, geopolitical and economic factors which are in the process of playing themselves out on the Indian political scene. The following chapters will explore these parameters of external policy decision-making to better understand India's current and future international posture.



SUDHIR TAILANG/THE HINDUSTAN TIMES



CHAPTER THREE

India's heart is in its society, not in the state.¹

-Rabindranath Tagore

Nationalism is greater than sectarianism. And in that sense we are all Indians first and Hindus, Mussulmans, Parsis, Christians after.²

-Mahatma Gandhi

30. The domestic component of the determinants of India's strategic and international relations

A certain tension is set by the above quotes. They imply Indian society, in all its diversity, is a significant challenge to state authority. Sectarian or communalist³ conflict is central to understanding the continuing divide within India. In an attempt to understand conflict in India and South Asia, this chapter will begin by briefly exploring several theoretical approaches to conflict that have some heuristic value for this chapters inquiry into the domestic aspects of India's external relations. Following this, the chapter will discuss various aspects of internal strife in India. The chapter proceeds from the assertion that nine key sources of identity are similarly sources of conflict in India and South Asia. These nine identity nodes are explained in more detail in Appendix I. An assessment of the role of Indian political traditions and the emerging national identity will also be made. Through this analysis the relationship between internal and external conflict will be established.

¹ Rabindranath Tagore, as quoted in Troy Wilson Organ, *The Hindu Quest for the Perfection of Man*, (Athens: University of Ohio Press, 1970), p. 7.

² This January 1922 quote by Mahatma Gandhi is drawn from Gyanendra Pandey, *The Construction of Communalism*, (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1992), p. 233.

³ Communalism is a much used phrase, but is poorly understood. As such, the recitation of the following lengthy definition by Romila Thapar is justified. "Communalism in the Indian sense therefore is a consciousness which draws on a supposed religious identity and uses this as the basis for an ideology. It then demands political allegiance to a religious community and supports a programme of political action designed to further the interests of that religious community. Such an ideology is of recent origin but uses history to justify the notion that the community (as defined in recent history) and therefore the communal identity have existed since the early past. Because the identity is linked to religion, it can lead to the redefinition of the particular religion, more so in the case of one as amorphous as Hinduism." Romila Thapar, "Imagined Communities? Ancient History and the Modern Search for a Hindu Identity," *Modern Asian Studies*, no. 23, 1989, pp. 209 - 31.

The importance of the domestic milieu for external relations was noted by Indira Gandhi in 1970 when she stated that "[f]oreign policy can not be divorced from a country's domestic policy."⁴ The causal relationships driving India's foreign and strategic policy are best understood through the integration of the broader ranging conflict analysis perspective of international politics with a more formal understanding of strategic studies. Similarly, the relationship between domestic factors and economic aspects of India's position is essential to fully understand the limits of India's external position. Frustration over the pace and direction of India's economic development has led to increased levels of discontent among its people which affects both intra-societal relations and the political process. This is because social groups compete both between themselves and with the centre for limited resources.

The differences between India's external and its internal behaviour have been pointed out by Robert Bradnock in the following quote. "India's experience suggests that while heated disputes have frequently characterised domestic political activity, foreign policy has been marked by a striking degree of political unity."⁵ The extent to which Indian society's physical and metaphorical periphery is in agreement with the centre will be discussed below. There are significant differences between a states foreign policy and its external relations.

This chapter further asserts that India is in the midst of a fundamental reorientation of its national ethos. Communalism is challenging the secular model through reinterpretations of Hinduism. The Hindu fundamentalist agenda may come to influence both society at large and the decision makers perspectives through their rhetoric and actions. This may happen through the direct influence of the BJP, Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) or Shiv Sena, or it may occur indirectly as the Congress Party moves to the right to prevent itself from being outflanked by the right's courting of the Hindu vote. As a result, the foundation ideology of the government will be affected. This

⁴ A. Appadorai and M.S. Rajan, *India's Foreign Policy and Relations*, (New Delhi: South Asian Publishers Private, Ltd. 1988).

⁵ R. Bradnock, *India's Foreign Policy*, (London: The Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1990), p. 35.

change will come either directly through elections or through shifts in the political parties orientation towards communalist politics.

This will bring more conflict to India. Conflict within India stems from the incongruities and incompatibilities of sub-national groupings as they seek self expression and self realization within an existing state structure which is less able to meet these demands upon it. These tensions are further exacerbated by the current phase of economic and political transition which the country is undergoing. As this conflict within India grows, so too will conflict between India and Pakistan and to a lesser extent between India and its other neighbours.

Through the 1980s the Congress Party was compelled for the purposes of electoral gain, to play communal politics. This the Congress Party did to the detriment of the nation with the result that it eroded the secularist ethic that it had itself created, thereby opening the way for Hindu chauvinist communalist politics to enter the political mainstream. It is projected that the on-going stresses of economic reform and the international environment will serve to exacerbate internal frustration and that this will lead to further communal strife in an increasingly violent society. The communal aspect of internal strife will have a negative impact on India's internal stability and social cohesion. This will effect India's ability to allocate resources to areas other than internal security. It is unlikely that India's neighbours will refrain from continuing cross border assistance to Indian insurgents.⁶ By backing insurgents in India, India's neighbours have found their most effective way of keeping India preoccupied within its own borders.⁷ The Indian government will continue to blame the deteriorating situation on the hidden foreign hand. As a result, continuing internal strife will raise the possibility for international conflict.

⁶ In 1992 India had by its own admission 50% of its armed forces committed to suppressing internal insurgencies. This costs India \$6.4 million per day. "Where Politicians Fear to Tread," *Asiaweek*, 6/19/92, p. 28. This is in addition to dramatic increases in internal security forces in the late 1980s.

⁷ Pakistan, China, Bangladesh, Burma, and Bhutan have either directly or indirectly served as an operating base for Indian insurgent groups.

Individual Indian national and sub-national allegiances and identities form cluster groupings for the better articulation of their values and interests within the larger heterogeneous community. These groups will be examined in relation to India's political traditions and the current attempts to reinterpret those traditions. These emerging national and sub-national identities will be viewed in light of centre-state and centre-periphery relations as they relate to India's external environment in the following chapter on geopolitics. With this brief discussion of the factors that threaten India's cohesion, this chapter will now proceed to identify more specific sources of conflict.

30.1 An outline of conflict

Various attempts have been made to construct a general theory of conflict.⁸ These attempts are valuable as heuristic tools for the explanation of conflict in particular case studies. Attempts which go beyond providing guiding principles can distort observations and lead to faulty conclusions. The generalist approach to the study of conflict is most useful for its lack of exclusion. Not seeking to exclude it opens conceptual space for the analyst to observe connections and linkages not previously established. This approach contrasts with more narrowly defined strategic studies approaches to conflict that would refrain from ranging between levels of analysis or various disciplinary approaches.⁹ Despite early enunciations of this broader perspective, states are still viewed largely as reified entities in discussions of national security.¹⁰ The dominance of the state level of analysis and the

⁸ For early examples see R. Mack and R. Snyder, "The Analysis of Social Conflict - Toward an Overview and Synthesis," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, vol. I, no. 2, 1957 and also Clinton Fink, "Some Conceptual Difficulties in the Theory of Social Conflict," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, vol. XII, no. 4, 1968, pp. 412- 460.

⁹ The current resistance to the inclusion of environmental security issues by the mainstream of the discipline is an example of this. See also Michael McKinley, "New Directions in Strategic Studies," Richard Higgott and J.L. Richardson eds. *International Relations: Global and Australian Perspectives on an Evolving Discipline*, (Canberra: Dept. of International Relations, RSPacS, The Australian National University, 1991), pp. 288-316.

¹⁰ The first issue of *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* addressed this question in 1957. "Our belief in the fruitfulness of an interdisciplinary approach in this area is based on the conviction that the behaviour and interactions of nations are not an isolated self contained area of empirical material, but part of a much wider field of political behaviour and interaction..." as quoted in C. Fink, "Some Conceptual Difficulties," p. 412.

concomitant exclusion, or minimisation, of the impact of subnational factors remains despite previous efforts to establish multi-tiered analysis of conflict.

Greater depth of understanding emerges from awareness of the interrelated nature of internal and external conflict and the relationship between the various levels of analysis. Johan Galtung who used individuals as his starting point stated "a theory of aggression should combine the idea of frustration with the idea of perceiving aggression as a possible way out of the frustrating situation."¹¹

Before proceeding further with this perspective, which seeks to explain phenomena at the international level by developing an understanding that takes the individual as its starting point, a mention of the levels of analysis question is in order. There are basic trade offs between differing levels of analysis. As we move down our ladder of analysis, from the global systemic level, to regions, states, sub-national grouping and the individual, we are afforded a greater level of detail in our analysis. Concomitantly, these lower levels of analysis with their "richer detail, greater depth, and more intensive portrayal" provide us with "atomized and less coherent image[s]."¹² The integration of multiple levels of analysis provides the reader with an understanding which describes, explains and predicts the dynamics of conflict as they relate to India's evolving international posture in the region. This endeavour is undertaken in the belief that this will more fully illuminate the phenomena of India's regional posture. The chapter will now proceed to a general discussion of the sources of conflict in South Asia before breaking such conflict down into its components.

¹¹ Johan Galtung, "A Structural Theory of Aggression," in Ted Gurr, ed. *Anger Violence and Politics: Theories and Research*, (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1972), p. 86. Joseph Himes has presented an outline of conflict divided into private conflict, civil strife, social control and international war. See Joseph Himes, *Conflict and Conflict Management*, (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1980), p. 6.

¹² David Singer, "The Level of Analysis Problem in International Relations," in Klaus Knorr and Sidney Verba eds., *The International System: Theoretical Essays*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961), p. 89.

30.11 Sources of conflict in the South Asian context

Investigation into the sources of international conflict in South Asia cannot be divorced from internal domestic conflict. The particular composition of the opposing elites is one source of international conflict. A more broadly informed perspective involving the sources of conflict down to the group and individual level, provides a more comprehensive explanatory framework. The groupings of Indian society are formed for their ability to represent and mould the individual's identity. Simultaneous to the process of the individual seeking out groups to represent their values and interests, the leadership of the various coalescing groups seek to orchestrate the emerging and shifting identities to augment their ranks. Through these groups Indian political machinations operate. It is when the agendas of the various groups are at odds with one another, or with the centre, that conflict emerges.

To more specifically tailor an inquiry into the sources of conflict within the South Asian context it becomes necessary to categorize the specific manifestations which emanate from those sources. James Manor has conceptualized collective violence in India in the following way.

Categories of collective violence

- 1. Insurrectionary violence and reactions by agents of the state**
 - (a) regional, linguistic or ethnic insurrections
 - (b) leftist or class based insurrections
- 2. Non-insurrectionary violence between agents of the state and social groups**
 - (a) popular reaction against coercive agents of the state
 - (b) violent protest over social, economic, political or cultural issues
 - (c) looting, vandalism and arson
 - (d) security forces suppression of protests
 - (e) security force actions against those in opposition to the state
- 3. Violence between social groups**
 - (a) violence between castes
 - (b) communal violence
 - (c) inter-sect violence within a religious group
 - (d) tribal/non-tribal violence
 - (e) inter-linguistic group violence

- (f) class based violence
- (g) interest group violence
- (h) violence over immigration causing demographic pressure
- 4. Violence involving political parties**
- (a) inter-party violence
- (b) intra-party violence
- 5. Criminal violence¹³**

Sections 1, a and b and 3, b, d, f and h are the most relevant for an inquiry seeking to establish the connection between internal and external conflict. Elements of the relevant parts of sections 1 and 3 are prevalent in Kashmir, Punjab, the northeast¹⁴ and to a lesser extent in Tamil Nadu where internal conflict is vulnerable to external influence.

These four peripheral regions are likely areas for the overlap of intranational and international conflict. The ability of insurgents to gain support from across the frontier has contributed to their success and further drawn India's neighbours into India's internal security conflicts. For this reason an understanding of the internal dynamics of conflict serves as a partial explanation of the overall inquiry into the nature of India's posture within the South Asian region. Internal stability is indirectly linked to external relations and strategic posture. When the political and bureaucratic elite at the centre are absorbed in internal strife, their political energy and state resources are diverted inwardly and are therefore not available for the maintenance or promotion of foreign policy objectives.

Existing studies seeking to establish causal relationships between internal and external conflict lean towards a positive correlation. Work in the behaviourist vein has not definitively established direct causal relationships between levels of internal and external conflict. Despite this lack of certainty, they remain of particular interest as partial explanations of India's growing regional presence at a time when it is suffering from

¹³ James Manor, *Conflict Studies 212: Collective Conflict in India*, (London: Institute for the Study of Conflict, 1988), pp. 8-9. Previously the connection between the Naxalites, the communists and the Chinese would have made category four more relevant.

¹⁴ The states of the northeast, which have been embroiled in conflict with the centre and whose secessionist and autonomous elements have periodically received aid from across the frontier, are Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Tripura, Manipur, Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh.

dramatically rising levels of internal violence and social conflict. Study of the causal relationship between the international and sub-national levels of conflict have been further extrapolated to the global level where it has been asserted that the global conflict process exerts an influence on the magnitude of both internal and external conflict.¹⁵

The causal relationship between internal and external conflict may be dependent on factors of a level of complexity that exceeds the abilities of contemporary analysis. There may be certain characteristics which, if identifiable, can give additional meaning to the different manifestations of the internal/external nexus of conflict, but empirical studies are thus far lacking in their ability to present arguments with high degrees of certainty. Certain observations are nonetheless possible. For example, it has been recognised that international war has had an impact on the triggering of revolutions and other forms of internal strife.

Beyond the argument that internal conflict exerts a positive impact on external conflict¹⁶ is the question of when and how?¹⁷ The utility of external conflict in maintaining internal harmony has long been recognised by statesmen and analysts alike.¹⁸ Haas and Whiting articulated the general phenomenon that "[i]n times of extreme domestic tensions among elites, a

¹⁵ The linkage between the Gulf War of 1991, the change of economic orientation of India's economy away from the Nehruvian socialist model, the social dislocation that this will cause and India's foreign policy provide evidence in support of these findings. See Francis Hoole and Chi Huang, "The Global Conflict Process," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, March, 1989, pp. 142, 145, 150.

¹⁶ The survey of the literature carried out by Michael Stohl in his chapter "The Nexus of Civil and International Conflict," in Ted Gurr, *Handbook of Political Conflict: Theory and Research*, (New York: The Free Press, 1980), is, while leaning toward the presence of a positive relationship, inconclusive in its findings on the exact nature of the relationship between internal and external conflict. The manner in which the studies were conducted probably explains the disparate results. The causal relationship may be obscured by other factors.

¹⁷ This perspective on the issue of the relationship is akin to the perspective taken in Robert Putnam, "Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two Level Games," *International Organisation*, summer, 1988, p. 427.

¹⁸ "The best way of preserving a state, and guaranteeing it against sedition, rebellion, and civil war is to keep the subjects in amity with one another, and to this end, to find an enemy against whom they can make common cause." Jean Bodin 1576 as quoted in Michael Stohl, "The Nexus of Civil and International Conflict," in Ted Gurr, *Handbook of Political Conflict: Theory and Research*, (New York: The Free Press, 1980), p. 297.

policy of uniting a badly divided nation against some real or alleged outside threat frequently seems useful to a ruling group."¹⁹ Evidence of stress among the elite has been witnessed in India most poignantly since the decline of Congress Party rule and the advent of coalition politics, beginning with the elections of 1991. Frequent continuing reference to the foreign hand's role in India's internal turmoil is indicative of the government's desire to deflect criticism. It similarly reflects their suspicion of foreign powers. Answers, beyond establishing a basic causal relationship, will of necessity need to tailor themselves to specific situations and cases.

Ted Gurr's work stands out as one of the more informative attempts to answer the how and why questions of conflict in the abstract. His work in developing a causal model of civil strife provides a perspective for initiating inquiry into the specifics of internal and external conflict in India.²⁰ His articulation of the frustration theory of aggression is a useful tool to understand more fully conflict on the domestic level within India.²¹ India is a case where the expectations of individuals, in both political and economic terms, were raised to levels that have by and large not been satisfied through India's pace and style of development.²² India is at a particularly sensitive juncture in its development. India is between beginning the process of modernisation and industrialisation and making it on terms equivalent to the newly industrialised countries of East Asia.

¹⁹ Haas and Whiting as cited in T. Gurr, *Handbook on Political Conflict*, p. 298.

²⁰ For a selection of his work see Ted Gurr, "A Causal Model of Civil Strife: A Comparative Analysis Using New Indices," *American Political Science Review*, December 1968, Ted Gurr, "Psychological Factors in Civil Strife," *World Politics*, January, 1968, Ted Gurr, *Why Men Rebel*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970) and Ted Gurr, *Anger Violence and Politics: Theories and Research*, (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1972).

²¹ In the frustration theory of aggression a frustration is that which stands in the way of goal directed behaviour. Aggression is that behaviour that is intended to injure the source of the frustration. Ted Gurr, "Psychological Factors in Civil Violence," in *Anger, Violence, and Politics*, 1972, pp. 34-5.

²² Bety Nesvold, "Stages of Political Conflict," in Judith Gillespie and Dina Zinnes, *Missing Elements in Political Inquiry: Logic and Levels of Analysis*, (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1982), p. 179.

[l]eaders can put their followers' anger to rational or rationalized uses. If anger is sufficiently powerful and persistent it may function as an autonomous drive, leading to highly rational and effective efforts by both leaders and the led to satisfy anger aggressively.²³

The situations in the peripheral areas of India that have been engaging in secessionist and autonomous activity²⁴ are heavily reliant on reservoirs of frustration. This frustration is subject to, and to an extent dependent on, an elite drawn from within its ranks for its articulation. Without being focused by an elite, these frustrations manifest themselves in a spontaneous and uncoordinated fashion so that they do not significantly effect the stability of the state. It is the distinctive aspect of minority ethnic groups that facilitates their mobilization. The mainstream poor, who are similarly thwarted in their attempts at self realisation, do not threaten the state with "a general class polarisation or an impending class war ..."²⁵ In order to be mobilised, the group's frustration²⁶ must be articulated in such a way that the group perceives itself as distinct from the mainstream of Indian society.

With leadership, the possibility of attaining demands, and thereby threatening the centre, becomes a possibility. This proposition is more relevant in the context of the shattered periphery of India, (Kashmir, Punjab, and the northeast), than it is for the country as a whole. This is because the

²³ Ted Gurr, *Anger, Violence, and Politics*, p. 35.

²⁴ Secessionist and autonomous movements are both motivated by the same types of self realisation goals. They differ in their perception as to whether or not they can achieve their goals within a state structure which they do not control.

²⁵ It is the conservative nature of India's Hindu society that has made a broad based peasant uprising, such as China's, an unlikely event. Indian minority groups share different social values than the majority. The Hindu fundamentalist movement seeks to strengthen the state while shifting its ideological underpinnings. The quote is drawn from P. Brass, *The New Cambridge History of India: The Politics of India Since Independence*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 247.

²⁶ Closely linked with the frustration theory of aggression is the concept of relative deprivation. Relative deprivation is defined as the "actor's perception of discrepancy between their *value expectations* and their environment's *value capabilities*." From the frustration theory of aggression and the concept of relative deprivation Gurr posited the following proposition. "The occurrence of civil violence presupposes the likelihood of relative deprivation among substantial numbers of individuals in a society; concomitantly, the more severe is relative deprivation, the greater the likelihood and intensity of civil violence." Ted Gurr, *Anger, Violence, and Politics*, pp. 37, 39.

mainstream poor do not have a separate identity, as do the Muslims, Sikhs or tribal groups, to articulate their struggle. The mainstream poor's Hindu identity is the primary source of their conservative outlook. India is a rural country. The rural areas are economically less integrated into modern India than the urban centres. This limits the rural poor's expose to alternative concepts.

The continued exposure of the masses to middle class and elite standards of living through the cinemas, Doordarshan, the radio and the print media will continue to create expectations that have little chance of realization for the vast majority of the population. Santosh Ballal of the advertisement agency *Rediffusion* which handled the advertisements for the widely popular television series the *Ramayana*, described his view of this phenomenon. "We create the life styles, we create the aspirations, whether the viewer achieves the aspiration is his problem, not mine."²⁷ If aspirations are callously created without a chance of realization they will eventually create frustration within society despite its inherent conservativeness. This will manifest itself more in the urban areas that receive greater media exposure. Many militants come from the ranks of the educated unemployed. The rise of the BJP may be linked to this frustration as this party has been most successful in urban lower middle class areas.

Increased levels of international conflict in South Asia seem likely given the high levels of relative deprivation in Kashmir, Punjab and the northeast and the linkage of these internal areas with external conflicts. The continuing deterioration of conditions for minority groups, perpetuated by a centre whose authority is increasingly reliant on repressive measures, implies continued polarization of these conflicts. The lack of accomodative approaches to problem-solving drains away resources from development by adding to conflict. This exacerbates problems within mainstream segments of the society which stem from the frustration of their economic aspirations. In an atmosphere of scarcity, mainstream society will be less predisposed to expend resources on minority groups to forge peaceful solutions than it

²⁷ As quoted in Mark Tully, *No Full Stops in India*, (Delhi: Viking Penguin, 1991), p.148.

would during a period of economic growth. Those groups dependent on external support are also to an extent subject to foreign manipulation.

While recognising the inadequacies and uncertainties of existing knowledge with the internal/external nexus,²⁸ a holistic approach taking all these factors into account is essential for a balanced understanding of India's regional behaviour and posture. Large questions beget uncertain and partial answers. The centre-periphery dynamic, the relationship between internal and external conflict, the frustration theory of aggression and the sources of allegiance in India all inform this inquiry into India's external posture. The chapter now turns to focus on tensions between the centre and the periphery.

30.12 The coercive arm of the state in India

The use of force and surveillance by the central government and elites to maintain their hold over dissenting minorities of the geographical and metaphorical periphery rose sharply in the 1980s. The abuse of civil and human rights is most severe in those areas that are seeking to distance themselves from the centre. There are four key target areas of such abuse in

²⁸ Methodological questions of verification of the frustration theory of aggression present a number of problems. Firstly, this theory is one based on perceptions of frustration which are subjective in nature and difficult to quantify. Statistics measuring the outcome of this frustration, if indeed that frustration is the source of the violent acts, are lacking. These statistics are compiled in broad categories and in a less than rigorous manner by a government with vested interest in under-reporting increased levels of violence. Further, there exists the problem of Western analysts projecting their own cultural interpretations. Additional problems arise in the way in which empirical studies have been compiled. During the period 1955 - 1964, India demonstrated the third highest level of conflict and coercion in the Asian region, behind South Vietnam and Laos, as measured by Gurr and Lichback. In amassing their data, Gurr and Lichback relied on incidents reported in *The New York Times* and *Facts on File*. Reportage on India in the West is sporadic and competes with the plethora of other news items for coverage. As such, the database has liabilities. Even if one were to compile a data base drawn from a reading of Indian newspapers, the statistic would be less than perfect due to government desires to keep potentially explosive statistics out of the public eye lest they trigger further outbreaks of violence. Despite the liabilities and the less than reliable nature of available statistics, trends and dynamics can be ascertained from the general course of events. These indicate an increasing level of internal violence and coercion which are related to India's more assertive and possibly belligerent external posture. Ted Gurr and M. Lichback, "Forecasting Domestic Political Conflict," in J. D. Singer and M.D. Wallace eds., *To Auger Well: Early Warning Indicators in World Politics*, (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1979), pp. 153 - 194.

India. These include those groups that are engaged in autonomous or secessionist movements, political opposition groups (at either the national or state level), minority groups and ordinary criminals.²⁹ The size and budget allocations of intelligence, paramilitary, military and police organisations expanded significantly during the 1980s as the state sought to counter rising dissension with force. The diversion of these security assets from external to internal functions further strengthened the internal coercive arm of the state.

Targets of abuse and agents of state security

Targets

1. Insurgents
 - Kashmir
 - Punjab
 - Assam and the Northeast
 - Naxalites etc.
2. Political opposition
3. Minorities
 - caste
 - religion
 - tribal
4. Criminals

Agents

1. Paramilitary
2. Police
3. Intelligence
4. Regular Military

The heterogeneity of Indian society is easily exacerbated by various communal groups seeking to mobilise communities for their particular goals. Often the sense of group identity is defined by emphasising dissimilarities from the larger community or communities. The centre has also abused its power to counter autonomous and secessionist groups and to manipulate state politics. Emergency powers were used 74 times from 1951 to 1987.³⁰ These factors create an adversarial relationship between the minorities and the majority community, or between the periphery and the

²⁹ Government under reporting of collective violence is motivated by a desire to keep these events from escalating. If this were the only matter statistics could be released one or two years after the incidents. At such a later date they would be unlikely to trigger reprisals. Specific documentation of cases of human rights abuse have been documented in Amnesty International, *India: Torture, Rape & Deaths in Custody*, (London: Amnesty Publications, 1992).

³⁰ H.M. Rajashekara, "Presidents Rule in the Indian States," *The Indian Journal of Political Science*, Oct.-Dec. 1987, p. 633.

centre. As these differences become polarised, the more militant factions in the movements gain in stature within their communities as they become increasingly violent. As groups emerge in opposition to the centre, they have found external assistance to aid them in their struggle. This, and the alternative cultural identities of these groups, has in turn led the centre to perceive these groups as traitors and enemies of India. In this way laws have been passed that suspend normal rights in these strife torn states. This strengthens the coercive powers of the security and police forces and opens the way for abuse of human rights of minority groups no longer perceived as Indian. As such they are seen to deserve the wrath of the state's mailed fist.

The state has extraordinary powers at its disposal for the maintenance of law and order. The trend is towards expanding resources to meet increasing disturbances among the people. The police force has grown from 468,000 in 1951 to 904,000 in 1981.³¹ As they have grown so too have their excesses.

Amnesty International documented 415 cases of death in custody since 1985. Of these only 42 cases were investigated by a magistrate. This is despite Section 176 of the Criminal Procedures Code which makes such an inquiry mandatory. Under Sections 30 and 331 of the Penal code, torture to extract information is a crime punishable by a ten year prison sentence while causing death by torture is to be tried as murder.³² Of the 415 cases only 20 resulted in judicial inquiries with only three policemen being convicted of murder of the detainees in their custody.³³ It is further probable that the

³¹ Paul Brass, "Politics in India," in Francis Robinson, *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of India*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 181.

³² The list compiled by Amnesty International of the types of torture used in India is a lengthy one. Methods used include: sleep deprivation, deprivation of food and water, beatings with belts, lathis, rods etc., forcing water through nostrils, crushing with heavy rollers, rape, sexual mutilation, crushing of testicles, burning with iron rods, electric shock, blinding with acid, insertion of chilies into rectum, eyes, open wounds, etc., forced drinking with penis tied, tearing out of finger nails, asphyxiation, beating of pregnant women, impaling with iron rods forced through anus, burial to the neck, etc.

³³ The Government of India reported that "76 criminal cases have been registered against members of the security forces; two army officers have been dismissed and they have been sentenced to 10 and 11 years respectively; 23 Central Reserve Police Force and 10 Border Security Force personnel have been suspended in J&K. In Punjab, 89 police officers of various ranks have been dismissed; 68 prematurely retired." The High Commission of India,

cases documented by Amnesty International are only a fraction of the total number of cases. In such situations there are cover-ups with the authorities using threats and bribes to silence those who would speak out. The police have come to take on the role of both judge and executioner.³⁴

In those areas declared to be under a state of emergency, the security forces are almost immune from prosecution. Deaths in custody can easily be passed off as either the result of a fire-fight between insurgents and security forces, a suicide or as having happened while the suspect was trying to escape. The Terrorist Disruptive Activities Act allows security forces to arrest and detain for up to one year without charge or trial individuals in counter insurgency areas. Under this act the accused is presumed guilty. This is in direct contravention of Article 11 of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights. The Armed Forces Special Powers Act provides the security forces with immunity from prosecution for events that occur while on duty in disturbed areas. This is in operation in Kashmir, Punjab and in the northeast. The act states that "Any commissioned officer, non-commissioned officer or any other person of equivalent rank in the armed forces may ... fire upon or otherwise use force, even to the causing of death, against any person who is acting in contravention of any law or order for the time being in force in the disturbed area..." Section 6 of the act goes on "[n]o prosecution, suit or other legal proceeding shall be instituted, except with the previous sanction of of the Central Government..." Section 197 of the Code of Criminal Procedure provides immunity for public servants from prosecution without prior approval from either state or central government authority that employed them. Section 197 "[p]rotects all government officers from any prosecution for actions taken in the cause of duty when a state is under direct rule from central government."³⁵

The abuse of power is widespread among groups that can do so with little or no chance of prosecution for such behaviour. In disturbed areas the

Canberra, "Spokesman's Response to Queries on Amnesty International Report Dated 26 March 1992," *India News*, 3/30/92, p. 2.

³⁴ Amnesty International, *India: Torture, Rape & Deaths in Custody*.

³⁵ Amnesty International, *India: Torture, Rape & Deaths in Custody*, pp. 59-60.

laws insulate the security forces from any legal recourse to excesses. Collusion by fellow police officers, some magistrates and some coroners allows these excesses to continue with little repercussion beyond transfers and dismissals in a limited number of cases. One explanation of India's tolerance of such abuses is that they are primarily directed at the dissenting periphery. The centre, by perceiving sub-national groups as other than Indian, blurs the distinction between internal and external conflict. This section now shifts to examine identity structures and allegiances in India.

30.2 Identity nodes as sources of allegiance and conflict

There are nine key identity nodes which act as the building block of the identities, and in turn the allegiances, of the peoples of India. These identities are present to varying degrees among individuals. Some identities are almost exclusive, Hindu as opposed to Muslim for example, while others are closely interwoven with other identities as in the case of regional and linguistic affinities. Individual identities, while formed from the individual's unique background and experiences, are by no means static. The exact mix of the various identity nodes input into an individual's perceptions shifts between issues and over time. It is this "remarkable fluidity, together with India's unparalleled social and cultural heterogeneity, [which] provides much of the explanation for a central feature of conflict and collective violence in India..."³⁶ This internal dimension of conflict also plays a role in external conflict as the allegiances of peoples are mitigated by political differentiations of territory. The following is a list of the key identity nodes around which allegiances are formed in the Indian context.

Identity nodes of India

- 1. Religion:** Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Christian, Buddhist, Jain
- 2. Territory:** urban-rural, state, regional, sub-regional, local
- 3. Caste:** jati and varna and when combined with political identity other backward castes (OBC) and scheduled castes (SC) become meaningful identities as well
- 4. Politics:** secular, traditional, or fundamentalist-reformist, as broad categories with party affiliations such as Congress, BJP,

³⁶ James Manor, *Collective Conflict in India*, pp. 12-3.

Janata Dal, Janata Dal (S), CPI, Telugu Desam, National Conference etc.

5. **Class:** Westernised and traditional elite, the growing middle class, the marginalised rural and urban poor

6. **Race:** Aryan/Dravidian/Mongol

7. **Ideology:** secular, communalist, nationalist, communist

8. **Tribe:** Mizo, Naga, Bodo, etc.

9. **Language:** Hindi, Urdu, Tamil, English, etc.³⁷

Understanding the sources of India's identity helps to clarify how Indians form allegiances. It is the complex interplay of the identity nodes which determines allegiances. As individual allegiances amalgamate into groupings and find their way into the realm of politics, they come to set the agenda of sub-national-intergroup politics. As a sense of separateness develops within sub-national groups "a more violent feeling of antagonism, which is expressed as a form of xenophobic rejection of what is 'other'" emerges. In most cases this is directed at mainstream Hindu culture which is the force against which the sub-national group struggles to define itself.³⁸ The dangers associated with extrapolating from the individual level of analysis, through the group and state levels to the international, are outweighed by the perspectives value in helping to establish a more comprehensive explanation of events.³⁹

Notions of ethnicity by definition are composed of a collection of identity nodes. An exact definition of ethnicity is elusive though there are many proposed. Despite the terms problematic qualities the following definition by Urmila Phadnis will suffice.

³⁷These nine key identity nodes are discussed in greater detail in Appendix one.

³⁸ Jean Racine, "A Contribution to the Geopolitical Analysis of India," in P. Girot and E. Kofman eds. *International Geopolitical Analysis*, (London: Croom Helm, 1987), p.94.

³⁹ James Manor has discussed the identity choices of Indians and established a list of identities which omits race as a category. The above list has omitted ethnicity as a category. It has done so because ethnicity is here viewed as a composite of elements of the above list of nine key identity nodes.

... an ethnic group can be defined as a historically formed aggregate of people having a real or imaginary association with a specified territory, a shared cluster of beliefs and values connoting its distinctiveness in relation to similar groups and recognised as such by others.⁴⁰

The concept of identity nodes is useful as a tool to remove the layers of meaning associated with the "shared cluster of beliefs and values" component of the above definition of ethnicity.

Despite the prevalence of the Hindu culture throughout India there are six states within India which have alternative core identities. The most notable is Jammu and Kashmir with its overwhelming Muslim religious identity. The Kashmiri Muslims desire to express their separate identity has led to a high degree of conflict between Kashmir and the centre. Punjab similarly presents a minority dominated state where Sikhs command a plurality of 60.8%.⁴¹ Less well known are the three Christian states of Meghalaya, Nagaland and Mizoram, with 52.6%, 80.2% and 83.8% Christian populations respectively. Furthermore Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland's inhabitants are roughly 80% tribal in their orientation. While there exist multiple core identities within India, the above mentioned identities are more important due to both their position of being the majority within their own state and because of their peripheral position on an external border which opens the possibility for foreign support.

The tactics and policies which achieved limited success during the 1950s and 60s in ameliorating conflict among these differing groups of peoples are no longer proving fruitful. This is most violently demonstrated by the degeneration of the situation in both Kashmir and Punjab into civil war and terrorist rule. The redrawing of state boundaries to allow sub-national groupings to more fully express their identity, while placating some, has led to further agitation as those not incorporated in earlier solutions seek to achieve similar demands. The lack of faith that the centre

⁴⁰ Urmila Phadnis, *Ethnicity and Nation-Building in South Asia*, (Delhi: Sage Publications, 1990), p. 14.

⁴¹ "When redressing a wrong is not possible through peaceful means, it is pious and correct to take up the sword." -Guru Gobind Singh "Hopeful Three," *India Today*, 2/28/93, p.30.

will protect the interests of the sub-state peripheral groups leads to their desire to achieve a political solution allowing more direct control over state affairs. This exacerbates centre-periphery tensions. Those who have become radicalized and are situated on an external border have increasingly turned to India's neighbours to gain strength for their cause. The asymmetrical power relations between India and its neighbours have made these peripheral states eager to try to offset the power imbalance through support for insurgents in India. These dynamics of India's relations with its region have resulted in high levels of cross border support for Indian secessionist and autonomous insurgents. India has similarly used insurgents as a foreign policy tool as in Bangladesh in 1971 and more recently in Sindh. This will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Six.

Before looking at the particular dynamics of India's relations with its region, an examination of India's political traditions and emerging national identities is in order.

30.3 Indian political traditions

Ancient Indian political thought should be taken into account in an assessment of the composite factors of India's socio-political make up. The relative importance of the influence of the ancient Indian political tradition on the contemporary Indian political milieu has been underemphasised. India has inherited a parliamentary system and a language of government from its previous colonial metropole. While breaking from its exploited position within a colonial system India retained many Western influences after independence. These linkages to a Western political tradition, as represented by the outward adoption of a Western structure of government, belie the Indianess and presence of Hindu socio-cultural values of that system. In many respects these socio-political values differ significantly with Western traditions. As India is working through its current transitional period it is looking within its indigenous political traditions for guidance in setting its future agenda. Part of this process is the reinterpretation of past traditions.

Friction within the Hindu community over how to deal with the Ramjanmboomi-Babri Masjid and Muslim minority rights issues in 1989

and 1990, illustrate how India, and more specifically Hindu society, is now having to come to terms with the ideology of secularism. The Bharatiya Janata Party is appealing to the communalist tendencies within the Hindu community. By doing so they are appealing to an earlier political psychology than the secularist rhetoric of the founding fathers of the modern Indian state. Given the seeming inability of the existing dominant ideology, (which is to a large extent based on imported concepts), to address India's problems, it is not surprising that the BJP is drawing on the indigenous Indian political tradition as a source of inspiration.

The Hindu caste system's separation of power and status is unique. By commanding the highest level of status within the four varnas of the caste system of Hindu society, Brahmins have traditionally had the most central role in the interpretation of Hindu traditions. This is due to the emphasis placed on their sanctified religious position by the community. It was traditionally the Kshatriyas who were the ruling caste and hence the repository of state power of the society. Often the Kshatriya warriors would be in a position to exercise more temporal power than their caste superiors and spiritual lords, the Brahmins. By strict adherence to ones dharma⁴² and the reinforcing concept of pollution in inter-caste relations as opposed to purity in intra-caste relations, Hindu culture has traditionally divided status and power. Though they exercised more temporal power, Kashatriya duties placed them in a subordinate position to Brahmins. While strict interpretations of caste are slowly evolving, notions of caste continue to be of relevance in India.

A separation and distinction between spiritually inspired norms of the society and the norms of the rulers of state has allowed Indian rulers to behave in what in Western nomenclature is best characterized as being "machiavellian" without being subject to the same societal sanctions to which their Western counterparts have been subject.⁴³ The Indian tradition

⁴² Dharma is defined as "duty, righteousness, moral law; social and personal morality; natural law, natural obligation." in Raghavan Iyer, *The Moral and Political Thought of Mahatma Gandhi*, (London: Concord Grove Press, 1983), p. 440.

⁴³ Lucien W. Pye, *Asian Power and Politics: The Cultural Dimensions of Authority*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985), pp. 136-7.

separates status from power as well as spiritual power from temporal power. This differs substantially from the Western tradition of the divine right of kings.

Because of their role as the preservers of the societal order traditional Indian rulers were not judged by the same religiously prescribed modes of behaviour as was society at large. "The role of the ruler is that of Indra (bestower of rewards) and of Yama (who meets out punishment). Rulers are thus visible dispensers of (divine) punishment and rewards. Those who disrespect them will be punished by the Gods."⁴⁴ While the Kashatriya rulers enforced the order of society, the Brahmins were closely linked with them in deciding what that order should be. "By enforcing the adherence of the people to the observance of duties prescribed for the four castes and the four stages of life and rooting out all unrighteousness, the ruler functions as the dispenser of justice."⁴⁵

The legitimacy of Hindu rulers rested on the societal belief that social order was necessary in order for everyone to fulfil their dharma. The Bhagavad-Gita illustrates the imperative of the ruler to fulfil his role so that the cosmic order of things will remain.⁴⁶ In the Bhagavad-Gita, the Hindu God Krishna, who is acting as Arjuna's charioteer in battle, urges him on to achieve the destruction of his enemies. Arjuna is hesitant because he knows it will result in great carnage. Through the discourse between Krishna and

⁴⁴ This excerpt is drawn from the work of Chanakya, or Vishnugupta, who is better known as Kautilya. Though there is some debate as to whether these three are indeed one and the same person in all probability they are. The work for which Kautilya is best known is the *Arthashastra*. It is the *Prince* of Indian politics. Through his counsel, Kautilya helped Chandragupta Maurya defeat the Nanda kingdom and establish his rule in 321 BC. The Mauryan empire was the first unified Indian state. The works of Kautilya were most likely produced between 321 and 290 BC. See V. K. Subramanian, *Maxims of Chanakya: the Crystalized Wisdom of the Indian Machiavelli*, (New Delhi: Abhinav Publications, 1980), p. 144. See also R. P. Kangle, *The Kautilya Arthashastra Part II: An English Translation with Critical and Explanatory Notes*, (Bombay: University of Bombay Publishers, 1963).

⁴⁵ V. K. Subramanian, *Maxims of Chanakya*, p. 146.

⁴⁶ The dictums of Chanakya, the Bhagavad-Gita, The Code of Manu and other treatises should not be relegated to mere historical curiosities. The modern Indian state has looked to India's intellectual tradition as a foundation for redefining a modern indigenous political philosophy. Kautilya can be thought of roughly as being a non-Western equivalent to Hobbes and Machiavelli. This is mentioned in passing in Richard Falk, *The End of World Order: Essays on Normative International Relations*, (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1983).

Arjuna the ideal of the need to fulfil one's caste obligation is put forward. Arjuna as leader of his people had no choice but to wage war to fulfil his caste duty.⁴⁷

Nehru's and Gandhi's contributions, while an inextricable part of the modern Indian political tradition, must be seen in historical terms as innovative ideas which were added to a historically impressive political tradition. As India continues to develop, it is returning to its indigenous culture. The return to Hindu political traditions is demonstrated by the increased use of Hindu imagery in politics, the desire on the part of the north Indians to use Hindi as the national language rather than English and from the more native character of the sociological background of MPs.⁴⁸ Nehru's foreign policy of Panchsheela, while inspired, seems less appropriate to the prevailing circumstances of South Asia than Kautilya's 2,300 year old advice on relations with neighbouring states. "A ruler with contiguous territory is a rival. The ruler next to the adjoining one is to be deemed a friend. Neighbouring states are the source of treaties and hostilities."⁴⁹ The following section will assess Kautilya's work in more detail.

30.31 Kautilya's *Arthashastra*

Despite India's readiness to adopt alien governmental structures the roots of an indigenous Hindu tradition of statecraft extend back to 300 BC. Kautilya's *Arthashastra*, or science of polity, like Machiavelli's *Prince* of 1513, was written by an adviser to the Prince of state as a manual of dictums for successful statecraft. Kautilya's prince was Chandragupta, who with Kautilya's assistance, went on to become the first king of the Mauryan Dynasty. This was the first kingdom of sufficient size to be thought of as India. Chandragupta built his empire in the period immediately after Alexander the Great's army turned back from further eastward expansion at the river Beas. It is thought that Kautilya met Alexander the Great in 325

⁴⁷ The Bhagavad-Gita in R.C. Zaehner, translator and editor, *Hindu Scripture*, (London: Dent & Sons, 1978).

⁴⁸ R. Barz in *India: Rebellion to Republic*, pp. 100 - 103.

⁴⁹ V.K. Subramanian, *Maxims of Chanakya*, p. 11.

BC.⁵⁰ The Greeks laid waste to all significant opposition in the northwest of the subcontinent. This created a vacuum into which Chandragupta expanded his empire. Alexander left General Seleucus in charge of their conquests in the subcontinent. As the Mauryan empire began to grow General Seleucus marched on Chandragupta to reclaim the lands that had been lost but was forced to sue for peace. Through the peace Chandragupta gained present day Baluchistan and Afghanistan. In this way Chandragupta came to rule from the Hindu Kush to Assam.⁵¹

An Indian tradition of realist statecraft was established with the work of Kautilya. It held political life to be separate from the general tenets of Hindu law in that the rulers' dharma, to preserve Hindu society, necessitated behaviours that would not be acceptable otherwise.⁵² Herein lies a partial explanation of the more cynical side of Indian politics. This relationship between arthashastra and dharma, and between the realist conceptualization of politics and the ethical and moral behaviour of Hindu society continues to have influence in contemporary Indian politics.

The *Arthashastra* provides one of the first foundations for a theoretical conceptualisation of international relations. Kautilya emphasised the importance of power in statecraft. To him there were three components of power. These were the power of deliberation or decision making, the power of the treasury and the power of the Armed forces.⁵³ The objective of power

⁵⁰ It is interesting to note that two of the most expansive empires of the era, those of Alexander and Chandragupta, had behind them the teaching of such great minds as Aristotle and Kautilya.

⁵¹ R.C. Majumdar, "Kautilya," in the *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, (New York: Macmillan Free Press, 1968), p. 354.

⁵² Like Machiavelli many years later this raises the issue of the justification of the means by the end achieved. It should be acknowledged that at the time of his writing Kautilya's justification of the means of the ruler by the end of the preservation of Hindu society would not have universally been accepted. Many in 300 BC would have associated the King's dharma with the dharma of his people. Just as Machiavelli's work was thought to be evil, the prudence of its suggestions were acknowledged despite its initial perception as being inconsistent with the professed morals of society. John Spellman, *Political Theory of Ancient India: A Study of Kingship from the Earliest Times to Circa A.D. 300*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964), p. 211.

⁵³ George Modelski, "Kautilya: Foreign Policy and International System in the Ancient Hindu World," *The American Political Science Review*, Sept. 1964, p. 551. Partial inspiration for the dissertations model stems from Kautilya's sources of power.

for the King was to secure and expand his position and preserve the existing order of society. The king's status measured in terms of his power, would dictate his foreign policy. This emphasis on status has continuing relevance for contemporary India's strategic posture.

One interpretation of India's military build-up in the late 1980s is that it was motivated by a quest for status. Reinforcing Kautilya's emphasis on status was his emphasis on asymmetrical relations as opposed to equal relations between states.⁵⁴ In Book Seven of the *Arthashastra* Kautilya explores the six measures of foreign policy of kings. These are 1. accommodation, (sandhi) 2. hostility, (vigraha) 3. indifference, (asana) 4. attack, (yana) 5. protection, (samsraya) and 6. double policy, (dvaidhibhava).⁵⁵ These policies are arrived at through an assessment of one's power. The element of power dictates policy.

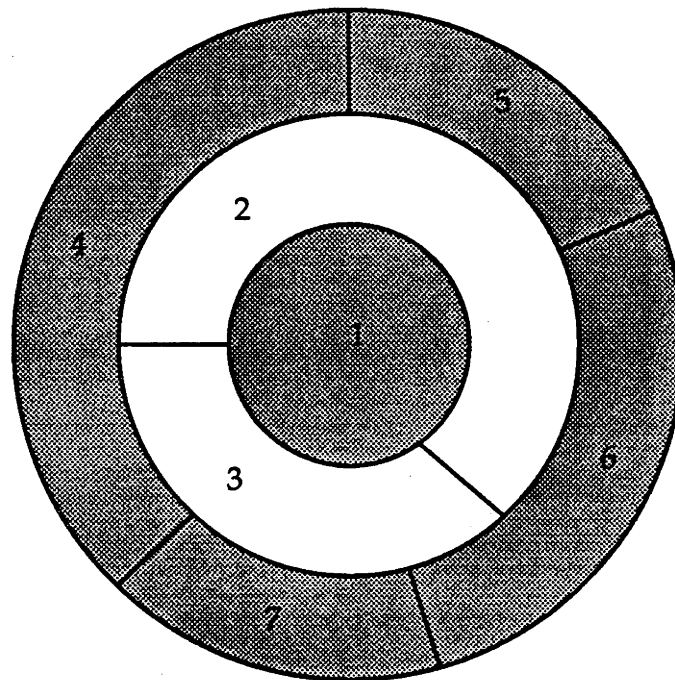
This Realpolitik is more readily associated in the Western mind to Machiavelli (1467 - 1527) than to the land that produced Mahatma Gandhi. Both Kautilya and Machiavelli were trying through their written works, which were dedicated to their monarchs, to unite their respective nations. The importance of a discussion of the work of Kautilya stems from the need to become aware that India has an ancient and enduring realist tradition of foreign policy.⁵⁶ Realism has always been a central theme of the Indian political tradition despite the idealism of Nehru and Mahatma Gandhi. Realist conceptions of statecraft were articulated there much earlier than in the West despite the emphasis on the metaphysical by the religions of the subcontinent.

⁵⁴ John Spellman, *The Kautilya Arthashastra*, Book Seven "The Six Measures of Foreign Policy," pp. 372 - 444.

⁵⁵ See Modelski, p. 552 for these summaries. The original text, as translated in Kangle's *Arthashastra*, p. 373 is as follows. "When in decline as compared to the enemy, he should make peace. When prospering he should, make war. (When he thinks) 'The enemy is not able to do harm to me, nor I to him,' he should stay quiet. When possessed of a preponderance of excellent qualities he should march. Depleted in power, he should seek shelter. In a work that can be achieved with the help of an associate, he should resort to a dual policy. Thus are the measures established."

⁵⁶ This said, it is a tradition which is in an on-going process of reinterpretation.

Kautilya's system of geopolitics



■ = Potential allies against two and three

Adapted from Joseph Campbell ed. *Philosophies of India*, (London: Routledge and Keegan Paul Publishers, 1967), p. 292 and also from G. Bhagat, "Kautilya Revisited and Revisited," *Indian Journal of Political Science*, April/June, 1990.

The most known of Kautilya's concepts is the adage that one's enemies' enemy is an ally. This Kautilya originally conceptualised as a mandala of concentric circles of states emanating out and away from one's own state.⁵⁷ The understanding of the mandala system was aimed at helping the king attain the twofold objectives of state, security and interest. In this "moral and religious consideration, matters of ideology and the common spiritual tradition do not have the force of this geometrical [mandala] fact."⁵⁸

⁵⁷ In the above diagram states 4, 5 and 6 would, according to Kautilya, be potential allies of state 1 against state 2. Likewise 4, 7 and 6 would be potential allies of 1 against state 3.

⁵⁸ Joseph Campbell as quoted in G. Bhagat, "Kautilya Revisited and Re-Visioned," *The Indian Journal of Political Science*, April-June, 1990, p. 198.

It becomes essential to determine to what extent, and in what ways, elements of Hindu culture are a part of contemporary Indian politics. To establish that a certain tradition exists falls short of establishing its influence on the contemporary situation. In India's case these are very subtle questions. Myron Weiner has addressed the problem and concluded that the degree of influence of the ancient teachings on contemporary statecraft and politics is minimal despite the references made to that body of knowledge. Weiner points out the problematic of establishing a correlation between the Hindu political tradition and contemporary politics. The dynamic whereby subsequent generations continue to return to the set texts and reinterpret them to give new meaning to the contemporary age differs from similar attempts in Western thought.⁵⁹ Kautilya's use of the imagery of the mandala, with its circles and connotations to the wheel of life, connotes a more cyclical way of conceptualisation. Weiner's remarks on this phenomenon echo the views of B. A. Salatore.⁶⁰ This is a testament to the staying power of the Hindu society over its closely related political structure.

This dynamic of the reinterpretation of the sacred texts, whether they be *The Arthashastra*, *The Codes of Manu*, *The Vedas*, *Upanishads*, or *Puranas*, is instrumental in giving legitimacy to new ideas as they are represented as part of the tradition despite their recent origin.

There is a well known phenomena of reinterpreting the past to bring it more in conformity with contemporary beliefs and practices. Although all societies do this to some extent, Indians are particularly skilled in the art.⁶¹

⁵⁹ In the West such cyclical interpretations, such as Francis Fukayama's rediscovery of Hegel, are not joined with an individual conception of life that itself is conceived of in rebirth. As such the perception of the inevitability of cycles is not as common in the West.

⁶⁰ B. A. Salatore, *Ancient Indian Political Thought and Institutions*, (London: Asia Publishing House, 1963).

⁶¹ Myron Weiner, "Ancient Political Theory and Contemporary Indian Politics," in S.N. Eisenstadt, R. Kahane and D. Shulman, *Orthodoxy, Heterodoxy and Dissent in India*, (New York: Mouton Publishers, 1984), p. 113. A similar view that "cultural history is a projection: one reads into it or takes out of it according to present-day needs," has been put forward by Ashis Nandy, "The Making and Unmaking of Political Cultures in India," in *At the Edge of Psychology: Essays in Political Culture*, (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1980), pp. 46 - 69.

A non-continuous tradition based on reinterpretations of original referents of the society draws on a firmly grounded source of power of identity to implement reforms or reinterpretations of the existing order of political life in such a way that they are seen to be consistent with the order of society.

Weiner's argument that "using the past is not the same as being influenced by it"⁶² is interesting to contemplate in context with the rhetoric and actions of the BJP as a means of political mobilisation. Symbols are manipulated, possibly cynically, to evoke images and sentiments based on reinterpretations of the core concepts of Hinduism, as a means of political mobilisation. This perspective is supported by observations by Stephen Cohen.

This vigorous growth of a mass political culture indicates that the revolution of modernity will not be led by the Westernised elites but by these newly powerful groups.⁶³

There is evidence of rising belief by the electorate in the symbols and the values which are presented to them as catalysts for action. The new interpretation of the role of political leadership, especially in the context of the preservation of religious society, is currently undergoing reinterpretation. Previously the pluralistic aspects of Hinduism had been stressed to facilitate political pluralism.⁶⁴ Now the Hindu revivalists are reinterpreting the Hindu past to rationalize a more interventionist role for government in support of the Hindu majority. The secularist interpretation of the Hindu past emphasises the protection of minority rights and religious pluralism. The potential sociological implications of this trend is for an increasingly self confident and righteous India. Such a reinterpreted national ethos may be less accommodating to both its Muslim minorities and its Islamic neighbours who are perceived as trying to undermine the stability of the Hindu state.

⁶² Myron Weiner, in, *Orthodoxy, Heterodoxy and Dissent in India*, p. 114.

⁶³ Stephen Cohen, *The Indian Army: Its Contribution to the Development of a Nation*, (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1991), pp.195-6. Cohen continues to view the army as a secularising force.

⁶⁴ Myron Weiner, in, *Orthodoxy, Heterodoxy and Dissent in India*, p. 125.

It is within this practice of the reinterpretation of symbols and texts that the chapter turns to look at the contemporary politics of the BJP with regard to the Muslim minority. This is done with a desire to examine the possibility that internal inter-religious tension might have the effect of increasing conflict between a more Hindu India and Islamic Pakistan.

30.32 The Muslim minority, the Hindu identity and external conflict: Shah Bano, communalist-secularist debate, Babri Masjid-Ramjanboomi and Kashmir

The question then follows; what is the effect of these developments on India's external relations, especially with Pakistan. How will the shift in attitudes within India on the proper place of minorities, and the Muslim minority in particular, affect India's external relationships? Indian politics is based on the competitive interests of individuals as represented by groups. Political parties have played on religious issues to gain the electoral support of these groups. As such, the interplay between the ideologies of secularism and communalism have come into direct conflict.⁶⁵ The Muslim minority will increasingly become marginalised as communalist tensions continue to mount. This may happen in a relatively calm and gradual way. Conversely, it may come to pass through a violent backlash of a dislocated and frustrated Hindu majority who have come to feel threatened by the special status given to Muslims and other minority groups under the rule of Nehruvian inspired secularism. The effect that a dramatic rise in already high levels of communalist violence will have on the Indo-Pakistani relationship is negative. To understand how this perception of minorities has been formed, this section will examine some of the more important causes and issues.

The Shah Bano case is informative on the shifting attitudes of the Hindu majority towards the Muslim minority. The case has had the effect of challenging the secularist ideal which undergirds the legal system and the country as a whole. The supreme court's ruling on Shah Bano challenged

⁶⁵ It should be noted that within the Indian context the concept of secularism is one which does not deny the veracity of religion but merely asserts that all religions are equally correct in their belief structure. This particularly subcontinental view of secularism is distinct from the Western concept of secular humanism because it does not deny the transcendental element. Ainslie Embree, *Utopias in Conflict: Religion and Nationalism in Modern India*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), pp. 95 - 7.

minority communities' previous right to their own legal codes of conduct within India. In 1978 Ahmed Khan, a Muslim, divorced his wife and, consistent with Muslim law, returned the Rps 3,000 mehr which he had received as a marriage settlement. His wife, Shah Bano, then sued under the Criminal Procedures Code for alimony. The bench ruled that under section 125 of the code, Khan would have to pay a maintenance. Khan's appeal that he should not have to pay the alimony was based on the duty of Muslims to obey Shariat law. Reacting negatively to Khan's case Chief Justice Chandrachud stated that "... the time had come for a common legal code for all Indians, irrespective of religion."⁶⁶ After his initial support of the ruling, Rajiv Gandhi was forced to mute his support for fear of antagonising the Muslim community.⁶⁷

The Muslim Women Protection of Rights of Divorce Bill that would exempt Muslims from section 125 of the Criminal Procedures Act was defended on the grounds that it furthered the interests of secular society by providing guarantees that minority groups would not be deprived of their rights. This is in direct contradiction to the pre-independence position of the Congress Party that India should be ruled by common laws for all citizens. The bill was seen both as a "capitulation to the forces of Islamic obscurantism" and as "pandering to Muslim separatism."⁶⁸ This politically motivated reinterpretation had the effect of contributing to the further decline of secularism in India. By catering to a religious minority for political support, on this and other issues, communalist politics and, in reaction, Hindu fundamentalist ideology have moved to the mainstream of Indian politics.

A misunderstanding of the Hindu tradition and its approach to violence exists. This is largely a matter of confusion by many in the West over the Hindu basis of Mahatma Gandhi's teaching. The Mahatma integrated Hindu and Western values and traditions . One such product was

⁶⁶ Ainslie Embree, *Utopias in Conflict*, p. 97.

⁶⁷ The Muslim community is one of the most valued vote banks in Indian politics. Of the 542 seats of the Lok Sabha the Muslim community is influential in 150.

⁶⁸ Ainslie Embree, *Utopias in Conflict*, p. 108.

his articulation of the concept of ahimsa or non-violence. It is this view that causes difficulty in coming to terms with the levels of violence in India.

... there is no absolute proscription of violence either in classical or folk culture of Hinduism ... [the] Upanishadic view of life was that it was essentially based upon violence. Life feeds on life, said the Upanishads, and therefore it is impossible to live without violence.⁶⁹

Rajiv Gandhi later continued to bend his secularist principles when pressed by the BJP for the Hindi heart-land vote in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar over the Ramjanmboomi issue. He again bowed to political pressures in the 1991 election campaign when he sought to use his image of solidarity with Iraq as a means of gaining the Muslim vote. This act of bending to communalist pressures for electoral gain was a pragmatic policy which Indira Gandhi utilised before Rajiv. In this way Mahatma Gandhi's vision of a united India continues to fade.

The struggle for independence led to communalist inspired collective carnage that resulted in the dislocation of ten million Hindus⁷⁰ from Pakistan and the deaths of approximately one million inhabitants of the subcontinent. Since independence the numbers of incidents and their levels of lethality have been increasing. The Bombay riots in the wake of the destruction of the Babri-Masjid Mosque and the continuing strife in Kashmir in the beginning of 1993 attest that this is an ongoing problem.

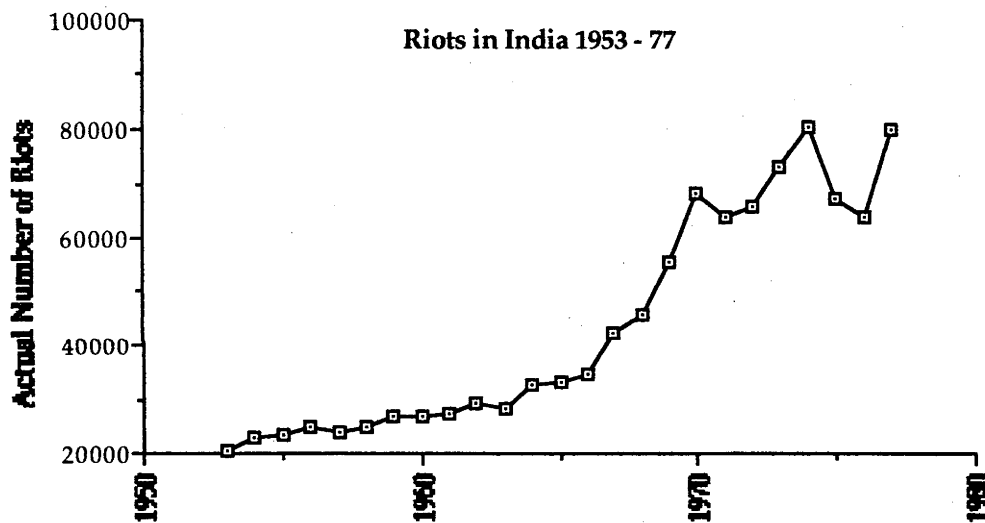
Jawaharlal Nehru believed that "The government of a country like India ... can never function satisfactorily in the modern age except as a secular state."⁷¹ Despite the seeming incongruities between Islam and any secular state within the Indian context, a secular state, as opposed to a Hindu state was appealing. It is from this basis that the Congress Party originally attracted the Muslim vote. With the rise of communalist violence in the

⁶⁹ V. Das and A. Nandy, "Notes on Violence," as quoted in James Manor, *Conflict Studies 212, Collective Conflict in India*, (London: Institute for the Study of Conflict), p. 1.

⁷⁰ Radhakamal Muherjee, "Studies in Inter-Group Conflicts in India, *Indian Journal of Social Research*, March, 1988, pp. 31- 42.

⁷¹ Mushirul Hasan, "In Search of Integration and Identity: Indian Muslims Since Independence," *Economic and Political Weekly*, 11/88, pp. 2467-78.

sixties and continued discrimination in the government and private sectors, Muslims began to explore alternative political affiliations such as the Jamaat-i Islami and Itihad ul Musilmeen. While communalism has always threatened the political fabric of Indian society it has in the last decade risen substantially. The seventies were marked by a comparative lull in communalist violence. The eighties witnessed a four fold increase of communalist deaths. Utar Pradesh, Bihar, Maharashtra, Gujarat, and West Bengal have traditionally been those states with the highest casualty figures. The communalist sentiment is strong enough that it is undermining the very institutions which are responsible for countering its abuses. In communalist rioting in Bihar in December of 1989, 100 Muslims were taken into custody by the military and then later turned over to the police. The next day they were found to have been killed.⁷²



Adapted from: George J. Bryjak, "Collective Violence in India," *Asian Affairs: An American Review*, Summer 1986, p. 37, B.R. Nayar, *Violence and Crime in India: A Quantitative Study*, (Delhi: Macmillan Company of India, 1975) *Crime in India 1977*, (Faridabad: Government of India Press, 1981) The riot statistics, while useful as a gage of general levels of violence and tension within the society, take into account many forms of collective violence which are not necessarily inspired by Hindu-Muslim conflict. As such they would include Hindu-Sikh conflicts and all other riots.

⁷² James Clad, "A mixed Verdict but Opposition fails to win a Majority," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 12/7/89.

Atul Kohli, in his recent study, *Democracy and Discontent*, concluded that there has been a "dramatic increase in political violence in India."⁷³ Kohli attributes this dramatic rise to feebleness of the omnipresent state to fulfil its responsibility to "foster the 'life chances' of many diverse social groups..."⁷⁴ Reliable consistent data is difficult to obtain. Despite this there is a definite rise in the levels of violence. One hundred and thirty people were reportedly killed in association with the the 1991 election.⁷⁵ Home Minister S.B. Chavan reported to the Rajya Sabha that in the three months of April, May and June of 1992 600 militants and 462 police and civilians were killed in Punjab alone.⁷⁶ From January 1990 to August 1992 almost 8000 people were killed in militant and counterinsurgency actions in Kashmir.⁷⁷

Communal violence in India

Year	No. of incidents	No. killed	No. of injured
1976	169	39	794
1977	188	36	1,122
1978	230	110	1,853
1979	304	261	2,379
1980	421	372	2,691

Adapted from: George J. Bryjak, "Collective Violence in India," *Asian Affairs: An American Review*, summer 1986, p. 41, Bisharif, *Economic and Political Weekly*, May 1, 1981. The Home Ministry definition of communal violence includes conflict between two or more ethnic, linguistic and or religious groups and as such is not limited to Hindu-Muslim confrontations. This increasing trend can be projected into the 1990s.

These figures indicate that existing statistics, such as those below, have been rapidly overtaken. Further, intercommunal conflict has been expanding

⁷³ Atul Kohli, *Democracy and Discontent: India's Growing Crisis of Governability*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 6-7. Kohli has produced a similar graph based on statistics from the Ministry of Home Affairs and Baldev Nayar, *Violence and Crime in India: A Quantitative Study*, (Delhi: Macmillan, 1975), p. 17. His findings, covering the years 1955 to 1985, confirm and extend the general progression towards dramatically increasing levels of political violence in India as presented in the above graph.

⁷⁴ Atul Kohli, *Democracy and Discontent*, p. 8.

⁷⁵ Sergie Irodov, *New Times*, p. 15.

⁷⁶ "600 Punjab Militants Killed," *The Hindustan Times*, 7/15/92.

⁷⁷ "Rao Vows to Hold Kashmir," *The Australian*, 8/17/92.

into areas where it was heretofore unknown. For example, Hindu - Muslim strife left over 100 dead in Manipur in May of 1993.⁷⁸

India's social fabric has suffered the necessary and painful stresses of transition which have led to increased competition for political power to control the paucity of available resources. While the nature of collective conflict and rioting in India has a tendency to be fragmented and unorganised, it is being used by the political parties for the purposes of carving out of vote banks.

Vote-bank politics is dividing India. V.P. Singh, of the Janata Dal, sought to gain backward caste votes through the implementation of the Mandal Commission Report recommendations. Rajiv Gandhi flirted with the Hindu fundamentalists in the lead up to the 1989 elections only to reverse and try to court the Muslim vote in the lead up to the 1991 elections. Despite these attempts it is the determined, and well orchestrated, efforts of the BJP to mobilise the country through a new sense of a Hindu India that is potentially the most disruptive to international relations. Incidents of Hindu-Muslim conflict will, in an indirect way, have an impact on India's external posture. In the first instance they will extend the BJP's power base and influence political discourse. Such militancy against the Muslim community may gain sufficient momentum to get the electoral support to form state governments in the north, and to become a necessary coalition partner to form a government at the national level. Rising levels of Hindu-Muslim conflict in India will reflect negatively on the Indo-Pakistani relationship as perceived by both sides.

The nature of statistical reporting makes it difficult to distinguish between communalist conflict between Hindus and Muslims or, for example, between Hindus and Sikhs, Assamese and Muslims or inter caste violence. The Hindu majority feels besieged by the mounting collective conflict. As this perception grows, frustrations will grow and pressure will build for an attempt to find a comprehensive solution. Many Hindus can

⁷⁸ While the northeast and Manipur have witnessed much conflict it has been based on tribal affiliation or as a response to demographic shifts. This incident is a departure for its primary communal basis. Sanjoy Hazarika, "100 Dead in Religious strife," *The New York Times*, 5/5/93.

still recall their flight from areas now part of Pakistan or Bangladesh. These memories of carnage, rape and destruction have become part of the national psyche. Building on this international image of Muslims and the creation of Pakistan are the wars of 1965 and 1971⁷⁹ and the present on-going efforts by Pakistan to fan the flames of secession in Punjab and in Kashmir. Though it is somewhat problematic to attempt to demonstrate a direct correlation between the internal inter-communal group level of analysis and the international level, the rising levels of internal conflict are eroding the relationship, possibly to the point of war, between India and Pakistan. It is of interest that "support for organisations such as the [Vishwa Hindu] Parishad seems to come largely from the Hindu urban middle class..."⁸⁰ This is the most rapidly expanding and politically important socio-economic grouping within Indian society today.

The Ramjanboomi/Babri Masjid dispute was the focal point of inter-communal conflict between Hindus and Muslims in India between the mid 1980s and 1992 when it was destroyed. The origins of the dispute date back to the sixteenth century. In 1526, Babur commemorated the first Mughal invasion of India by converting the Hindu Temple of Rama at Ayodhya to a Mosque. It is from these origins that the Mosque takes its name. In 1949 images of Rama and Sita were found inside the Mosque. By the 1960s, the issue had become a focal point of resentment by the Hindus toward the Muslim minority. In 1970, the courts ruled that the site should be closed lest it provoke further conflict between the two communities. In 1986, the courts reversed the earlier decision and reopened the site. It is from this time that the high levels of violence have been associated with the dispute. Coincidentally this is the same period of mounting tensions between the Hindu and Sikh communities in Punjab. And the increase in cross border support for Kashmiri and Sikh militants.

⁷⁹ The next war between India and Pakistan may not be confined to the border areas. India may not, as it did in 1971, hesitate after another bifurcation of the country. It may then seek a victory which will beyond a doubt assert its regional dominance. This war, in the minds of Hindu India, will be waged with the legitimatizing perception that it is a matter of self defence.

⁸⁰ Ainslie Embree, *Utopia's in Conflict*, p. 130.

Ayodhya cost Rajiv Gandhi dearly by undermining Congress' Hindu support in the electorally vital Hindi belt which spans northern India. Ayodhya, located 532 kilometers to the southeast of Delhi, is allegedly the birthplace of the Hindu God Rama. Timed to coincide with the lead up to the national elections in November of 1989, the Vishwa Hindu Parishad gathered sanctified bricks from 375,000 towns and cities throughout India, Canada, the United States and Europe to start construction of a new temple to their Lord Rama. The bricks were brought to the site by believers. In the course of transporting the sanctified bricks to the site some 280 people were killed in communalist violence.⁸¹ Despite the controversy whether a Hindu temple to Rama did occupy the site prior to the erection of Babri Masjid, what is important is that it is widely believed to have been the case.⁸²

Initially it was the government's position, as articulated by Rajiv Gandhi's Home Minister, Buta Singh,⁸³ that if there was to be any further construction in Ayodhya it would take place at a location distant from the existing Mosque so as not to exacerbate tensions by threatening the existence or legitimacy of the Mosque and by extension Muslim rights to their form of worship. The reality was that on 11 November 1989, VHP sadhus orchestrated the excavation of a foundation less than 22 feet from Babri Masjid. Security forces on the scene did nothing to stop this action. This inaction indicated a reluctance by Congress to openly oppose the VHP.⁸⁴ The VHP has also targeted other sites, including Mathura and Varanasi, where Mosques have been built on the site of former Hindu temples.⁸⁵

The excavation of the foundation touched off Muslim reprisals against Hindus across northern India. Hindus were burned to death in their villages, killed in their dormitory beds and pulled from trains and stoned to

⁸¹ "Bricks Pave Way to Religious Strife." *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 11/6/89.

⁸² Clad, James "The Hindu Card: Appeal to Command Sentiment Could Backfire." *The Far Eastern Economic Review*, 11/23/89.

⁸³ Home Minister Buta Singh lost his parliamentary seat by more than 53,000 votes to the BJP candidate in the November 1989 elections. Other key Congress Council of Ministers members such as Rajesh Pilot, Jagdish Tytler, Ram Niwas Mirdah and Natwar Singh also lost their seats. *The Australian*, 11/28/89.

⁸⁴ In this way Prime Minister Rao is following Rajiv Gandhi's precedent.

⁸⁵ Clad, James "The Hindu Card: Appeal to Command Sentiment Could Backfire." *The Far Eastern Economic Review*, 11/23/89.

death. To quell the Muslim mobs, Indian security forces were forced to open fire. In light of this violence excavation at the sight was suspended.

This attempt to play on Hindu sympathies was a major electoral blunder for the Congress Party. Rajiv's acquiescence to the militancy of the VHP over the affair served to alienate the Muslim community while adding to the momentum of the Hindu fundamentalist movement. This momentum resulted in the December 1992 destruction of the Mosque. The Mosque's destruction triggered violence against Hindus and Hindu shrines in Pakistan and Bangladesh.

Former Indian prime minister, and leader of the Janata Dal Party, V.P. Singh was joined by leftist parties in calling for Prime Minister Narasimha Rao, of the Congress Party, to step down from the prime minister's chair as a result of his failure "to protect the constitution" in connection with the destruction of the Babri Masjid. Though Rao dispatched some 20,000 members of the Central Reserve Police to help control the crowd of more than 200,000 who had assembled at Ayodhya, they failed to assist the 3,000 local police who did little to prevent the Mosque's destruction on 6 December 1992.

Rao's inability to prevent the destruction of the Mosque threatened the policy of secularism enshrined in India's constitution. The official death toll in subsequent rioting was 1,119. Violence associated with the Mosque's destruction spread to 15 of India's 25 states. Most of those killed were reportedly Muslims shot by police.⁸⁶ Imam Syed Ahmed Bukari expressed his communities lack of faith in the government and accused Rao of allowing the "death of secularism."⁸⁷ Rao sought to avoid his ouster in Parliament by dismissing the BJP Uttar Pradesh government, by arresting BJP leaders Advani and Joshi and by banning the Shiv Sena and the VHP.⁸⁸

This is not the first instance where internal conflict has led to increased international tension and conflict. The theft of the prophet's hair

⁸⁶ "Mosque Death Toll," *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 12/6/92.

⁸⁷ "Destroyed Mosque Spells Uncertainty for India," *Reuters News Service*, 12/7/92.

⁸⁸ "India Facing Further Religious Violence," *The Canberra Times*, 12/10/92.

in 1964 is an example of the interrelationship between internal and external conflict in South Asia. The loss of the sacred relic from a Kashmiri Mosque in early 1964 resulted in retaliatory rioting against Hindus in East Pakistan. This touched off anti-Muslim violence in West Bengal and Bihar and the overall situation led to a heightening of tensions in the period immediately preceding the war of 1965.

Other examples of the internal/external dynamic are the policies of Panchsheela and non-alignment. The consensus approach to the freedom struggle adopted by Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru brought a majority of Indians together to achieve its independence. Likewise Nehru sought to bring together the breath of the political spectrum through his foreign policy of Panchsheela and non-alignment. He was largely successful in bringing together views as disparate as conservative pro Western capitalists and communists. In this way NAM was not merely an Indian response to the external environment but an outgrowth of Indian internal politics and domestic conditions.⁸⁹

The on-going recurrences of communalist violence implies that, while India has the veneer of secularism enshrined in its constitution, the people have not accepted or internalised its secular ideology.⁹⁰ The Indo-Nepal dispute of the spring and summer of 1989 was primarily touched off by Nepal's flirtation with China as a source of arms. Gorkaland's demands for the inclusion of Nepali as one of the constitutionally recognised languages of India and the status of Nepali speakers in the rest of India, while subordinate to strategic considerations, did affect the external equation with Nepal.⁹¹

The mercenary style of politics employed by the Congress Party has had a deleterious effect on the ideology of secularism and Kashmir's desire to remain a part of the Indian state. This further erosion of the secular ideology, which had heretofore kept communalist violence in abeyance, is

⁸⁹ Partha Ghosh, "Domestic Sources of India's Policy of Non-alignment," *India Quarterly*, v. 36, 1980.

⁹⁰ A. Appadorai, *India's Foreign Policy and Relations*, p. 64.

⁹¹ Robert Bradnock, *India's Foreign Policy*, p. 28.

responsible for increased violence in Kashmir. The anti-Hindu, Muslim riots in Anantnag, Kashmir in February 1986 led Rajiv Gandhi to seek to placate the Muslim communalist sentiments through the introduction of the Muslim Women Protection of Rights of Divorce Bill that would exempt Muslims from Section 125 of the Criminal Procedures Act. The impact of internal tensions has led Hindus to ask the question: "are Muslims really committed to being Indian citizens or do they have an extraterritorial loyalty to Pakistan, the state that destroyed the unity of India in 1947 and remains its enemy?"⁹² As the levels of communalist violence grow, the Hindu majority is increasingly coming to the conclusion that the Muslim minority and other minority groups, including tribal and ethnic groups, are placing their primary identity ahead of that of the Indian state. This creates the perception that the minority groups are other than "Indian" as defined by the majority. Concomitant with this is the trend of Hindu revivalists to more closely identify the state with a Hindu identity. This effort represents a fundamental reorientation of the ideological basis of the modern Indian state. It should also be understood that this is not a reactionary movement but one that seeks to manufacture a new ideology of the state through redefinition of the myths of the state based on a Hindu identity emphasising strength rather than tolerance.

Neo-traditionalists are, within the Indian context, best conceptualised as constituting the new radical right. Through focusing attention on glorious notions of a Hindu past, as represented by the attention focused on Ram through the Ramjanmboomi issue, support for redefinition of the present allows a new future to be created. This process of reinterpreting the past began with the subordination of Muslim rule, which had been in place since the 12th century. With British rule came the opportunity of Hindu thinkers to reinterpret their past. During the freedom struggle leading thinkers sought to emphasise the eclectic, integrative, absorptive and tolerant aspect of Hindu culture to create an ideology which could allow the formation of a multi-religious, multi-ethnic state.⁹³ As tolerance gives way

⁹² Ainslie Embree, *Utopias in Conflict*, p.105.

⁹³ Many of the above mentioned themes concerning interpretations of Hindu culture have been discussed by Ainslie Embree in *Utopias in Conflict*.

to strength, India's external orientation will adjust to reflect the changing domestic ethos. The VHP reconverted 20,000 Muslims during the 1980s, despite the lack of an evangelist tradition within Hinduism.⁹⁴

Threatened by centrifugal tendencies, the centre is now in search of a ideology to counteract the entropy which is setting in. This ideology will either be a revitalised form of secularism or an ideology based on Hindutva.

Hindutva is built on the tenets of reformed Hinduism of the 19th century. Reformed according to the readings of those who saw Hinduism as inferior to the Semitic creeds, in turn seen as well bounded, monolithic, well organised and capable of sustaining the ideology of an imperial state.⁹⁵

The short sighted electoral policies of the Congress Party during the 1980s created an atmosphere where secular conventions and the rule of law were being undermined. Rajiv Gandhi both accentuated communal tension and showed that he would bow to vote bank pressure for electoral gain by not accepting the supreme courts ruling on the Shah Bano case, and by responding by introducing the Muslim Women's Bill. When the Hindu vote bank began to pressure him on Ayodhya he again shifted position. His stand on Shah Bano, and the extension of presidential rule in Punjab by amendment of the constitution, further undermined the rule of law. Rajiv Gandhi and the Congress Party were put on the electoral defensive by the BJP's attempt to carve out the biggest vote bank in India--the Hindu vote. It is the BJP's aim to cut across caste, class, region, language, or other subdividing categories of Indian society to capture Hindu India. The BJP's emphasis on the geographic aspects of the definition of the term Hindu also leaves room for non Hindus to join. Despite this, it is unlikely that its support base will expand beyond Hindi speaking north India.

The rise in internal tensions in the mid to late 1980s was mirrored by increasing signs of conflict between India and its neighbours, as demonstrated by *Operation Brass Tacks*, *Operation Checker Board*, the intervention in Sri Lanka, the deteriorated relations with Nepal and the

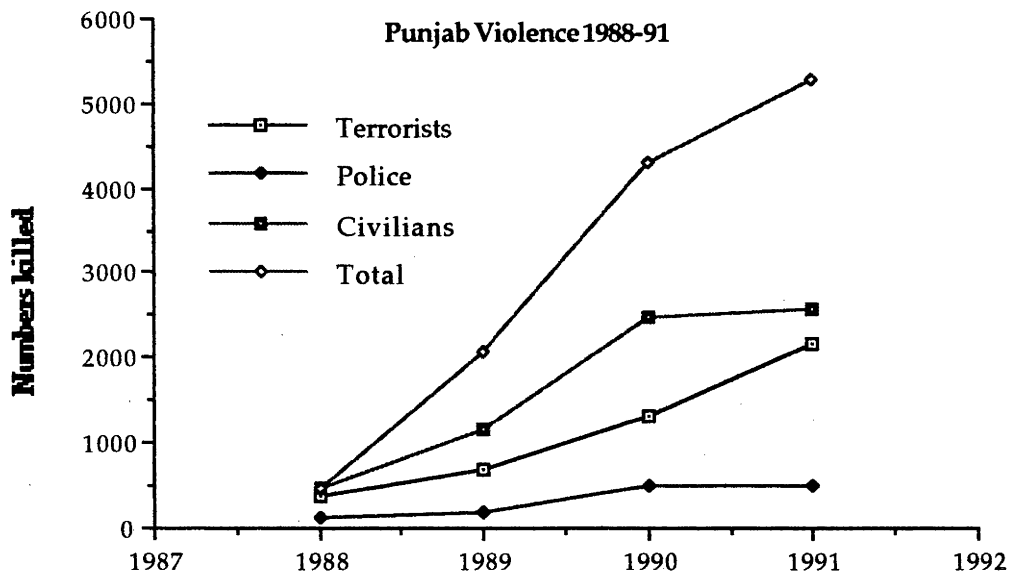
⁹⁴ Javed Ansari, "Evangelism Safron Style," *India Today*, 2/28/93, p. 50.

⁹⁵ Ashis Nandy, "Hinduism Versus Hindutva," *Times of India*, 2/18/91.

intervention in the Maldives. The question then arises as to whether or not there is a correlation between the rising levels of internal and external conflict. The existence of underlying insecurities between communities within India had been overlaid by the early political leaderships championing of the precepts of secularism.

As political life entered the realm of cynical political expediency, demonstrated by Indira's relationship with the radical Sikh movement in Punjab and the earlier manipulations of the politics of Kashmir, the restraint of secularism was withdrawn. Indira Gandhi's use of Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale as a political mercenary to aid her in an attack on the moderate Akali Dal contributed to the events which ultimately led to her death. Indira Gandhi, with Giani Zail Singh, home minister and later president, created a fundamentalist Sikh movement, led by Bhindranwale, to destabilise and split the the Akali Dal. The Akali Dal had been outspoken against Indira and the emergency. By attacking the Akali Dal, Indira hoped to create openings for a return of Congress to office in Punjab.⁹⁶ This delegitimised the legitimate sub-national and autonomous agenda, as opposed to militant and avowedly secessionist elements, such as the Dal Khalsa, which sought a separate Sikh state. The Sikh struggle has been radicalised by being cynically manipulated by the centre. This has brought Punjab to the brink of being irreversibly beyond a negotiated settlement.

⁹⁶ R. N. Kumar and G. Sieberer, *The Sikh Struggle*, pp. 249-59.



Source: Punjab Police as published in Hamish McDonald, "The Toll of Terror," *The Far East Economic Review*, 4/9/92 p.24

The underlying tensions resurfaced within the context of a Hindu community which sought to redress its siege mentality by asserting itself over those communities which it perceives as threatening. In this context, internal and external conflict are understood as part of a larger nexus between security environments. The nature of conflict in the subcontinent, and India's emerging position within it, is better understood by refraining from drawing rigid distinctions between discreet areas of conflict in international or domestic environments. The causal relationship is difficult to firmly establish but it does come closer to an explanation of India's behaviour than superficial discussions of India's need to be taken seriously as an international actor.

The above mentioned events resulted in no less than a communalist challenge to the secular state. In 1993, it was not clear which of these two national identities would predominate.

30.4 Emerging national identities: the communalist/fundamentalist challenge to the secularist state

The Babri Masjid/Ramjanboomi controversy highlighted the extent of Hindu-Muslim tensions in the north of India. This tension is not limited

to the Hindi belt heartland of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar since there are clear signs that the communalist tensions are spreading to other areas of India. The outbreak of extensive rioting in Bangalore and Mysore in Karnataka and more generally in central southern India during the 1980s bears this out.⁹⁷ Other states that have recently witnessed heightened levels of communalist violence are Jammu and Kashmir, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Gujrat, West Bengal and Madhya Pradesh.

Hindu chauvinism is cumulatively effecting a transformation of India from a secular to a communally based society. Its rhetoric and actions are divisive, and confrontational towards India's minorities. In January of 1992 Hindu nationalists planned to drive a motorcade from the south of India to Kashmir as part of a "pilgrimage of unity" and as an act of defiance against Muslim secessionists.⁹⁸ Though the caravan was halted by security forces who were unable to ensure its safety, BJP leader, M.M. Joshi, and 70 of his supporters were flown to Srinagar. There he carried the Indian national flag to the central square, Lal Chowk, "in a defiant gesture of Indian domination of the rebellious, predominantly Muslim region."⁹⁹ In addition, the VHP is committed to a structure at the Ayodhya site that will replace the destroyed Babri-Masjid Mosque.¹⁰⁰ L.K. Advani has called for "a clear cut stand "that would let the Pakistanis know "that there are limits to which [India] can tolerate" Pakistani intervention in Indian affairs.¹⁰¹

India's neighbours have further cause for concern should the BJP gain control of the government. The chief of the Shiv Sena, Bal Thackeray, in denying the militancy of his organisation's approach, stated that "we don't

⁹⁷ Dennis Austin and Anirundha Gupta, "The Politics of Violence in India and South Asia," *Conflict Studies*, July/August 1990, p. 8.

⁹⁸ This assertion of Hindu authority was concluded in 11 minutes while sporadic fighting carried on in the city. Edward Gargan, "Kashmir Caravan by Hindus is Halted," *The New York Times*, 1/26/92.

⁹⁹ Edward Gargan, "Airlifted Hindu Nationalists Fly Indian National Flag in Kashmir," *The New York Times*, 1/27/91.

¹⁰⁰ Gautam Navlakha, "A Show of Hindu Power," *Economic and Political Weekly*, 4/1/89. "Hindus Stop Work on Temple," *The Australian*, 7/2/92. Raju Golpanakrishna, "Hindu Militants Converge on Spot Near Disputed Shrine," *Reuters News Service*, 10/19/91.

¹⁰¹ "Advani for Realistic Approach on Pakistan," *Hindustan Times*, 12/7/90.

have a violent attitude. But if we are attacked, we will retaliate."¹⁰² He further demonstrates the growing defensive attitude of Hindus toward minority groups in the following. "Where will the Hindus go if the government and the minorities keep on behaving the way they do? ... This will remain saffron Hindustan." BJP President M. M. Joshi echoes these sentiments stating "This concept of minorities having different economic and political interests than anybody else is wrong."¹⁰³ Ashok Singhal of the VHP has predicted that "You will soon see within this country a vertical divide within each political party -- those who accept Hindu nationalism and those who don't." M. M. Joshi has articulated Hinduism as a "geo-cultural concept" and further proposed "that there should be a confederation [based on this geo-cultural concept] from Afghanistan to Indonesia" under India's influence. His vision for India is one where "India takes its place in the community of nations; a few centuries ago we were at the top of the world-- why can't we be again."¹⁰⁴

Despite the appearance of overwhelming support from the Indian electorate, the Congress party received less than 45% in most elections. The communal appeal which has been propelling the BJP's electoral success has always been a part of Indian politics. Post independence political parties can be thought of as communal or secularist in their orientation. Examples of the communal regional parties include the National Conference in Kashmir, the Akali Dal in Punjab, the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) of the south, Telugu Desam of Andhra Pradesh, and the Shiv Sena of Maharashtra.¹⁰⁵ The communists regional base of support in West Bengal is an exception to this general rule. What makes the communalism of the BJP a significant threat to secularism is that it has potential for pan-Indian support that the other secular parties do not.

¹⁰² This and the following two quotes are drawn from an interview with Bal Thackeray and Ashok Singhal in I. Badhwar, et. al, "Communalism: Dangerous Dimensions," *India Today*, p. 35.

¹⁰³ Interview, M. M. Joshi, BJP Party Headquarters Delhi, 2/7/91.

¹⁰⁴ Interview, M. M. Joshi, 2/7/91.

¹⁰⁵ Robert Bradnock, *India's Foreign Policy*, pp. 25 - 6.

30.41 The 1989 and 1991 elections

1989 Lok Sabha Election Results ¹⁰⁶	seats	%	% of vote
Congress	197	37%	40.3%
National Front			
Janata Dal	141	27%	18.3%
Telegu Desam	2	1%	3.4%
Congress (S)	1	-	-
BJP	86	16%	11.8%
Left Parties			
CPI (M)	32	6%	6.5%
CPI	12	2%	2.7%
Other Left	8	2%	1.1%
Others			
AIADMK	11	2%	1.6%
Akali Dal	6	1%	-
Bahujan Samaj Party	3	1%	-
Small Parties and Independents	30	6%	-

The most salient features of the 1991 elections are the gains made by the BJP. This weakened the status of the Congress Party. The 1991 elections marked the further expansion of coalition politics at the national level with regional parties becoming parties of national scope.¹⁰⁷

The BJP's electoral success was more significant than the numbers alone would suggest. In the 1989 election, the BJP increased its representation in Parliament to 86 seats. In the 1991 hustings, it increased its representation from 86 to 117. Its significant success in 1989 was made possible by collaboration on the issue of voting trade offs with V.P. Singh's Janata Dal and the National Front (NF). In the 1991 elections, there was no agreement between the BJP and the NF as to who would stand against Congress in which districts. The BJP stood on its own in 1991, consolidated

¹⁰⁶ There are a total of 545 seats in the Lok Sabha. Of these elections were held for 529 seats. Elections were not held for Assam's 14 seats or for the two Anglo-Indian seats. Richard Sission, "India in 1989: A Year of Elections in a Culture of Change," *Asian Survey*, February 1990, p. 122.

¹⁰⁷ In the November 1989 elections at least 110 people, including some candidates, were killed in election related violence. This is twice the figure killed in the 1984 election. "Big Gains for Hindu Fundamentalist Party." *The Australian*, 11/28/89.

its previous gains and expanded on them. Furthermore, Congress's performance was bolstered by the sympathy vote in the wake of Rajiv Gandhi's demise in the later two days of polling. The BJP's position is stronger because it captured power in the politically crucial areas of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. Between them, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar control 139 of a total of 545 seats in Parliament. Overall, the BJP increased its share of the popular vote from 11.5% to 23%.¹⁰⁸

The BJP would have had a larger victory had Rajiv Gandhi not been assassinated. The "sympathy vote" turned voters in favour of Congress. In this way Congress' Rajiv Gandhi, like his mother, helped his party even in death. This was most notable in Tamil Nadu where Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated.¹⁰⁹ There Congress gained a clear rout over the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK). The DMK had been closely associated with support for the Sri Lankan Tamil Tigers whom the Indian central bureau of investigation has indicated as being behind the assassination.¹¹⁰

The Indian voter is voting for change in the hope that eventually some government will implement programs to alleviate his/her problems. This reactive voting behaviour was evident in the 1989 elections when the south supported Rajiv Gandhi. Even the BJP who are the new-comers to government cannot escape the vote for change. In 1991 they lost seats in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Himachal Pradesh.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁸ Hamesh McDonald, "The Hindu Burden," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 6/27/91, p. 12.

¹⁰⁹ A Marketing and Research Group (MARG) poll indicated that there were significant shifts in support towards the Congress Party on the June 12th and 15th polling dates as opposed to the election trends on the opening polling date 20 May 1991. Rajiv Gandhi himself was swept into power on a massive sympathy wave based on the voter reaction to the assassination of Indira Gandhi in 1984. The fact that the sympathy vote did not have the same effect in 1991 as it did in 1984 can be attributed to the lack of another family member for the voting populace to extend their sympathy to. Rajiv's Italian born wife, Sonia refused to accept leadership of the party. Rajiv's two children were too young and without political experience. Further contributing factors to the diminished impact of the sympathy vote would be the time delay and the fact that Rajiv was assassinated in Tamil Nadu by foreign Tamils. In 1984, Indira's assassination by Sikhs in Delhi could immediately be vented on the local Sikh populations in the north. See also Hamesh McDonald, "Fractured Mandate," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 6/27/91, pp. 10-13.

¹¹⁰ Hamesh McDonald, "Fractured Mandate," pp. 10-13.

¹¹¹ The BJP came to power in these states in 1989. BJP Lok Sabha representation decreased from 27 to 12 seats of Madhya Pradesh's 40. In Rajasthan its share dropped from 13, to 12 of 25.

Hindu fundamentalism is promoted by a number of key organisations. The political wing is the Bharatiya Janata Party which has been making significant inroads into the national political arena. The Vishwa Hindu Parishad is a socio-religious body which has taken up the cause of Ram in the effort to promote Hinduism in India. The Hindu nationalist Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) is one of the earlier organisations which seeks to protect the Hindu faith. In addition there is the more extreme Shiv Sena.

The Shiv Sena are seeking to develop Hindu assertiveness and self confidence. A Shiv Sena area leader of the Thane district of Bombay describes his frustrations in the following way. "I have contempt for Gandhi. He believed in turning the other cheek. I believe that if someone slaps you, you must have the power to ask him why he slapped you, or you must slap him back. I hate the idea of non-violence."¹¹² This attitude is characteristic of the Hindu backlash against policies of accommodation and tolerance toward minority groups. With the scarcity of opportunity, majorities are less benevolent towards their minorities.

Roop Rekha Verma, professor of philosophy at Lucknow University, has highlighted the nature of the tension set by the Babri Masjid-Ramjanmboomi issue.

The Babri Mosque is a symbol. By removing it, the Hindus can show the Muslims they can't have everything their way. The Muslims know that the Mosque is useless, and has not been used for prayers for decades. But they know that after that, Hindu rule will come. In this situation how can the Muslims give up the mosque.¹¹³

The destruction of the Mosque at Ayodhya is the first step towards a redefinition of the foundational ideology of the Indian state. The

In Himachel Pradesh it dropped from 3, to 2 of 4. Hamesh McDonald, "The Hindu Burden," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 6/27/91, p. 13.

¹¹² V.S. Naipaul, *India: A Million Mutinies Now*, (Calcuta: Rupa & Co., 1990), p. 24.

¹¹³ Hamish McDonald, "Temple Trauma," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 11/7/91, p. 13.

Hindu chauvinist majority has shown that it can assert itself over the will of the government.

1991, Lok Sabha Election Results¹¹⁴

Congress	226
National Front	
Janata Dal	56
Telegu Desam	13
BJP	117
Left Parties	
CPI (M)	35
CPI	13
Others	
AIADMK	11
Small Parties and Independents	31

Only 53% of the eligible voters cast ballots in the 1991 election.¹¹⁵ This is the lowest turnout of any modern Indian election. This apathy reflects the exasperation of the Indian voter with the cynical quality of Indian politics. This dissatisfaction can be characterised by the "throw the rascals out" rule. The increasingly wary Indian voter in the 1991 election voted for change regardless of region or previous affiliation. The most significant change was the increase from 11.5% of the popular vote to 23% by the BJP.¹¹⁶

The degree of influence of Hindu fundamentalism can be measured by the non-Hindu parties willingness to bend their demands for fear of loosing the "Hindu" vote. On 9 November 1989, Rajiv Gandhi allowed a VHP bricklaying ceremony for the new temple at Ayodhya to proceed despite the earlier decision by then Home Minister, Buta Singh, to keep such ceremonies away from the site.¹¹⁷ In February of 1991, Chandra Swami

¹¹⁴ Walter Andersen, "India's 1991 Elections," *Asian Survey*, Oct. 1991, p. 980 and Hamish McDonald, "Fractured Mandate," *The Far Eastern Economic Review*, 6/27/91, p. 10.

¹¹⁵ The hot weather at the time of the elections also contributed to the low turn out. Barbara Crossette, "Disgruntled India: The Voters Make Clear Their Discontent, Giving No Party a Majority in Low Turnout," *The New York Times*, 6/18/91.

¹¹⁶ Support for the Communists of Bengal and the regional parties of the south are exceptions. Hamish McDonald, "The Hindu Burden," *The Far Eastern Economic Review*, 6/27/91, p. 12.

¹¹⁷ James Clad, "The Hindu Card," *The Far Eastern Economic Review*, 11/23/89.

courted Bal Thakeray of the Shiv Sena on behalf of Chandrashekhar.¹¹⁸ Prime Minister Rao raised only token opposition to the BJP assembly at Ayodhya which resulted in the Mosque's destruction. He was also reluctant to stop the BJP rally at the boat club in Delhi on 25 February 1993. The rally was to celebrate and consolidate the BJP's victories in the previous months. Rao agreed to oppose the rally only in the face of stiff cabinet opposition. Arun Singh emerged in early 1993 as a chief rival to Rao's leadership of the Congress Party by condemning Rao as soft on the BJP and Hindu fundamentalism.¹¹⁹

After their major success in the 1991 elections the BJP decided that they could win without having to pay too much attention to the minorities. This strengthened the position of the hard liners in the party.¹²⁰ The position of the hard-liners in the party was further reinforced as a result of intra-party struggles over future policy on Ayodhya in July of 1992 which subsequently led to the Mosque's destruction. M.M. Joshi, with his policy of continuing to push for construction at Ayodhya, was successful in sidelining L.K. Advani, A.B. Vajpayee and Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister, Kalyan Singh.¹²¹ The M.M. Joshi faction of the BJP and the VHP, in pressing their right to build a temple at the Ayodhya site made direct attacks on the secular policies of the Congress Party.¹²² The hard-line wing further seemed to have influence with the youth wing of the BJP when they picked up the theme of attacking pseudo-secularism by burning it in effigy in Delhi.¹²³ Despite these obvious signs of increasing militancy the Congress Party did little to openly challenge the Hindu agenda.

30.42 The electoral rise of Hindu parties

It is a historical curiosity to ponder whether the Congress Party and its somewhat elitist views would have ever come to occupy the central position

¹¹⁸ Ambrash Mishra, "PM's Overture to Shiv Sena," *Sunday Times*, 2/10/91. Swami is also popular with PM Rao.

¹¹⁹ I. Badhurwar and Y. Ghimire, "Battle for the Party," *India Today*, 2/28/93, p. 26.

¹²⁰ S.A. Aiyer, "The BJP Sold on the Hindu Card," *India Today*, 7/15/91.

¹²¹ Vida Subramaniam, "Joshi Group Tightens Grip on BJP," *The Statesman*, 7/22/92.

¹²² "BJP to Take on 'Pseudo-Secularists,'" *The Hindustan Times*, 7/16/92.

¹²³ "Youth Wing Burns Pseudo-Secularism in Effigy," *The Statesman*, 7/28/92.

which they eventually did without the assistance of Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru and the limited franchise of the early stages. The franchise in India in the provincial elections of 1937 only included 10% of the population. Mahatma Gandhi was crucial to the freedom struggle because he brought together the independent peasant and middle class movements for independence. In 1951 the franchise was extended to all adults and as a result the electorate jumped from 40 million to 200 million. The nature of politics has also changed as the electorate has expanded and larger numbers of people have been brought into the electoral process.¹²⁴

In the Western press, the BJP has been viewed, somewhat mistakenly, as a recent phenomenon. To make an accurate assessment of the degree to which Hindu fundamentalist views have influenced political discourse in India, and to be able to make an assessment of the proposition that they are gaining additional influence, it is necessary to be acquainted with the BJP's antecedents. The Jan Sangh, the Hindu Mahasabha as well as such organisations as the Shiv Sena, the RSS, and the VHP are the base upon which the BJP has established itself.

The first electorally significant modern Hindu fundamentalist organisation was the Hindu Mahasabha which held its first session in 1915.¹²⁵ Another of the early Hindu groups was the Ram Rajya Parishad, which was created after World War Two to defend orthodox Hinduism. In its initial stages, the Mahasabha existed both within and externally from the Congress movement though it subsequently broke in 1933 over Congress Party appeasement of Muslims.

It would be a mistake to view the Hindu communal movement as an expression of orthodoxy, unless this orthodoxy is seen in contrast to the more Westernized leadership of the country.¹²⁶

In 1925, the Mahasabha created the non-political organisation, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh or national volunteer corps, to act as the defenders of

¹²⁴ Ravinder Kumar, "The Past and the Present," p. 44.

¹²⁵ Myron Weiner, *Party Politics in India: The Development of a Multiparty System*, (Delhi: Low Price Publications, 1990), p. 166.

¹²⁶ Myron Weiner, *Party Politics*, p. 197.

the Hindu faith. Mahatma Gandhi's assassin was a member of the RSS. After having established itself, the RSS's membership wished to take a more active role in politics. Though not differing significantly from the Mahasabha, the RSS did not wish to be politically subordinate. The RSS decided in 1951 to form a successor organisation to the Mahasabha, the Jan Sangh, so as to be able to overtly enter politics. The Mahasabha achieved minimal electoral results in the 1952 and 1957 elections.

The Jan Sangh was formed in the early 1950s by Mookerji, a former president of the Mahasabha. The Jan Sangh was created on the principles of "one country, one nation, one culture and the rule of law [and advocated] nationalizing all non-Hindus by inculcating in them the idea of Bharatiya culture."¹²⁷

In the aftermath of the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi in January of 1948, the home minister had the heads of the RSS and the Mahasabha arrested. He further declared the two organisations unlawful.¹²⁸ Mahatma Gandhi had been killed by Nathuram Vinayak Godse who had been a member of both the Mahasabha and the RSS.¹²⁹ This had a significant negative impact on the image of these Hindu groups as the Mahatma was an admired and venerated figure. While the organisational structure remained intact the ban slowed electoral progress.

By plotting the electoral rise of the Hindu fundamentalist parties in India it becomes apparent that these have been long standing, ideologically indigenous political actors that have, by and large, maintained a rise in popularity since independence. The recent resurgence in the popularity of the BJP in the 1989 and 1991 elections is attributable to the growing frustration of the country with the secular basis of Congress Party rule. As we have seen in the preceding discussion of issues such as the concessions to linguistic minorities, the Shah Bano case, Article 370 granting land rights to

¹²⁷ Tariq Ali, *An Indian Dynasty*, p. 196.

¹²⁸ B.D. Graham, *Hindu Nationalism and Indian Politics: The Origins and Development of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 11.

¹²⁹ The current Leader of the Shiv Sena, Bal Thakeray, has remarked "We are proud of Nathuram Godse. He saved the nation from another partition." S.A. Aiyer, "The BJP Sold on the Hard Line," p. 62.

Kashmiris, the protection of shrines, etc. all have contributed to the Hindu majority's frustrations. These frustrations, exacerbated by continued economic difficulties, have created the necessary conditions for a Hindu backlash. This was effectively orchestrated by the BJP in the lead up to the 1991 elections through the Ramjanmboomi-Babri Masjid issue.

There are several factors which will limit the scope of BJP electoral inroads. One of the problems of Hindu fundamentalist electoral appeal is its inability to extend its electoral base of support beyond the Hindi belt. The different orientation towards Hinduism, the language issue and ethnic divisions will continue to act as significant impediments to the expansion of Hindu fundamentalist parties into the south of India. The BJP will also have difficulties, though less so, in those districts with concentrations of Muslims. With 11.4% of the total population,¹³⁰ which is concentrated in the north, the northeast and south central areas, Muslims can not be easily discounted. There was evidence in the 1991 election that the Muslim community cast its votes on the basis of opposition to the BJP.

Despite these limits the BJP is strongest in the Hindi heart land. The strength of the BJP rests with the young, urban, upper caste, Hindi speakers of the north of India. The strata of society in which the BJP is the most popular will be the strata from which India's bureaucrats and decision makers will be drawn. In Suren Navlakha's analysis of Hindu civil servants, industrial managers and university teachers, 83.9% of respondents were of upper-caste Hindu background. Their overall representation in the Hindu population is only 9.9%.¹³¹ Approximately 85% of India's population is Hindu. Even if the BJP remains thwarted in its drive to capture the centre it will continue to be a pivotal player in the electorally crucial areas and among the nation's decision making elite. They will be well placed to influence policy either through coalition, from outside government, or indirectly through the bureaucratic, managerial and educational institutions and structures.

¹³⁰ Paul Brass, *The New Cambridge History of India*, p. 189.

¹³¹ S. Navlakha, *Elite and Social Change*, p. 64.

An additional factor indicating an increased future role of Hindu fundamentalist influence in foreign affairs issues is the degree of popularity of Hindu fundamentalism among the expanding ranks of the urban middle classes. The BJP drew 27.7% of the urban vote as opposed to 17.5% of the rural vote in the 1991 elections. The Janata Dal was more reliant on the rural vote while the Congress Party was evenly split with 36.1 and 37.3 respectively.¹³² The urban voter, through his exposure to the media, is more aware of the nuances of foreign policy issues than the rural voter. He is more readily able to gain access to alternative media sources than the government owned All India Radio or Doordarshan.

In its election manifesto of 1989,¹³³ the BJP highlighted the importance of internal threats to India's national security "in strategically sensitive border states." The situation in Kashmir, Punjab, and the northeast were specifically identified. While calling for good relations with India's neighbours, the manifesto went on to state "We stand for normalization of relations with China, with due safeguards for Tibet, proper recognition of India's national interests and honourable solution of the border dispute." The manifesto outlines a seven point platform.

1. Work towards reimpacting dynamism to the non-aligned movement;
2. Pursue a policy of peace, friendship and cooperation with neighbouring countries;
3. Reject the domination of superpower interest in South Asia and the Indian Ocean;
4. Work towards the establishment of a regional common market by strengthening the South Asian Regional Conference;
5. Work for the establishment of a new international economic order, take initiative for trade and monetary reform, North-South dialogue with emphasis on enhanced South-South Co-operation;
6. Continued effort for world wide rejection of apartheid; and
7. Continuously work towards the solution of problems of people of Indian origin living abroad.

¹³² Marg Research Group Exit Poll, "How India Voted," *India Today*, 7/15/91, pp. 54-5.

¹³³ Bharatiya Janata Party, *Election Manifesto, Lok Sabha Elections, 1989*, (New Delhi: BJP Central Office, 1989), pp. 38-40.

In the area of defence the BJP accused the Rajiv Gandhi administration of bringing "to a standstill all policy making and implementation within the Defence Ministry." The Manifesto further articulated a six point policy on defence.

1. Optimum defence preparedness including production of nuclear bombs and delivery systems
2. Diversification of sources of supply of defence hardware, continued emphasis on maximising indigenous production, self reliance and defence research and development;
3. Greater accountability of defence expenditure;
4. Enhancement of Indian navy's capability;
5. Identification and elimination of foreign lobbies associated with defence weapons procurement and contracts; and
6. Improve service conditions in the armed forces so as to make careers more attractive to the best talent in the country.

Though the above platform includes many standard Indian policies, a number of departures from traditional Congress Party positions can be discerned. Further, with hindsight we can see Congress coming closer to its opposition on some policy positions over the intervening period of BJP electoral success. This pressure from the right reinforces the nuclear and missile programmes own impetus. Continued development of an intermediate range nuclear missile capability may endanger the hard won improvements in India's relations with both the United States and China since 1988.

As Narasimha Rao reorients India's foreign policy in the post-Gulf War environment, he has no choice but to remain committed to programs which are vital to a national image of strength. To back away from such programs as the Agni missile would serve to give the Hindu right an exclusive claim to being the party of strength. In a statement clarifying that India would not sign the NPT, Prime Minister Narasimha Rao called for "an independent foreign policy" that would not be "subservient" or subject to "arm twisting."¹³⁴ To hand the BJP the defence and foreign policy areas would be electoral folly. As a result, the Congress Party continues to oppose

¹³⁴ "We Will Not Sign the NPT: Rao," *The Hindu*, (int. ed.) 5/16/92.

American efforts to include India in regional nuclear non-proliferation talks, the missile technology control regime or a non-proliferation treaty while at the same time opening the Indian economy to the international market economy and courting technology assistance, such as the LCA project, and increased defence dialogue with the United States.¹³⁵

These incongruities came together on 28 May 1992 when India simultaneously participated in its first joint naval manoeuvres with the United States in the Arabian Sea and conducted a test fire launch of the nuclear capable Agni missile in the Bay of Bengal. Such timing can only be interpreted as sending a signal that India's improving relations with the United States will be pursued in tandem with continued independence of action.¹³⁶ Indian policy makers have expressed the sentiment that they have no choice but to continue with such programs or "risk being thrown out of office ..." ¹³⁷ Given Rao's emphasis on economic reform, one might wonder if he would be willing to jeopardise such an ambitious programme unless he felt compelled to do so.¹³⁸

¹³⁵ Defence Minister Pawar met with Secretary of Defence Cheney in April of 1992 where India was encouraged to contact American subcontractors and manufacturers concerning the development of the LCA. R. Chakrapani, "US to Help Push LCA Project," *The Hindu*, (int.ed.) 4/18/92.

¹³⁶ R. Chakrapani, "Pawar Sees Change in US Attitude," *The Hindu*, (int. ed.) 4/18/92 and "India-US Military Accord in Offing," *The Hindu*, (int. ed.) 4/18/92.

¹³⁷ Steve Coll, "India Tests Controversial Agni Missile," *The Washington Post*, 5/30/92 and Sanjoy Hazarika, "India Successfully Tests a Medium Range Missile," *The New York Times*, 5/31/92.

¹³⁸ Note for the following chart: In the 1977 election, the Jan Sangh joined the Janata coalition along with the Congress (O), Swantantra, Socialist, and Bharatiya Lok Dal Parties. The Coalition won in 1977 with 298 Lok Sabha seats. In the 1980 election Janata polled only 31 Lok Sabha seats. Percentages are rounded to .5.

Sources: Walter Andersen, "Elections 1989 in India: The Dawn of Coalition Politics," *Asian Survey*, 6/6/90, Hamesh McDonald, "Puppet on a String: New Prime Minister Rules at the Mercy of Congress," *The Far Eastern Economic Review*, 11/22/90, p. 8. High Commission of India, "Official Tally of Lok Sabha Results," *India News*, 12/20/89, Walter Andersen and Shridhar Damle, *The Brotherhood in Saffron*, (Delhi: Vistaar Publications, 1987), pp. 263-6, James Clad, "Congress Falls But Opposition Fails to Win a Majority: A Mixed Verdict," *The Far Eastern Economic Review*, 12/7/89, Myron Weiner, *Party Politics in India*, (Delhi: Low Price Publications, 1990), Unattributed, "National Alternative to Congress: The Non-Left Parties," (Islamabad: Institute of Regional Studies, 1989), Electoral Commission India, *Report on the First General Election 1951-2, vols. 1&2* (New Delhi: Government of India Press, 1955), Election Commission India, *Report on the Second General Election in India 1957 vols. 1&2*, (Faridabad: Government of India Press, 1959), M. Pattabhiram, *General Election India 1967*, (Bombay: Allied Publishers, 1967), S.P. Varma and Iqubal Narain, eds. *Fourth General*

Hindu Parties electoral performance: Lok Sabha and state assemblies

		Lok Sabha		State Assemblies	
1952	Hindu Mahasabha	4		20	
	Jan Sangh	3		33	
	Ram Rajya Parishad	<u>3</u>		<u>32</u>	
		10	3%	85	3%
1957	Hindu Mahasabha	2			
	Jan Sangh	<u>4</u>		46	
		6	6%		4%
1962	Hindu Mahasabha			8	
	Jan Sangh	14		113	
	Ram Rajya Parishad			<u>13</u>	
			6.5%	134	6%
1967	Jan Sangh	35	9.5%	268	9%
1971	Jan Sangh	22	7.5%		
1977	Jan Sangh	91	14%		
1980	Jan Sangh	14	8.5%	147	
1984	Bharatiya Janata Party	2	7.5%	167	
1989	Bharatiya Janata Party	86	11%	556	
1991	Bharatiya Janata Party	117	20%		
	Shiv Sena	<u>4</u>			
		121			

The most plausible explanation for the parallel rise in Indian domestic political violence and an assertive external posture, beginning in the 1960s and rising dramatically in the 1980s, is the failure of the central government to deal with the rising expectations of its population. This frustration has led to the formation of groups who increasingly express these feelings through

Election in India vols. 1&2, (Bombay: Orient Longman, 1970) and Craig Baxter, *The Jan Sangh: A Biography of an Indian Political Party*, (Philadelphia: University of Philadelphia Press, 1969).

violent acts. The political leadership, on the one hand, opportunistically manipulates these circumstances to capitalise on them for short term electoral gain. This further exacerbates these tensions. On the other hand, the leadership resorts to placing blame on external sources thereby deflecting criticism from itself while attempting to create national solidarity by creating a common enemy. In this atmosphere relations with Pakistan and China are under threat of deteriorating. Blaming an external enemy also puts off the resolution of the conflict by creating the false impression that the government is not in a position to rectify the problem.

What does seem clear is that the secularist ideology that served as a foundation to the modern Indian state is eroding. Indeed, the 1990s will witness the struggle between those who seek to adhere to the secularist identity and those Hindus who are seeking to redefine India's identity through Hindutva. The destruction of the Babri-Masjid Mosque has led to escalating alienation and intercommunal strife as demonstrated by the ensuing anti-Muslim pogrom in Bombay in January of 1993 and the suppression of a BJP mass demonstration at the Boat Club in Delhi in February of 1993. When unable to hold the February demonstration, party leader A.B. Vajpayee stated that "When the central government prevents the people of the country from entering the capital, it shows it has a screw loose ... This is the death knell for democracy."¹³⁹ In order to suppress the demonstration, the Rao Government arrested over 45,000 Hindu fundamentalists across the country and brought into the capital more security forces than had been witnessed since before independence.¹⁴⁰ When the government is besieged by its own people democracy itself is in danger.

This process of erosion may not be irreversible but, at a minimum, India has a long period of readjustment to reconcile those forces which are threatening the secularist foundation.

Without a countervailing politics rooted in some notion of transcendental service (which, for all its faults, did animate the

¹³⁹ Edward Gargan, "Police in India Block Big Rally Arresting 1,000," *The New York Times*, 2/26/93.

¹⁴⁰ Edward Gargan, "Indian Police Seize Tens of Thousands to Block Protest," *The New York Times*, 2/25/93.

socialism of India's first two decades of independence), the Kautilyan antecedent seems set to prevail.¹⁴¹

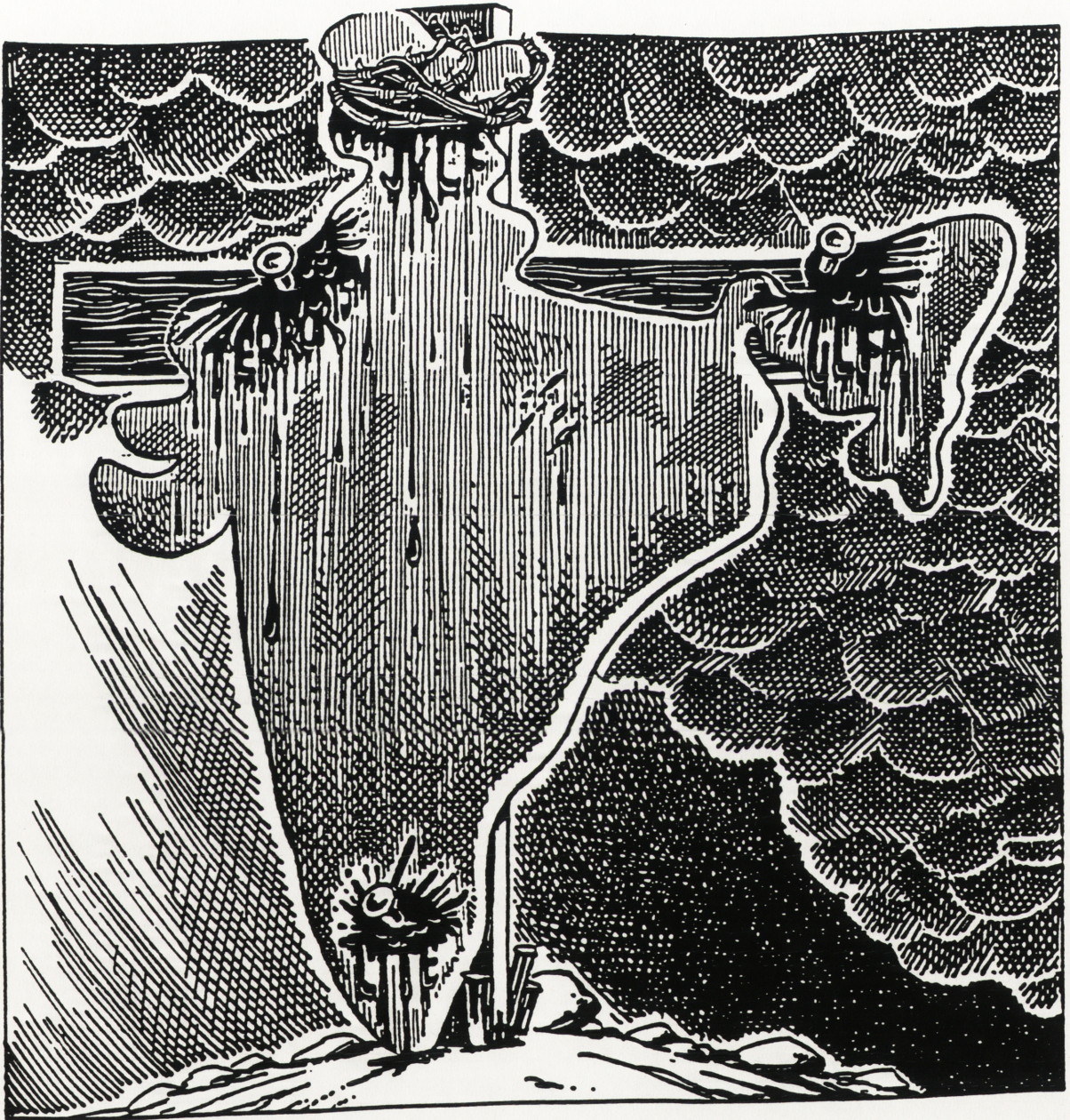
The particular ideological orientation of Indian society and politics is important not for making projections as to whether or not India will emerge as a powerful state, which is a matter of time, but for understanding the purposes to which that power will be applied. There is a building sense within India of wanting to be taken seriously on the world stage. This is most notable amongst elites and the rising middle classes. The extent to which this is indicative of a broader consensus in the country at large is difficult to firmly establish. Domestic social and economic issues will continue to dominate the political attention of the average Indian for some time to come. As these domestic issues become entangled in regional politics and the global political economy, the Indian voter will increasingly have to come to terms with the external environment.

India, as a heterogeneous, multi-ethnic, multi-religious society may become vulnerable to the spread of ethno-nationalist and secessionist movements. If such sub-national units as Croatia, Slovenia, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Moldova are successful in their attempts to realize national sovereignty, India may find itself increasingly hard pressed to maintain central control over newly emboldened secessionist movements. India may conclude that it must address the problem by cutting the militants off from external support. Existing efforts to interdict cross border assistance at the border or within India have met with mixed results in their efforts to stem the flow of weapons. Opinion may shift to view a war with Pakistan as a necessary defensive step to preserve India's unity. Evidence that this view is gaining credence is appearing. Retired counter insurgency specialist Major General Afsir Karim projects an escalation of Pakistani support for insurgents in Kashmir and Punjab. This may in turn trigger a recourse to the military option to stem the rising tide of support.¹⁴² Conversely, recent counterinsurgency operations in Punjab may indicate the enduring strength of the Indian state. What is certain is that as long as there are significant

¹⁴¹ James Clad, "India: Crisis and Transition," *The Washington Quarterly*, winter 1992, p. 101.

¹⁴² "Intervention by Pakistan: India May Use Military Option," *The Statesman*, 7/28/92.

disaffected groups within the society there will be some level of friction and conflict. If the alienated peripheral elements have little to lose, have a base of support and the hope of gaining concessions, conflict of varying degrees of intensity will remain. As this conflict continues, the mainstream Hindu community may further move away from a tolerant view of minorities to an antagonistic one.



Source: Ajit Ninan, *India Today*, 7/31/91, p.48.

CHAPTER FOUR

Whoever controls the Indian Ocean dominates Asia. This Ocean is the key to the seven seas. In the twenty first century the destiny of the world will be decided on its waters.

-Alfred Thayer Mahan¹

40. Geopolitical factors as parameters of India's strategic and international affairs

From the above statement it is apparent that Mahan appreciated the geopolitical importance of the Indian Ocean. Conceptually, Mahan approached the region from an extra-regional maritime perspective. In this way he emphasised the control of the Ocean as the key to controlling the littoral, and as a result Asia and the Eurasian world island. Indian geopolitical thinking centres itself first in either the northern Gangetic plain or the southern Indian peninsula which projects into the Indian Ocean. In this way Indian geopolitics are centred on the littoral.

The Indian Ocean has been an integral part of the history of the peoples of the southern Malabar and Coromandel coasts. For India's geopolitical position it is important that India extend its influence in the Indian Ocean to prevent maritime powers from projecting themselves onto the shores of India. Further, the Indian perspective, unlike Mahan, views the Pamir, Karakorum and the Himalayan mountain ranges as natural barriers to the Eurasian interior. The degree to which transmigration, invasion and exchange has occurred between the subcontinent and Central, Southwest and Southeast Asia has been dependent on surmounting the mountainous terrain of the northwest and northeast frontiers. Further cultural and trade relations were established with Southeast Asia through maritime contact.

Colin Grey, in *The Geopolitics of Superpower*, uses George Luttwak's definition of geopolitics as, "the relation of international political power to

¹ As quoted in P.S. Gupta, "The Indian Ocean and World Politics: Reflections on its Future," *India Quarterly*, July/December, 1987, p. 195.

the geographical setting."² The pre-eminent Indian geopolitician, K.M. Panikkar has defined geopolitics "as the study of the state in space, that is an attempt to analyse and understand the permanent political factors arising from geographical features of a country."³ Grey correctly identifies Sir Halford Mackinder as the "intellectual father of U.S. containment." The work of Mackinder, along with that of Mahan, Spykman and Haushofer, was known to K.M. Panikkar, the intellectual father of modern Indian geopolitics.⁴ Working within the accepted Clauswitzian notion of war, or military force, as "a continuation of political commerce, a carrying out of the same by other means,"⁵ a slightly modified definition which includes an internal dynamic is used in this chapter. Geopolitics is here defined as the relation of international and sub-national political power to the geographical setting.

To Panikkar, "geopolitics in relation to the countries of the rimland has to work out other doctrines, which are more closely related to their development."⁶ Much of his work was devoted to modifying geopolitics as a framework for understanding India's position. One of the objectives of this chapter is to examine Indian notions of its territorial delineations.

² Colin Grey, *The Geopolitics of Superpower*, (Lexington: The University of Kentucky Press, 1988), p. 4 and Colin Grey, *The Geopolitics of the Nuclear Era*, (New York: Crane Russak and Co., 1977).

³ K.M. Panikkar, *Geographical Factors in Indian History*, (Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1955), p. 89.

⁴ Other Indians who write from the geopolitical perspective include Baldev Raj Nayar, *American Geopolitics and India*, (New Delhi: Manohar Book Services, 1976), Admiral S.N. Kholi, "The Geopolitical and Strategic Considerations that Necessitate the Expansion and Modernization of the Indian Navy," *Indian Defence Review*, Jan. 1989, pp. 33-46, Manorama Kholi, "Indian Foreign Policy: A Geopolitical Perspective," *India Quarterly*, Oct.-Dec. 1990, pp. 33-40, B.L. Sukhwai, *India: A Political Geography*, (New Delhi:1971), Vice Admiral M.P. Awati, "Islands of the Indian Ocean: A Geopolitical and Geostrategic Assessment," *The Indian Ocean Review*, January 1991 and Pradyumna Karan, "India's Role in Geopolitics," *India Quarterly*, Sept., 1953, pp. 160-9. Other South Asian authors include, Mohammed Ismail Siddiqi, "Inter- and Intra-regional Conflicts in Pakistan's Border Landscapes," in Dennis Rumley and Julian Minghi, *The Geography of Border Landscapes*, (London: Rutledge Publishers, 1991) and Mahnaz Ispahani, *Roads and Rivals: The Political Uses of Access in the Borderlands of Asia*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989).

⁵ Carl Von Clausewitz, *On War*, (New York: Penguin Books, 1968), p. 119.

⁶ K.M. Panikkar, *Geographical Factors in Indian History*, p. 13.

There are some contradictions in Panikkar's work on the question of India's natural boundaries and its expansion beyond them. In *Geographical Factors in Indian History*, Panikkar stated that "one of the preoccupations of European geopolitics, that is the desire for space, has not the same significance in India."⁷ He also describes "extra Indian" territory as an "unnatural geographical agglomeration" for Indian rulers.⁸ Panikkar referred to the Kautilyan definition of what is "Indian" territory. "Kautilya defined Chakravarti Patha or the empire state as extending 2,000 yojanas from the Himalayas across the peninsula of India."⁹ Later Panikkar observed that "Wherever the Hindus colonised they took with them their love of the Himalayas."¹⁰ The act of colonising includes a desire of a power to extend a political unit's control over territory not already under its control.

While there is a valuable body of theoretical literature in the geopolitical area,¹¹ it was discredited as a consequence of Hitler's adaptation of Haushofer's work to justify his concepts of *Liebensraum* and *drang nach osten* which led to the policy of ethnic cleansing of Jews and Slavs from territory so that it would be suitable for the occupation of the German race. Of those who continue to write from a geopolitical perspective, the work of Jean Gottman and Saul Cohen stands out.¹² Generally, contemporary South Asian regional security analysts tend not explicitly to use the perspective.¹³

⁷ K.M. Panikkar, *Geographical Factors in Indian History*, p. 20. Panikkar examines in great detail the maritime traditions and exploits of the Southern Indians in Southeast Asia in *India and the Indian Ocean*.

⁸ In this case Panikkar is describing Chandragupta Maurya's control of the Hindu Kush. K.M. Panikkar, *Geographical Factors in Indian History*, p. 20.

⁹ K.M. Panikkar, *Geographical Factors in Indian History*, p. 20.

¹⁰ K.M. Panikkar, *Geographical Factors in Indian History*, p. 37.

¹¹ Three of the most influential works are Sir Halford Mackinder, *Democratic Ideals and Reality: A Study in the Politics of Reconstruction* (New York: Henry Holt and Co. Publishers, 1942), A.T. Mahan, *The Influence of Seapower on History, 1660-1783*, (London: Sampson Low, Marston & Co. Ltd., 1890) and Nicholas Spykman, "Heartland and Rimland," in R. Kasperson and J. Minghi, *The Structure of Political Geography*, (Chicago: Aldine Publishers, 1969).

¹² Jean Gottman, *Centre and Periphery: Spatial Variation in Politics*, (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1980). Saul Cohen, *Geography and Politics in a World Divided*, (New York: Random House Publishers, 1963), Saul Cohen, "Global Geopolitical Change in the Post-Cold War Era," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Dec. 1991 and Geoffrey Parker, *Western Geopolitical Thought in the Twentieth Century*, (London: Croom Helm, 1985). An innovative perspectives on geopolitics includes Richard Ashley, "The Geopolitics

40.1 India's changing conceptions of its security environment

India's perception of its external security environment has evolved through several phases since independence. India inherited three political traditions that were to have an impact on the way in which it formed its security perceptions of its national security environment. In the immediate post independence period both Gandhian concepts (such as ahimsa and satyagraha) and colonial traditions inherited from the British Raj "made uneasy bed fellows."¹⁴ A third and interestingly important tradition is the Hindu fundamentalist perspective. This is potentially the most significant catalyst of change for the way India perceives its external environment.

While this third perspective is in process of reinterpretation its origins are to be found in the works of Kautilya. The Kautilyan concept of the circle of states, as discussed in the previous chapter, has at its core a firmly grounded notion of geopolitics. George Modelski has described the mandala of states in the following way. "By developing further the axiom that neighbourhood entails actual or potential opposition or enmity, he deems the King beyond the ari to be an enemy of ari and therefore a friend (mitra)..."¹⁵ This locational determinism of geopolitics on the subcontinent is more persuasive in a world limited to states with ideologies similar to Hindu society. The concept suffers somewhat when competing ideologies are introduced into the equation. Nevertheless, it is likely that India will continue to court Afghanistan, Iran and Russia to balance Pakistan and China.

of Geopolitical Space: Toward a Critical Social Theory of International Politics," *Alternatives*, XII, 1987.

¹³ For a recent exception see, Peter Lyon, "South Asia and the Geostrategics of the 1990s," *Contemporary South Asia*, 1 (1), 1992.

¹⁴ S. Gordon, "Domestic Foundation of India's Security Policy," in Babbage and Gordon, *India's Strategic Future*, p. 6.

¹⁵ G. Modelski, "Kautilya: Foreign Policy and International System in the Ancient Hindu World," *The American Political Science Review*, Sept. 1964, p. 554.

It is difficult to understate the importance of the centre-periphery relationship within both India and South Asia.¹⁶ From a geopolitical perspective the centre-periphery dynamic is far more salient than the Western notion of the frontier. The dichotomised view of national and international territory is not held as strongly in South Asian cultures as it is in the West. The integration of internal and external security was effected in July of 1970 when the Foreign Affairs Committee of Cabinet and the Internal Affairs Committee were merged. The need for an integrated approach had been understood by Nehru who stated that "External affairs will follow internal affairs."¹⁷ India's strength in the South Asian periphery will be weakened as long as its internal periphery is itself open to external manipulation.

Ultimately, India will be forced to resolve its sub-national problems, at both the internal and external levels. Internal reform and the effective cutting of cross border support to India's insurgents will be necessary to quell the rampant internal strife that shatters India's peace. While first placing India within a wider geopolitical context, this chapter will focus on India's three key strategic frontiers, the northwest frontier, the northeast frontier and the Indian Ocean. This is in addition to discussion of the centre-periphery relationship. The tension between Delhi and those dissatisfied sub-national groups peripheral to the Indian state, has a direct bearing on India's geopolitical position. The chapter will also further examine the relationship between India's internal turmoil and its relations with its neighbours by examining how these developments affect India's geopolitical position in South Asia and the Indian Ocean regions.

As discussed in Chapter Two, Nehru's foreign policy was based on the mixture of concepts of Panchsheela, the NAM and realism. While the concepts of Panchsheela did not incorporate fully the Mahatma's notions of peaceful resistance, they did reflect the idealistic values of the struggle for

¹⁶ For a brief discussion of centre-periphery in South Asia see Nirmal Bose, "The Centre-Periphery Relationship: Problems of Separation in India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka," in Gean Gottman, *Centre and Periphery*. Bose, in viewing Bangladesh as "one insofar as their cultural identity is assumed" fails to recognise the distinct character of the Chakma. p. 213.

¹⁷ A. Appadorai, *India's Foreign Policy and Relations*, p. 13.

independence. With defence spending kept below two percent prior to 1962 the nation's security was, to a large extent, placed in a faith in fraternal relations. The NAM similarly reflected this idealistic vision for basing foreign relations on a more progressive policy.

The influence of idealism on notions of security gave way to real politik in the wake of the 1962 breach of the Himalayan barrier by the Chinese. This humiliating defeat by a fellow developing Asian state was devastating to both Nehru and the nation. Indian security policy henceforth shifted to a more realistic footing. The Third World had, with exceptions, been thought to be in league with newly independent India due to the shared colonial experiences and the common need for economic development. Now the Third World, as well as the First World, came to be perceived as potentially adversarial. It is at this point in India's development that India began to meaningfully develop its military capabilities and defence doctrine along realist lines. In pursuit of a defence doctrine, India returned to familiar British traditions and conceptions of subcontinental security.

India's national security self image has thus far lacked the confidence necessary for it to consistently act as the regional hegemon. This insecurity is part of the weak/strong conceptualisation of security as interpreted by Sandy Gordon. Since 1971 India has been acquiring confidence through its achievements such as its defeat of Pakistan in 1971, its highly successful Agni missile program and the Maldives intervention. Conversely, there remains a high degree of anxiety over the multiple stresses which have been impairing national security. This theme of the threat to national unity has been used by both Indira and Rajiv Gandhi as a way of mobilizing political support behind their banners of national leadership. This was demonstrated in 1981, when Pakistan acquired 40 F-16 aircraft from the United States, and also in 1989 during the lead up to the elections of that year.¹⁸

The seeming incongruity of the weak/strong conceptualization of security is understandable under the present circumstances. In the long

¹⁸ S. Gordon in R. Babbage and S. Gordon, *India's Strategic Future*, p. 15.

term, India is in transition from being the leading power in South Asia to becoming the dominant power of the Indian Ocean region. In the short term, internal strife, the loss of Soviet support and the turmoil of economic reform have all diminished India's standing in its immediate region. One definition of a great power is a state that can project power outside its immediate region. As long as India cannot project its power beyond its immediate borders it will fail to attain great power status.

The Indian Ocean region is itself comprised of several regions.¹⁹ There are five key factors which continue to inhibit the expansion of Indian influence beyond South Asia and the northern reaches of the Indian Ocean. These are, 1. the continued resistance of Pakistan to concede to Indian hegemony, (even within South Asia), 2. continuing internal strife, 3. rivalry with China, 4. intra-regional and extra-regional resistance to the Indian Ocean becoming an Indian lake and 5. the need for economic reforms to take hold and yield the high rates of growth to sustain India's ambitions in the region.

What can be observed, from an analysis of both Indian external behaviour and the thinking of key Indian strategic thinkers, is an increased desire for India to assume a more significant role on the world stage. India desires a role commensurate with its size and self-perceived sense of coming of age in the international arena. These manifest themselves in a new and expanding definition of India's region, the emerging "Hindu" identity, a self-reliant military-bureaucratic complex and an increased willingness to acquire and use military capabilities in support of foreign policy and security initiatives. A willingness to use acquired capabilities was demonstrated in Bangladesh in 1971, operations *Brass Tacks* and *Checkerboard* in 1987 and through the interventions in the late 1980s in Sri Lanka and the Maldives.

A central objective of India's national security posture has been the enhancement of India's international status. India's "employment of

¹⁹ These eight regions are, Southern Africa, East Africa and the Horn of Africa, The Persian Gulf, South Asia, Southeast Asia, Australia and the islands of the Indian Ocean. William Dowdy and Russell Trood, *The Indian Ocean: Perspectives on a Strategic Arena*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 1985).

military resources as a status enhancement mechanism"²⁰ can be seen as a means of promoting its national interests on the international stage. This could be perceived as a way of transforming significant regional military power, or a regional preponderant influence, into global, world-order influence. What has been termed the Rodney Dangerfield approach would, in this way, transform regional military power into status, and then in turn, into tangible world-order input.²¹ Thus India seeks to

translate heightened regional influence into acceptance as a major participant in global security and political arrangements. This policy determination is likely driven by prestige and other psychological considerations.²²

If India can establish its credentials as a middle power equivalent to that of its former colonial overlord it would be in a better position to demand a global role commensurate with its new self-perceived power position.

The Indira Doctrine²³ is India's equivalent to the Monroe Doctrine. The Indira doctrine seeks to establish India as the unchallenged regional hegemon. What is potentially alarming about the Indira Doctrine, to states outside South Asia, is not India's assertions of a right to exert a preponderant influence over states in its region, but that the definition of India's region is itself expanding. The Indira Doctrine, when wedded with an expanding notion of what constitutes India's "region," presents the broader region with the prospect of an expanding power. Indian foreign policy will be the product of the on-going debate between realist and idealist inspired practitioners and theorists of India's strategic and international affairs.

²⁰ Jerrold Ekin and Andrew Ritezal, "India," in D. Murray and P. Viotti, *The Defense Policies of Nations: A Comparative Study*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), p. 523.

²¹ Raju Thomas put forward the Rodney Dangerfield theory that India "can't get no respect" and as a result has been building up its military muscle as a means of achieving the desired respect, at a conference on India's Strategic Future at the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, The Australian National University, in April of 1990.

²² J. Elkin and A. Ritezal, "India," p. 527.

²³ Babani Sen Gupta, "The Indira Doctrine," *India Today*, 8/31/83.

The overriding primary objective of the military in India has been, and remains, the maintenance of India's territorial integrity. India's statements with regard to the presence of extra-regional powers have been traditionally set in terms of the rhetoric of the Non-Aligned Movement. Opposition to foreign bases, the Zone of Peace Proposal, and solidarity with other developing nations have been an amalgam of the Non-Aligned component of India's foreign policy. This position derives from a desire to secure the region against outside competition. What is interesting, is the distinction between the rhetoric used, and the reality of the strategic environment, and the way in which the policy making elites have conceptualised that external environment. Despite the decreasing importance of idealism in the formation of Indian strategic thought and policy, there is a continued reliance upon its rhetoric to promote India's image both within the international and domestic spheres. The emphasis on rhetoric is such that the Non-Aligned Movement as ideology has become reified as the objective, rather than as a means, of foreign policy.

It has been proposed by Elkin and Ritezal that Indian military doctrine has the two-fold objective of the "creation of asymmetrical power relations with South Asia states and a greatly augmented maritime force projection capability."²⁴ While the above quote remains fundamentally unchanged there are a number of modifications warranting a review. Economic constraints, the military-technological implications of the Gulf War and continuing internal strife all have an impact on the geopolitical equation. While the economic factors will be discussed in the next chapter, this section will focus on the internal-external nexus and its impact on India's strategic frontiers.

Despite the continuum in fundamental objectives, India is adjusting to the changing geostrategic realities made evident by the Gulf War. The importance of air superiority and the efficacy of high technology weapons are not to be underestimated. The importance of weapons of mass destruction as a potential deterrent to superpower involvement in the Third World was also highlighted by the war. General discussion of the war

²⁴ J. Elkin and A. Ritezal, "India," p. 257.

during the preparatory stages emphasised the chemical and potential nuclear weapons of Iraq. These weapon systems were proven to be valuable for their negative impact on the enthusiasm of the public in democratic countries for initiating hostilities. Their value in operational terms is less, especially when weighed against the ability of First World powers to respond in kind. By having the capability to raise the perceived costs of war, these weapons systems become appealing to second order powers as a deterrent to superpower intervention, despite larger stocks of weapons in First World arsenals.

Based on the trends of India's expanded military capabilities, as discussed in Chapter Two, it appears that India is preparing to move beyond its immediate position within South Asia. If this is the case, India will acquire those additional weapons systems²⁵ necessary to project its influence out into the Indian Ocean and its littoral regions. While this portrays India as an aggressive power it is the position of this study that India is motivated to seek greater power for several reasons. A desire for internationally recognized status, continuing insecurities and, to a lesser extent, the presence of a small elite that genuinely desire India to become a hegemonic power in the region all contribute to this motivation. The security elite²⁶ has come to perceive security and defence issues in both a Western-realist manner as well as from a South Asian perspective. They seek to augment India's power in both real and symbolic ways.

These are the reasons why India will continue to seek greater influence among the island states of the Indian Ocean, and in the Persian Gulf, Southeast Asia and Central Asia. The interventions in the Maldives and in Sri Lanka are here interpreted as the beginnings of an expanding posture. Off-shore interests such as ethnic Indians abroad, the exclusive economic zone (EEZ), sea-borne trade or deep sea bed mining may also push India to expand its interests beyond its territorial waters. The chapter now

²⁵ Such systems as nuclear submarines, ballistic missiles, extended range aircraft, aircraft carriers and amphibious forces are therefore of particular interest to those seeking to ascertain India's motives and defence doctrine.

²⁶ The nature and composition of the decision-making elite will be discussed in Chapter Six.

shifts to discuss India's historical inheritance and its affect on geopolitical perceptions.

40.11 The "Great Game" and the inheritance from the Raj

As the Russian border was being extended to the south and east during the 19th century, the boundaries of the subcontinent were being pushed to the north and west by the British and their allies. This was often at the expense of the Chinese. Gulab Singh's forays into Jammu-Kashmir led to his eventual control over the region in 1846. He successfully extended his influence into Ladakh in 1834 and Tibet briefly in 1841. The Anglo-Afghan Wars of 1839-42 and 1878-81 were also waged to secure the north west frontier. The Gurkhas conquest of Nepal and their unsuccessful invasion of Tibet in 1792 and the subsequent extension of British influence into Nepal as a consequence of the Anglo-Gurkha War of 1814-16 extended subcontinental influence to the northeast. These moves were followed by influence over Sikkim in 1890, Tibet in 1904 and Bhutan in 1910.²⁷

These efforts of the British, Sikhs and Gurkhas to extend their borders were associated more with geopolitics than religion or ideology. When India assumed political legitimacy it also assumed responsibility for subcontinental security. This reality differs little from the reality confronting the British. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 and the communist Chinese invasion of Tibet in 1949-50 can only be properly understood within their historical geopolitical settings. So too must we view India's actions on its borders in this context. Marxist/Leninist and now nationalist (as opposed to Czarist) Russia, Maoist (as opposed to imperial) China and modern India (as opposed to the Raj) are all more recent manifestations of existent states whose geopolitical imperatives have not been significantly modified despite changes in the dominant ideology of the state.²⁸

²⁷ See Peter Hopkirk, *The Great Game: On Secret Service in Central Asia*, (London: John Murray Publishers, 1990), Neville Maxwell, *India's China War*, (Bombay: Jaico Publishing, 1970) and K.M. Panikkar, *The Evolution of British Policy Towards Indian States 1774-1858*, (Delhi: Mital Publications, 1986).

²⁸ This again raises the question of what the impact of the rise of Hindu fundamentalism will be on Indian Geopolitics. While it will not change India's fundamental position it may

There were two schools of thought on the question of British India's borders. The first was the forward school whose proponents advocated pushing India's borders forward to meet the challenge extended by Russia. This was motivated by the belief that conflict with Russian interests was inevitable and that it would be best to engage Russia as far as possible from the Indian plains. The second school of thought was concerned with the cost of such a forward strategy and advocated instead the support of buffer states to protect British interests. Its advocates supported independence for Afghanistan and Hunza and sought to encourage Chinese influence in Sinkiang and Tibet as a means of preventing the extension of Russian influence into those regions. The forward school was of the view that only by extending India's control into these regions could its borders be protected. This forward strategy eventually led Britain to invade Afghanistan. During the first Afghan War of 1838-42 the initial British army of some 16,000 was destroyed by the Afghans whilst withdrawing from Kabul. The remnants of this army made their final stand at Gandamak in the winter of 1842.²⁹

Difficulties associated with the delineation of frontiers were compounded by the alternative conceptions of "boundaries" within the subcontinent. Western minds focusing on the delineation of the frontier met with the Asian perspective which is based on the extension of influence from the centre to the periphery in diminishing circles of influence. Demands of tribute and influence over peripheral kingdoms would be less than on those close to the capital:

motivate India to be more intrusive in the affairs of other states. This fundamentalist/secular debate has been presaged by previous debates concerning India's external relations.

²⁹ Of the retreating force, only one individual managed to escape to the British garrison at Jalabad. D.S. Richards, *The Savage Frontier: A History of the Anglo-Afghan Wars*, (London: Macmillan, 1990), pp. 44-5. The Soviet Union was to repeat this mistake in 1979. The history of the fiercely independent peoples of Afghanistan continues to have relevance for the political situation of that country in the post communist period.

... it would be easy to say that demarcation has never taken place in Asiatic countries except under European pressure and by the intervention of European agents.³⁰

With the introduction of Western ideologies to the ruling elites of India, their ways of conceptualising the state and its geopolitics changed. This is most notable in K.M. Panikkar's adaptation of Western geopolitics.

40.12 Expanding notions of region

There is evidence of an expanding notion of what constitutes India's region among some Indian strategic thinkers. As India becomes a more significant international actor there is no doubt that it will expand its relations with foreign countries. These increased social and economic ties incorporate a strategic dimension.³¹ In the past thirty years India has moved from being Pakistan's rough equivalent and China's inferior, in terms of the strategic balance, to being the dominant power in South Asia and a rival to China in the Asia-Pacific region.

Before exploring the contemporary redefinition of India's region, it is helpful to be acquainted with traditional Indian concepts of what is "India." These concepts ground contemporary debate in India's cultural-historical context. Quotes drawn from the Rgveda, the Mahabharata and the Arthashastra give us a sense of the territory that throughout the centuries has been thought of by the people of Sindhu, Bharat and India as their natural territorial range. A further quote from Megasthenese's *Indica* confirms these traditional notions of India. The place names mentioned in the Vedas, the Ramayana the Mahabharata, the Arthashastra and by the Indo-Greeks have been plotted on maps by J. Schwartzberg and Shiva Gopal

³⁰ Viceroy Curzon from *Frontiers*, Romanes lecture of 1907 as quoted in Neville Maxwell, *India's China War*, p. 21. While this statement is a little extreme, and certainly ethnocentric, it is largely correct.

³¹ This phenomenon can also be seen in countries such as Australia where increased trade with, and immigration from, the Asia-Pacific region has led to a significant reorientation away from its traditional relationships with Britain and the United States.

Bajpai.³² From these maps it becomes apparent that after the Vedic period "India" came to include the Deccan as well as the Indo-Gangetic plain:

Like mothers to their calves, like milch-kine with their milk, so, Sindhu, unto thee the roaring rivers run. Thou leadest as a warrior king thine arm's wings what time thou comest in the van of these swift streams. Favour ye this my laud, O Ganga, Yamuna, O Sutudri, Parushni, and Sarasvati. With Asikni, Visata, O Marudvridha, O Arjiky with Sushoma hear my call.

The Hymns of the Rgveda, Translated by R.T.H. Griffith, 1889, vol, II, 10, 75 4-9.

King Bharata, I shall depict for you this land of Bharata ... There are these seven main mountains the Mahendra, Malaya, Sahya, Suktimat, Rksvata, Vindhya and Pariyatra, but thousands more mountains are recognised in their general vicinity, massive and vast ones with colourful ridges. Then, there are other hills less well known, low ones that are inhabited by short people, both Aryan and barbarian, as well as folk that are a mixture of both. The population drinks from many rivers: the Ganges, the Indus and Sarasvati ...

The Mahabharata, translated by J.A.B. van Buitenen, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960).

Place means the earth. In that the region of the sovereign rule extends northward between the Himavat and the sea; one thousand yojanas in extent across

The Kautilyan Arthasastra, ed. by R.P. Kangle, (Bombay: University of Bombay Press, 1960).

India is bounded on the north by the extremities of Tauros, and from Ariana to the Eastern Sea by the mountains which are variously called by the natives of these regions Parapamisos, and Hemodos, and Himaos, and other names, but by the Macedonians Kaukasos. The boundary on the west is the river Indus, but the

³² J. Schwartzberg and Shiva Gopal Bajpai, *A Historical Atlas of South Asia*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), pp. 13-16. The following four quotes are drawn from this informative work. See also the earlier work of Collin Davies, *An Historical Atlas of the Indian Peninsula*, (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1949).

southern and eastern sides, which are both much greater than the others, run out into the Atlantic Ocean ...

Megasthenese, *Indica*, as cited in J.W. McCrindle, *Ancient India as Described by Megasthenes and Arrian*, (Calcutta: 1926).

The question remains, what are the "natural" borders of "India"? For that matter what is "India"? The above references are more cultural than political zone demarcations. For most of the subcontinent's history it has been ruled by several states in any given period. It is a recent phenomenon that the territorial delineation of the dominant political unit has come close to the borders of the cultural zone. Of 63 key powers of the subcontinent since 500 BC, 28 were based on the Gangetic plain while only nine managed to achieve pan-Indian status.³³ Of the nine, only five ruled over more than 50% of the subcontinent.³⁴ There is a tendency to view the bifurcation of the British Raj into India and Pakistan as a unnatural occurrence. In fact, such a fracture of a pan-Indian empire is part of the historical cycle of integration and disintegration of the subcontinent. One prerequisite of pan-India powers is that their core area power base is located in the Gangetic plain. This has more often than not been at Delhi. The political power of India is today located in Delhi and in the Hindi belt of the north, particularly with the electorally significant block of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar.

The debate over what is to constitute India's region, while ultimately subjective, is important because of the justifying and legitimating impact of

³³ Peter Lyon, "South Asia and the Geostrategics of the 1990s," *Contemporary South Asia*, vol. 1, no. 1, 1992, p. 26.

³⁴ "A Geopolitical Synopsis: The Evolution of Regional Power Configurations in the Indian Subcontinent," Joseph Schwartzberg, *A Historical Atlas of South Asia*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), p. 255. Our concept of India, as a single territorial identity similar to either present day India or the previous notion of the subcontinent, leads us to think of India as truly a subcontinental state. Historically speaking this pan subcontinental conceptualization of India is more an aberration than a norm. Since 500 BC only five empire/states, the Mauryan, Chola, Delhi Sultanate, Mughal and modern British Raj/Independent Indian state have extended their control over "India." All these pan-Indian empires had their centre of power in the Indo-Gangetic plain, usually in Delhi. Analysis of the subcontinent's periods of centralized control and the intermittent periods of diffused power centres reveals a cyclical pattern. The pattern is tending towards condensed time periods between the increasing crests of higher degrees of authority.

being considered a "regional" actor, rather than an "extra-regional" one. Jasjit Singh has reconceptualised India's region in the following way:

In reality, China, Burma, Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia are also all immediate neighbours with whom we have common boundaries and other countries in the proximity cannot be excluded from the region in terms of geo-political realities ... It would therefore be more appropriate to term the region as Southern Asia ...³⁵

By identifying India's geopolitical region as "Southern Asia," Singh is reforming and expanding the notion of India's region. This is not surprising, or inherently destabilising, as the two key concepts of "India" of this century, the subcontinent and South Asia were, and are, the creations of Britain and the United States, who view India from their own perspectives. By expanding the recognised limits of India's region, India is given a higher degree of legitimacy in seeking to influence events in these areas than it would if it were perceived as an outside power. Indeed when India was endorsing the demilitarisation of the Indian Ocean it focused on excluding "extra-regional" powers deployments into the region. This reconceptualisation of region has been discussed by others such as Admiral Nayyer and K.R. Singh who favour a stronger role for India in the Southeast Asian region.³⁶

There have been only a few points throughout India's history during which a single empire, dynasty or sultanate has extended its influence beyond the subcontinent. These were usually based in the Indo-Gangetic region. Many states of Suvarnabhumi, (Southeast Asia) such as Funan, Champa, Chenla and Dvaravati became Indianised during the first to sixth centuries AD. In 1025 the Cholas established their supremacy over the former Sri Vijaya empire. The Cholas continued to have active relations

³⁵ Air Commodore Jasjit Singh, "Confidence Building Among Neighbours," *The Hindu*, 3/22/90.

³⁶ K.R. Singh, "Maritime Security of India," *United Services Institute Journal*, Oct.-Dec. 1990, pp. 414-25. Not all reconceptualisations of India's region are expansive. General Rao has divided India in the following manner. 1. The mountainous north, 2. The Indo-Gangetic plain and 3. The central Indian and Deccan plateau in *Prepare or Perish: A Study of National Security*. (Delhi: Lancer Publishers, 1992), p. 2.

with China and Southeast Asia through the 13th Century.³⁷ The Cholas, like other states of Indian history that engaged in maritime activity, (and these tended to be South Indian), were not successful in establishing control over the powerful states of the northern plains although they could project their culture, trade and power as far as the Indonesian archipelago. What is unique about the modern Indian state is that the northern subcontinental power is politically integrated with the Southern maritime zone for the common purpose of promoting "Indian" interests in a larger geopolitical arena. This has been widened by the increase in speed and reach of weapons systems. The imagery of the relative combat potential of Arjuna's chariot, the war elephant, the Portuguese man of war, the INS Vikrant, or the Agni missile provide a sense of this.³⁸

Another justification for extending Indian influence is proposed by Deputy Director of the Institute of Defence Studies and Analysis, A.K. Banerjee, in his concept of the three "I"s of the Indian Ocean. This is another view which seeks to have Indian Ocean issues handled by Indian Ocean states and in particular by India, Indonesia and Iran. Indonesia reportedly offered to seize the Andaman and Nicobar Islands during the 1965 war to take pressure off Pakistan.³⁹ The opening of a nuclear relationship between China and Tehran,⁴⁰ and the past history of naval support having been offered by both Iran and Indonesia to Pakistan in the 1965 War, make the three "I"s an unlikely possibility. This concept does nonetheless express the extent to which Indian Ocean status can be utilised to discredit extra regional actors. This is part of the reconceptualisation of the Indian Ocean as a truly "Indian" or a "littoral states" Ocean.⁴¹

³⁷ Joseph Schwartzberg, *A Historical Atlas of South Asia*, p. 32.

³⁸ By analyzing the battlefields of Agincourt, Waterloo, the Somme and Dien Ben Phu, John Keegan has effectively studied this issue. John Keegan, *The Face of Battle*, New York: The Viking Press, 1976).

³⁹ Mohammed Ayoob, *India and Southeast Asia*, p. 41.

⁴⁰ Bryan Boswell, "Tehran Reactor Sale Chills US-Sino Links," *The Australian*, 9/14/92.

⁴¹ A.K. Banerjee, "The Three 'I's of the Indian Ocean: A Management Approach," *Mainstream*, 1/5/91. By Australia's exclusion the Indian perception that Australia is a non-Asian, non-Indian Ocean state seems to remain.

What is of the utmost concern is not that India will claim a legitimate interest in a broader region, but how this will be done.⁴² To make the best possible estimation of India's future course, history and current trends are essential indicators. The history of India's external relations indicates a move away from the idealism of its early modern period and a return to the realist geopolitics of the Raj model, with the modification that the interests served are exclusively linked to the subcontinent and not to a broader extra-Indian imperial network. India has been subject to colonisation and domination from across the seas. As such, India has legitimate security concerns. Current trends, such as the rise of Hindu fundamentalism, and other issues discussed in the previous chapter, together with the reorientation of the economy to be discussed in the following chapter, will have a considerable impact on the nature of India's foreign relations.

The extent to which India's desire for an expanded posture will come into conflict with other states is not entirely clear, though there are already some indications. Although invited into Sri Lanka, the Indian Peace Keeping Force was less than enthusiastically received by the populace and was subsequently asked to leave by the Sri Lankan government. The trade and transit dispute with Nepal in 1990, and the Nepali Congress Party's victory in 1991, further extended India's sphere of influence over Nepal. Indian differences with the United States over the development of India's nuclear and missile technologies are also points of contention. Just where India is headed in its external relations is still uncertain in this period of transition. What is probable is that India's future foreign policy will be determined by a mix of reinterpreted traditions, whether geopolitical or politico-cultural, and contemporary imperatives. In this way, ideas, such as those of K.M. Panikkar, may mix with the rise of fundamentalist rhetoric and the influence of economic reform to mould a new policy direction for India.

⁴² Surjit Mansingh has articulated five patterns of relations between India and the nations of South Asia. These are: 1. The Kautilyan, 2. The Raj, 3. The American, 4. Bilateralism, 5. Regional Cooperation in *India's Search for Power: Indira Gandhi's Foreign Policy, 1966-82*, (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1984), pp. 273-311.

In 1992, the Indian response to reports that the Pentagon was in favour of a reinstatement of a substantial strategic relationship with Pakistan was guarded. Leaks of the Pentagon's blueprint for the new world order reportedly portrayed India as "among the aspirants to global power status." The Defence Department document further referred to India as having "hegemonic aspirations over the other states in South Asia and the Indian Ocean." The report goes on to state that the United States must "maintain [its] status as a military power of the first magnitude ... acting as a balancing force and [preventing the] emergence of a vacuum or a regional hegemon."⁴³ In response to the leaked document, the Indian Foreign Secretary indicated that "India's view of this could have consequences in terms of Indian assessments and policy orientation."⁴⁴ The Indian government issued a statement indicating that they were assured by members of the State Department and the National Security Council that the views of the Pentagon paper were of "middle level officials and [did] not reflect perception at policy making levels."⁴⁵ Whether India and the United States can resolve their differences on the NPT and the MTCR will be a test of rapport between Washington and Delhi. The chapter now proceeds to address the centre-periphery question and its linkage with internal-external relations.

40.2 Centre/periphery and the interconnectivity of internal and external relations

One of the key factors which has led to increased conflict between India and its neighbours has been the nexus between internal and external politics. Within this nexus the role of Indian centre-state relations has exerted a negative impact on the stability of the region. This section focuses on those secessionist and autonomous movements in India's peripheral border regions because of their connection with India's external security

⁴³ Reportedly excerpts of a confidential United States Department of Defence Document, *Defense Planning Guidance*, were leaked to the New York Times early in March of 1992. As cited in Susumu Awanohara, "The Lone Ranger: Pentagons Blueprint for the New World Order," *The Far Eastern Economic Review*, 3/26/92.

⁴⁴ "No Change on India Signing the NPT," *India News*, (Canberra: The Indian High Commission, 3/18/92), p. 2.

⁴⁵ "No Change on India Signing the NPT," *India News*, 3/18/92, p. 2.

environment. There are other autonomous movements, such as the Telangana movement of Andhra Pradesh, which have been omitted due to their lower profile in connection with internal and external politics.

The peripheral groups are disaffected because their primary identity is separate from, and subordinate to, the mainstream identity of the Indian centre. Moving away from the cultural heartland of the Indo-Gangetic plain one encounters variations of subcontinental culture. The electoral significance of Uttar Pradesh is but one example of how this power of the centre is expressed. The high percentage of Brahmins in key administrative positions is another. To the northwest there is the influence of successive waves of invasion and assimilation from Southwest and Central Asia. To the northeast an alternative indigenous tribal identity predominates. To the south, the Dravidian culture, with its separate but similar traditions to the Aryan north predominates.

As India's political leadership under Indira and Rajiv came to rule more for the benefit of the coterie of the prime minister and the Congress party than for the long term benefit of the country, short-term, stop-gap measures were applied to domestic political situations which called for serious and meaningful solutions. This has led to a point where situations such as exist in Kashmir and Punjab have become "pawn[s] on the chess board of electoral politics [where] narrow short term considerations" usurp the role of the national interest.⁴⁶

The degenerating situation today in both Punjab and Kashmir allows Pakistan to continue a low level conflict with India which stops short of open war. Here the politically opportunistic element of the centre is to blame. If the political leadership were more visionary, less partisan, and willing to risk electoral losses for the larger good of the democratic process

⁴⁶ Satyapal Dang, *Genesis of Terrorism: An Analytical Study of Punjab Terrorists*, (New Delhi: Patriot Publishers, 1989), p.xvi. The Congress party is not alone, as suggested, in its self-serving manipulation of the Punjab situation. The CPI position on Punjab, as represented here by its Punjab head, has been critical of Khalistan's religious basis. In 1980 and 1981 the CPI worked with the Akali Dal when this was perceived as furthering its ends. See Ram Narayan Kumar and George Sieberer, *The Sikh Struggle: Origin, Evolution and Present Phase*, (Delhi: Chanakya Publications, 1991), p. 215.

the current levels of internal conflict between Delhi and Kashmir and Punjab could have been averted. This would, at least in part, have ameliorated the Indo-Pakistani conflict. If political accommodation had been reached with the autonomous elements in Kashmir and Punjab, Pakistan would not be in a position to exert considerable pressure on India. Without the leverage which the cross border insurgency gives Pakistan, it would be more inclined to pursue a negotiated solution. Instead, elements within Pakistan hold on to the belief that they can achieve their objectives through support for low intensity insurgency.

One of the symptoms of the desire to internationalise issues is the rise in the taking foreign hostages as a means of attracting attention to the militants' causes. Hostage-taking of foreigners may be understood as a symptom of increasing frustration and hostility to the external environment. During the one year period preceding October 1991, eight foreigners were taken hostage in Pakistan while ten were abducted in India. While the taking of Indian and Pakistani hostages has been commonplace for years, the new wave of hostage taking is increasingly focusing on foreigners. This may reflect an increased sense of polarisation and desperation which in turn leads the groups to increasingly radical strategies in their attempt to focus international opinion and governmental attention on their causes. Among those who have been taken are: four Chinese, four Israelis, three Japanese, three Swedes, two Soviets, one Frenchman and a Romanian.⁴⁷ These individuals were taken by Kashmiri, Assamese, Sikh, and Sindhi groups. Prior to 1991 Sikhs had not taken foreigners hostage.

In one of the more interesting incidents, six Israelis were taken hostage in Srinagar. The Israelis managed to disarm some of their captors. In the ensuing fire-fight one Israeli was killed and others were wounded although they did manage to escape. Pakistani papers subsequently ran

⁴⁷ "India: Militants Kidnap French Engineer", 10/19/91, "Japanese Students Apologize for Kidnap Stir in Pakistan," 5/1/91, "Indian State to Free Hundreds in Soviet Hostage Deal," 7/8/91, "Captured Israelis Fight Back in Kashmir," 6/27/91, "Sikh Militants Set New Deadline for Romanian Diplomat Deal," 10/21/91, "Pakistan Says Political Motives Behind Kidnap of Three Chinese," 6/6/91, "Sweden Sends Envoy to Kashmir in Bid to Contact Kidnappers," 6/13/91. All of the above are drawn from the *Reuters News Service*.

stories alleging that the Israelis were in Kashmir in an advisory capacity to the Indian Armed forces and that they were involved in a plan to attack the Kahuta nuclear plant.⁴⁸ The official response of the Pakistani Foreign Ministry was that the "presence of Israelis of this kind is incongruous in the tourist context."⁴⁹

The motivation for kidnapping varies from a desire to attract attention to the secessionist cause to mere "dacoitery," or banditry, for profit. The result is an increasingly hostile environment for the local authorities and those foreigners associated with them. The majority of those kidnapped have not been tourists but people associated with governmental development projects. In October of 1991, India had only a seven year maximum penalty for hostage-taking though the government of Narasimha Rao was considering raising the penalty to a capital offence.

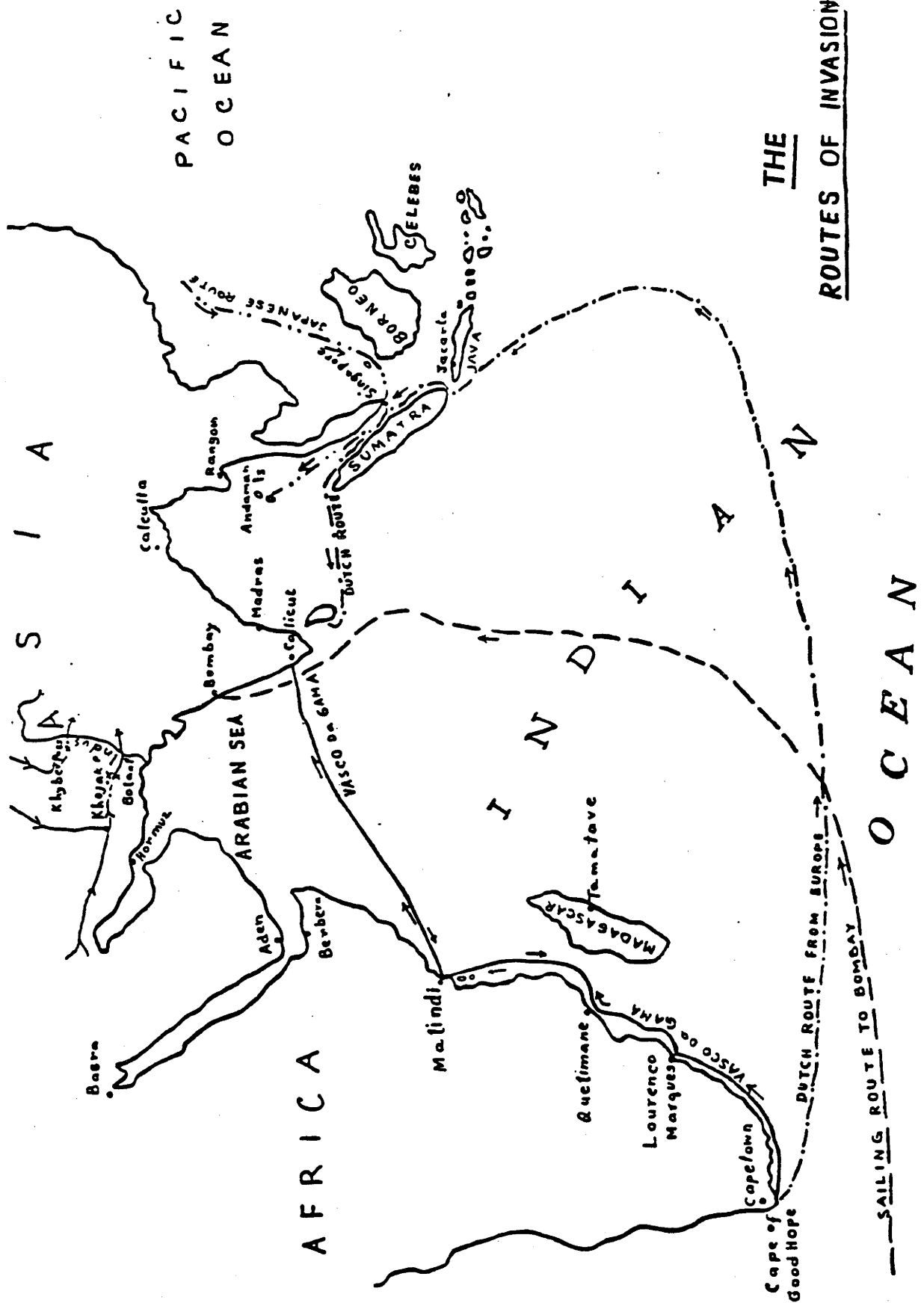
Having discussed changing Indian conceptions of space within India's historical context and in terms of the Indian core-periphery conceptualization of territory we will now go on to analyse in more detail the interrelationship between these concepts and India's three key strategic arenas. These are, the northwest frontier, the northeast frontier and the Indian Ocean.

40.21 The northwest frontier

The northwest frontier has been the single most effective entry point for invasion of the subcontinent. Alexander the Great, Timurlane, the Aryans, the Kushans, Huns, Arabs, Afghans and Moghuls have all in turn descended onto the Indo-Gangetic plain of the subcontinent through the NWF. Today India's stability is also threatened from this quadrant. This threat is not one of overt invasion, but one of subversion. Such threats, either of invasion or subdivision, are part of India's recurring history. In the past it has been the strategic depth of India that has allowed its culture to

⁴⁸ After the destruction of the Osirak nuclear facility in Iraq, Israel offered to attack the Pakistani facility at Kahuta if the Indians would provide refueling. Ramesh Thakur, *India's Foreign Policy*. forthcoming.

⁴⁹ "Pakistani Premier Threatens War if Nuclear Sites are Attacked." *Reuters News Service*.



Source: K.M. Panikkar, *Geographical Factors in Indian History*, (Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya

renew itself.⁵⁰ In part the distinctive character of the Deccan stems from its distance from the traditional invasion routes through the Bolan and Kyber Passes.

40.211 Punjab

The Centre's on-going efforts to bring Punjab under its control has polarised the community and played into the hands of the militants. As the militants gained strength, they too, alienated large segments of the people through their excessive demands which changed the habits of everyday life. In an attempt to placate demands for Punjabi Suba, or a separate Punjabi speaking state, the centre reorganised Punjab in 1966 by creating the state of Haryana to give Punjabi speakers a majority within a state they could call their own.⁵¹ The situation in Punjab began to deteriorate in 1983. Congress party fears of antagonising the Hindu vote in Haryana prevented Rajiv Gandhi from carrying through compromise measures aimed at diffusing the conflict with the Rajiv-Longowal accord of 1985.⁵² By 1987 the failure to implement this agreement between the centre and the Akali Dal added to Sikh's frustrations concerning autonomy and made more extreme measures seem necessary. Pakistani assistance came to be perceived as a necessary lever to gain the implementation of the reforms.⁵³

The continuing deterioration of the situation led to the imposition of President's rule on 12 May 1987. Since May of 1990 all security forces in Punjab have been placed under the control of the state Director General of Police. The state was declared a disturbed area in 1991 thereby giving the armed forces additional powers through the legal protection that the act gives them. Despite these measures, control slipped away from the centre and the moderates during the 1983 to 1990 period.

⁵⁰ K.M. Panikkar, "Indian History," p. 83.

⁵¹ Pravin Patel, "Violent Protest in India: the Punjab Movement," *Journal of International Affairs*, Fall 1986, p. 271.

⁵² Raju Thomas, "Wrestling with India's Sikh Crisis," *The Christian Science Monitor*, 6/7/88.

⁵³ Manoj Joshi, "Terrorists trained abroad, Says PM," *The Hindu*, 10/18/86.

In 1992, active day and night patrols by the army and paramilitary forces gave the necessary backing to the police who then were able to make a series of key arrests of militant leaders and to interdict larger numbers of contraband arms from Pakistan. In November 1992 police killed Nissan Singh Makhu, military leader of the Khalistan Liberation Front, Kulip Singh Fauji of the Babbar Khalsa Group, Gurdas Singh Mansurwal, operations chief of the Zafarwal Group of the Khalistan Commando Force, and four other military commanders of the Zafarwal Group. This government success followed the elimination of Sikh militant leader Talwinder Singh Permar in October of 1992. He was wanted in connection with the bombing of the Air India flight in 1985 where over 300 people were killed. In late 1992 Police Chief K.P.S. Gill said "Over 70% of terrorists in Punjab have now been eliminated."⁵⁴ With these leaders eliminated, the police seem to have regained the initiative in the civil war that has claimed 15,000 to 20,000 lives since 1981 when the insurgency began.⁵⁵

In 1993 the centre was able to consolidate its gains in Punjab. This is particularly interesting because it is not yet clear whether it was the application of force or other factors that effected the shift in the governments favour. With the introduction of the military the police forces were freed to move against the militants. Also, better interdiction at the border helped to isolate the militants. It is unclear whether this is but a lull in an on-going insurgency or whether the militants have been crushed. To keep this in perspective, it is useful to bear in mind the on-going resurgence of insurgencies in the northeast as well as the Sri Lankan governments' success against the JVP.

The blood being spilled each day in Punjab stems from the unique position that the Sikhs and Punjab have played in the history of the subcontinent. Traditionally they have been caught between the Islamic powers which have descended from the mountains of the northwest frontier and passed through Punjab into the Gangetic plain. In this way

⁵⁴ "Indian Police Kill Most Wanted Sikh Militant," *Reuters News Service*, 10/15/92.

⁵⁵ "Indian Police Kill Sikh Militant Leaders," *Reuters News Service*, 11/1/92 and "Two Top Sikh Terrorists Killed in Punjab," *Reuters News Service*, 11/16/92.

Punjab has been the scene of much conflict between Islamic and Hindu cultures. Centre policies that place more emphasis on the retention of electoral gain than in seeking a lasting peace do little to resolve the conflict. The cost of such a policy direction may be India's territorial integrity.

The signing of the Rajiv-Longowal accord and its subsequent non-implementation undermined moderate Akali confidence and worked to the advantage of the militants as the average Sikh increasingly believed that the centre would only respond to the force of arms. By failing to draw a distinction between moderate, autonomous, Akali demands and the militant calls for Khalistan, the centre polarised Punjab to grim effect.⁵⁶ In this polarised atmosphere, full implementation of the Longowal accord may not be sufficient. Further autonomous measures, along the lines of the Anandpur Sahib resolution may be necessary.⁵⁷

There exists a threshold of violence and cynical political manipulation beyond which conflict enters a phase where alienated peoples come to perceive separatist solutions as the only way to solve their problems. At this point, especially in peripheral border states, the situation is open for external manipulation of the situation.⁵⁸ In the lead up to the 1965 war, Pakistan overestimated the support of the Kashmiris. The situation in Indian-held Kashmir has deteriorated significantly since then. The potential for a fifth column also exists in Kashmir.

40.212 Kashmir

The continuing unrest in Kashmir remains close to expanding into a broader conflict.⁵⁹ The seemingly unending string of communalist atrocities

⁵⁶ Hancharan Bains, "Punjab: Victim of Piecemeal Tinkering," *The Business and Political Observer*, 12/19/90.

⁵⁷ D.N. "Which Political Solution for Punjab?" *The Economic and Political Weekly*, 9/15/90, p. 2037.

⁵⁸ Jagjit Singh Chauhan, a London based advocate of Khalistan reportedly has contacts with American Senator Jesse Helms and former National Security Council co-chairman General Daniel Graham. Tariq Ali, *An Indian Dynasty*, p. 254.

⁵⁹ The region of Kashmir is defined as those areas known as, the vale of Kashmir, Jammu, Poonch, Ladakh, Baltistan and Gilgit. This work is primarily concerned with those areas of Kashmir under Indian control.

that pervade the political landscape of the Indian subcontinent serve to anaesthetise the international community to the possibility that these tensions are at times dangerously close to escalating from relatively minor civil unrest to national strife or international conflict. The centre's success in counter insurgency operations in 1992 in Punjab was not matched by similar successes in Kashmir. In Kashmir the situation has been steadily declining since the imposition of direct rule in 1990. According to the Council for Human Rights in Kashmir 36,772 were disabled, 21,425 were detained for interrogation, \$2.3 billion worth of crops were destroyed, 3,688 females were raped and a total of 27,000 have been killed during the period 1990-93 as a result of India's counterinsurgency operations in Kashmir alone.⁶⁰ Somewhere between these somewhat inflated figures and the under reported figures of the government rests the truth of the matter.

There are no signs that India will relent in its attempts to force the militants to capitulate. Narasimha Rao has declared, "[t]his is the bottom line, no force on earth can alienate it [Kashmir] from us."⁶¹ India and Pakistan have fought in 1948, 1965 and 1971. Border skirmishes along the Kashmir border and on the Siachen Glacier have occurred regularly. The parallels between the tensions in Kashmir in the spring of 1990 and the situation prior to the 1965 War, indicate that conflict will recur if underlying problems are not addressed. These problems stem from the relationship between the majority and minority groups. Such tensions will not disappear through neglect. Neglect of the underlying social causes of unrest will lead to an escalation of tensions that will further erode relations between India and Pakistan. Traditional solutions, such as increased deployment of paramilitary and military forces, have thus far failed to address the underlying concerns upon which the conflict feeds.

Because of the centrality of Kashmir in the foundation ideology of India and Pakistan, conflict resolution has tended towards zero sum approaches. This is the root cause of the seemingly intractable nature of the dispute. If the Kashmir question is not resolved it will continue to escalate

⁶⁰ Council for Human Rights in Kashmir, "Roses for Freedom," *The New York Times*, 3/12/93.

⁶¹ "Rao Vows to Hold Kashmir," *The Australian*, 8/17/92.

to greater magnitude. It is in India's interest to see the issue settled and the existing border accepted. Conversely, it has been perceived to be in Pakistan's interest to retain high tension in order to keep the pressure on India.⁶² This policy serves the Pakistani purposes of keeping India strategically off balance as it continues to be embroiled in internal security matters. Continued unrest and turmoil serve that purpose while also keeping open the possibility that Kashmir may one day manage to break with India, either to join Pakistan, or to become independent.

The Pakistani Prime Minister's freedom to manoeuvre in Kashmir, as well as a number of other issue areas, such as the defence budget, Afghanistan or the nuclear programme, is severely limited by domestic political constraints and a lack of control over the intelligence or military structure. Fortunately for India, the Indian military has been a staunch supporter of democratic rule. The Indian intelligence agencies record is, however, less clear. The centre in India is also increasingly bound by political perceptions that are in part created by the Hindu fundamentalist organisations.

The source of Pakistani antagonism towards India as stemming from a core group of between five and fifteen percent of the population with a real hatred for India.⁶³ ISI is one organisation where there would be a larger concentration of such individuals than in the wider community. This minority anti-Indian element has sought to sabotage talks in the past through tactics such as the abuse and harassment of Indian diplomats in Islamabad prior to discussions. There may be a similar anti Pakistani group inside Indian intelligence. On 6 December 1992 Mohammad Ashfan of the Pakistani High Commission was picked up by Indian intelligence for espionage. Pakistan alleged that he was severely beaten in the process of interrogation. This incident was timed to cause friction between India and Pakistan in the lead up to the South Asian regional summit meeting in

⁶² The question remains as to whether or not General Zia's death may have been connected with dissent over the possibility that he was close to resolving the border dispute in Kashmir.

⁶³ This observation is a distillation of interviews conducted between 1990 and 1993.

Dhaka on 12-13 December 1992. Pakistan has accused India of 11 cases since 1987 where Pakistani diplomats have been either beaten or tortured.⁶⁴

The government of V.P. Singh was unproven in the spring of 1990 when it had to deal with a major crisis and make its own mark on Indian foreign policy. Kashmir was the first significant test of Singh's leadership in the foreign policy area. The withdrawal from Sri Lanka was planned under the previous government. At that juncture V.P. Singh let it be known to the Pakistanis that if they were to go to war India would not refrain from a protracted campaign along an extended front. In such a war an eventual Indian victory is now a foregone conclusion.

Identifying and addressing the underlying causes of the conflict in Kashmir is a first priority in de-escalating the strife there. Existing channels have failed to provide sustainable resolutions to Kashmir's problems because graft and corruption in the area have exacerbated poor economic opportunities and tensions. The people of Kashmir have increasingly turned to violence from 1989 onwards to express their frustrations. The existing political administration is either not interested in, or incapable of, addressing their concerns. The level of unrest would be reduced considerably if the special powers which give the paramilitary forces a free hand to abuse their authority were revoked and if economic opportunities were made available for the newly educated. By addressing the problems that exacerbate the root communalist tensions, unrest within the valley would be less likely to draw India into wider conflict.

There are signs that the more fundamentalist, pro-Pakistani elements within the militant movements are gaining on their more moderate rivals. The beginnings of fundamentalist inroads could be noticed in 1990 with the increased use of the chaddur by women. The fundamentalist militants have now convinced the majority of the urban female population to wear knee length burquas over their regular dress. This move has been unsuccessfully opposed by the Muslim Khawateen Maukaz, who are affiliated with the

⁶⁴ "Pakistan Protests to India Over Spy Row," *Reuters News Service*, 12/6/92.

Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF).⁶⁵ The divisions between the JKLF and the Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) backed Hizbul Mujahideen are becoming more apparent. Clashes between them were reported in June of 1992.⁶⁶ Pakistani support for the militants continues both with covert arms and training, and with overt exhortations of support. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif voiced his endorsement of the Kashmiri's struggle against India by praying for "the success of their jihad."⁶⁷

Despite their differences the JKLF and the Hizbul Mujahideen endorsed a 21 page document outlining their joint commitment to let the people of Kashmir decide whether Kashmir will become independent, join Pakistan or remain with India. This development in December of 1992 indicated that the groups were, despite their differences, willing to join forces in united opposition against Indian rule.⁶⁸

The situation in Ladakh demonstrates that the centre is not in all cases the enemy of peripheral sub-national groups. As the Muslim Kashmiris resent the imposition of Hindu Indian influence, so too do the Buddhist Ladhakis resent the growing influence of Islam in their traditionally Buddhist land. The inconsistency of resenting one overlord while aspiring to similar status elsewhere does not prevent the continued desecration of ancient Ladakhi stupas and chortens, or the insensitive Islamic calls to prayers in Buddhist Leh. The ethnic mix of Mons, Dards, Baltis and Tibetans in Leh has been disturbed by the increasing influx of Kashmiri Muslims. While culturally a distinct entity from Jammu and Kashmir, Ladakh has been incorporated into the state for administrative purposes. As pressure from Kashmiri Muslims grows, Ladakh has increasingly viewed closer direct relations with the centre, through a redefinition of Ladakh's status as a Union Territory, as the way to preserve its socio-cultural identity. Slogans such as "Pakistani agents go back " scrawled on the walls of the bazaar attest to this desire and resentment of the

⁶⁵ "Full Blown Fundamentalism in J&K," *The Hindu*, (int. ed.) 6/20/92.

⁶⁶ "J&K Militants Make it Business," *The Hindu*, (int. ed.) 6/23/92.

⁶⁷ "Sharif Supports Kashmir Terrorists," *The Hindu*, (int. ed.) 5/16/92.

⁶⁸ "Kashmiri's Said More United Against India," *Reuters News Service*, 12/6/92.

influx of non Buddhist peoples.⁶⁹ Thus the sub-national identity has led to increased loyalty to the centre, due to the centre's ability to protect the sub-region's identity from a larger regional identity that threatens it.⁷⁰ If other sub-national groups could similarly come to perceive the centre as a source of support, rather than a threat, then the motive for secession would be removed.

Beyond Punjab and Kashmir there are two other particularly sensitive geopolitical segments of India's northwest frontier. These areas are located to the north of Kashmir per se. They are the Siachen Glacier and the Aksai Chin plateau. The chapter will now go on to assess their significance.

40.213 Siachen

The Siachen Glacier has a geopolitical importance which is belied by the bareness of its terrain. The glacier itself is some 3000 square kilometres of high altitude, craggy, snowbound terrain located on the eastern end of the Karakorum Range. The glacier, and the Karakorum Pass, fall between the trilateral juncture of Ladakh, Baltistan and Aksai Chin,⁷¹ which are controlled by India, Pakistan and China respectively. The key issue is the leverage that control of the glacier would give either India or Pakistan should they face each other once again in war. The strategic Karakorum pass is at an altitude of 18,290 feet and is located to the east of the glacier. The frozen waste that Siachen is has led to the conflict over it being characterized as "a fight between two bald men over a comb."⁷² Despite this, the potential

⁶⁹ Jug Suraiya, "Troubled Times in High Places," *The Guardian*, 5/23/92.

⁷⁰ These impressions are drawn from interviews and discussions with Ladakhis while in Leh in 1990. See also Jug Suraiya, "At Cross Purposes in Little Tibet," *Times of India*, 10/7/90. The presence of large numbers of Indian military personnel has also led to conflicts between them and the local inhabitants.

⁷¹ The Chinese were not party to the Pamir Agreement of 11 March 1895 which delineated the Russian Afghan and British Raj frontiers in the Pamirs and Karakorums. A British boundary commission was set up to survey the "imperfectly known Chinese frontier." This the Chinese ignored. The fact that the people of Hunza seasonally migrated over the Karakorum watershed to the Chinese side caused difficulties in establishing the frontier between the Raj and the Chinese empire. C.P. Skrine and P. Nightingale, *Macartney at Kashgar*, pp. 79-81, 92-3, 95.

⁷² Stephen Cohen, ed., *The Security of South Asia: American and Asian Perspectives*, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1987), p. 240.

geopolitical significance of the territory to the Indo-Pakistani conflict, if somewhat dubious to outside observers, remains "real" in the minds of the strategic planners in both countries. Control of the Siachen area is strategically important for all concerned for securing current and future strategic positions in Kashmir and Aksai Chin. It has also become a test of will and a prize to enhance status.

The crux of the dispute rests in the larger conflict over the disposition of Jammu and Kashmir. Baltistan and Ladakh are presently subsumed within this larger territory. Beyond this there are particular ambiguities which are responsible for the history of the on-going fighting. As part of the Shimla Agreement the border in Kashmir was surveyed for the first time to establish a line of control. Concluded in 1972, the line of control survey recommended that the border, extending north and/or eastward from grid reference NJ 9842, was of insufficient importance to require detailed delineation.⁷³ There exists a difference in subsequent interpretation as to whether the interim agreement was that the line be drawn straight from the grid reference to a point immediately south of the Karakorum Pass or whether the border was simply to remain undefined. The Pakistan government does seem to have interpreted the border as being undefined, at least in the period immediately after the Shimla agreement. A Survey of Pakistan approved map of 1975 does not delineate the border between India and Pakistan in Jammu and Kashmir, nor does it give any indication of a border between India and Pakistan in the Siachen region. What the map does do is to draw a line demarcating the border between the Gilgit Agency and China and extends this line through K2 to the Karakorum Pass at which point the line ends and the map then reads "frontier undefined." From the

⁷³ There is a degree of confusion over the legitimacy of the Pakistani claim to the territory to the west of the line drawn from NJ 9842 to the Karakorum Pass. General Chibber's comments, as reported in Manoj Joshi, "The Siachen Imbroglia," *The Hindu*, 6/22/89, assert that the Indian decision to take up a position on the glacier in 1984 was an effort to prevent a Pakistani *fait accompli* with regard to their claim, confirmed on 21 August 1983, that the territory in question was to be under their control. Brian Cloughley, being more sympathetic to the Pakistani position, has interpreted the situation that the Indians were the first to break the tacit agreement not to specifically define or occupy the disputed territory. See Brian Cloughley, "India, Pakistan and the Siachen Glacier," *Janes Defence Weekly*, 11/14/87, p. 1121.

Pakistani map of 1975 it is unclear, beyond Gilgit, just where the Indo-Pakistani border lies.

There is no doubt about the importance of maps as indications of interpretations of states' demarcations of actual, or intended control, and the impact that these representations have on subsequent action. This is made evident by General Chibber's⁷⁴ recollection that it was an American map, presented to his attention in 1978, during a discussion about the fact that Pakistan had allowed international mountain climbing expeditions in the region, which, by delineating the border as extending northeast from the terminal point, aroused his concerns of Pakistani intentions in the area. It was General Chibber's understanding that the 1972 Shimla Agreement, similar to the Karachi Agreement of 1949, which had described the border as extending "thence to the glaciers," had been that the border was to remain undefined beyond NJ 9842 despite India's territorial gains in the Shyok valley to the south of the Karakorum Range in the 1971 war. The 1965 war, being terminated by an agreement to return to the status quo ante bellum, did not alter the situation.⁷⁵

Beginning with the Kumar expedition in 1978, India began to assert its presence in the Siachen area through summer mountaineering patrols.

⁷⁴ Lt. General Chibber retd. as Director General of Military Operations at Army Head Quarters in Delhi was directly involved with the decision to send Colonel Kumar on the mountaineering expedition to Terramkangi in Siachen in the Summer of 1978. He was further involved in the on-going conflict after assuming the Army Northern Sector Command in 1982.

⁷⁵ A shift in some American map representations of the degree of Pakistani control over the region is detectable between 1971 to 1984. The American National Geographic Map of Asia of 1971 does not delineate the Indo-Pakistani border in the Siachen region. Interestingly, it includes the Aksai Chin region within Indian territory. The National Geographic map of South Asia of 1984, while still retaining an element of ambiguity, does imply that the border does extend northeast from the terminal point NJ 9842 to the Karakorum pass and that the Karakorum Pass falls within Pakistan. By 1984, National Geographic represents Aksai Chin as under China's control though disputed by India. India felt that Pakistan was winning international recognition of its control of the Siachen Glacier area through its sponsorship of mountain climbing expeditions, and through international map representations, and therefore felt compelled to reverse this perception by asserting its own claim by military action. India did approach the United States and Pakistan concerning the issue of map representations of the region. Western magazines are stamped with a warning to Indian readers that the border representations are inaccurate. This dispute also highlights the importance of external perceptions to both India and Pakistan

Lt. General M.L. Chibber, "Siachen the Untold Story," *Indian Defence Review*, 1/90, p. 147.

This ambiguous arrangement was sufficient until 1982 when more substantial scouting probes began in the area. On 21 August 1983, a formal protest was issued by Pakistan's northern area commander over Indian patrols into the area. By 13 April 1984, the issue became further militarized when an Indian Brigade took up position on the Glacier in *Operation Meghdoot*.⁷⁶ In June of 1984 the Indian contingent was successful in repelling a Pakistani effort to dislodge them from their position.⁷⁷

Attempts to negotiate a solution on Siachen, beginning in January and June of 1986, proved fruitless. The Siachen question is inextricably wrapped in the overall fate of Kashmir. In May of 1989, the Indian Defence Secretary travelled to Islamabad to meet with General Zia. It is thought that at that time there came to be an informal understanding to exercise "restraint" on the issue. In April of 1991, Pakistan called for the Kashmir border to be referred once again to the UN. With regard to Siachen, the two sides agreed to refer the issue to further secretarial level talks. The April 1991 meeting was the fourth such meeting on the Indo-Pakistani Kashmir border where little diplomatic movement on the Siachen dispute was achieved.

The accomplishments of secretarial level talks have been agreements not to attack each other's nuclear facilities, the promise of advance notification of military manoeuvres and restraint on the violation of airspace.⁷⁸ These can be viewed either as the beginnings of confidence building or as measures which grant the states more control over war initiation and management. This latter explanation is the more plausible as

⁷⁶ Meghdoot is the divine cloud messenger after the famous Sanskrit play by Kalidasa. The Pakistani counter operation was code named Ababeel which is the Urdu word for a high flying sparrow. The Indian position is that their intelligence indicated that Pakistan had made preparations to occupy the area and that the Indian deployment was to pre-empt the move. Pakistan may have felt obliged to respond to the Indian patrols which themselves were in response to six Japanese and American mountaineering expeditions into the area between 1975 and 1980. Lt. General M.L. Chibber, "Siachen the Untold Story," *Indian Defence Review*, 1/90, pp.146-49.

⁷⁷ Brian Cloughley, "India, Pakistan and the Siachen Glacier," *Janes Defence Weekly*, 11/14/87, p. 1121.

⁷⁸ The agreements on military exercises and airspace violations were signed in Delhi on 6 April. "Government Signs Border Deal with Pakistan," *The Daily Telegraph*, 4/8/91

long as Indian and Pakistani negotiating positions remain fundamentally unaltered. The desire of Pakistan to internationalise Kashmir by bringing it before the UN, and the Indian desire to treat Kashmir as an internal matter, while focussing on establishing a pacified border, are seemingly irreconcilable. This is further exacerbated by the ease with which Pakistan is currently able to destabilise the situation in Kashmir. Despite the lack of movement on Siachen the two sides agreed to place the issue back on the negotiation agenda. Little diplomatic effort had been expended on the Siachen issue between 1989 and the April 1991 meeting where they agreed to resume negotiations. It is most likely that the issue will remain hostage to the overall relationship.

Despite open conflict since 1984, the two countries have been careful not to allow fighting on Siachen to expand into a general war, or even a broader, border skirmish in Kashmir. The fighting has, in an almost surrealist fashion, continued at this localized low-level at the top of the world seemingly without effect on the overall nature of the relationship between the two countries. Siachen is a costly affair. To 1989, India had lost some 350-400 dead and 1,500 wounded while Pakistan is thought to have lost twice that number. This is the world's highest battlefield with troops operating at altitudes of up to 22,000 feet. The estimated cost of India's operation was thought to be more than Rs 30 crores per annum⁷⁹ or \$US 1.6 million a day.⁸⁰ An annual expenditure of \$US 584 million is indicative of the strategic importance placed on Siachen.

Siachen remains an issue of national prestige for both Pakistan and India. On 30 July 1991, then Army Chief General Aslam Beg, in a statement issued from the Pakistani side of Kashmir, asserted that Pakistan had "maintained a upper hand [by having] defended every inch of our sacred land." Further, in stating that under his leadership Pakistan had not "yielded an inch of its land to the enemy" but had rather dominated all along the border.⁸¹ Beg seemed to both demean Zia ul Haq's stewardship of

⁷⁹ Manoj Joshi, "The Siachen Imbrolio," *The Hindu*, 6/22/89.

⁸⁰ Mahnaz Ispahani, *Roads and Rivals*, p. 209.

⁸¹ "Pakistan Army Chief Claims Upper Hand Against India on Border," *Reuters News Service*, 7/30/91.

Pakistan's territorial sovereignty and equate a strong position relative to India with the proper role of Pakistani leaders. Such confrontational attitudes are not indicative of a desire to meaningfully resolve the border issue even if they are primarily aimed at a domestic audience. The ability of Pakistani leaders to stand against the Indians seems to be the standard by which they are to be measured. In an interview conducted immediately before he was assassinated, Rajiv Gandhi stated that he and General Zia had been "close to finishing the agreement on Kashmir, we had the maps and everything ready to sign and then he [Zia] was killed."⁸² Elements within Pakistan had accused Zia of capitulating on Kashmir. This portrayal of events by Rajiv Gandhi introduces an additional motive to the possibility that Army Chief Beg was behind the Zia assassination.⁸³

If this, and the Ravi Rikhye scenario on Operation Brass Tacks are true, then it would seem as though the intelligence agencies of India and Pakistan are in effect in a position to veto any substantial peace initiatives sought by more enlightened elements within the democratic and military establishments of the two countries. The role of intelligence agencies in India will be discussed further in Chapter Six. The chapter will now turn from Indo-Pakistani conflict over Kashmir to look more closely at border disputes between India and China over Aksai Chin and Tawang.

40.214 Aksai Chin

During the 1984 skirmish between India and Pakistan on Siachen there was a build-up of Chinese troops across the border in Aksai Chin.⁸⁴ The Chinese response is most plausibly explained by a desire to be prepared

⁸² "Pakistan Denies Report on Gandhi-Zia Pact on Kashmir," *Reuters News Service*, 5/27/91.

⁸³ Prime Minister Zia, the American Ambassador, Arnold Raphael, and top military officers were killed in a aeroplane crash on 17 August of 1988. A Pakistani special commission investigating the crash was told by a electron microscopy expert that the wreckage contained "unusual concentrations of antimony, phosphorous, potassium and sulphur" which suggested sabotage by explosion. Moreover, former Pakistani Air Force pilot, Mohammed Akram Awan, has accused General Aslam Beg and ISI of colluding in the sabotage effort. Awan is currently serving a prison sentence for disclosing information to the CIA and Mossad with regard to covert Pakistani sales of arms to Iran. "Army Leader Killed Zia," *The Guardian*, 9/29/92. "Detonator in Wreckage of Zia's Plane," *Reuters News Service*, 10/28/92.

⁸⁴ Mahnaz Ispahani, *Roads and Rivals: The Political Uses of Access in the Borderlands of Asia*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989).

should India decide to additionally redress its position, with regard to its territorial dispute with China, in Aksai Chin. Those acquainted with the dispute will also remember that Pakistan ceded, through a bilateral agreement, 4500 square kilometers of territory of Pakistan held Kashmir to China thereby raising the prospect of Indo-Chinese conflict should India seek to reclaim her perceived losses in Kashmir. Pakistan and China signed this agreement on 2 March 1963. India has not recognised this transfer of territory. Since 1984 the Indian position on Siachen has remained intact along the Salto ridge. In the defensive context, Indian moves in Siachen were designed to prevent Pakistan from accomplishing a *fait accompli* similar to that of the Chinese in Aksai Chin.

The dispute between India and China is primarily concerned with two pieces of territory along the Himalayan border. These are known as Aksai Chin and Tawang. The Aksai Chin area is an uninhabited and inhospitable plateau at 12,000 feet altitude situated to the north of Ladakh.⁸⁵ Leh, the nearest Indian staging area in Ladakh, is snowbound much of the year, and in summer is accessible through a narrow, winding, high altitude mountain road which links it to both Srinagar and more recently to the Kulu-Manali valley. At the time of the conflict the route was little more than a donkey track. The region is more readily accessible from the Chinese side of the border. Unbeknownst to the Indians, during the 1950s the Chinese built a road across the Aksai Chin region connecting Tibet with Sinkiang and the Karakorum highway. Tawang, falling between Bhutan and Tibet, is an equally difficult area for military operations for the Indians.

The basis of the Indian claims in Aksai Chin and Tawang are part of the imperial legacy of the Raj. The inclusion of Aksai Chin within India was based on the Ardagh line proposed in 1887 by Major General Sir John Ardagh, of the forward school, who favoured pushing British imperial India's borders as far out as possible to counter Russian encroachment on the subcontinent. India's border claims in the northeast are based on the McMahon Line which was asserted as the boundary between the Raj and

⁸⁵ Aksai Chin is white desert in Chinese.

Tibet.⁸⁶ This was not acceded to by the Chinese who later overran Tibet. The McMahon line runs along the peaks of the Himalaya as they span the region between Arunachal Pradesh and Tibet. The Tawang sector, while falling on the southern side of the crest line, reflects the ethnic composition of the Tibetans on the northern side of the border, rather than the Assamese character of most of Arunachal Pradesh. Similarly, Bhutan and Ladakh are ethnically and religiously closer to Tibet, than to Assam or Muslim-Kashmir which are situated to their south.

As Nehru sought to establish India's presence up to the McMahon line he felt that Chinese actions would be constrained by their agreement to the five principles of peaceful coexistence of Panchsheel. Although China did not resist the Indian occupation of Tawang in 1951, the belief that China would feel constrained by Panchsheel proved to be over optimistic. India's rejection of the Chinese proposal to accept this status quo was not commensurate with India's strategic position. Given the inferior position of India in the Himalayan region in the early 1960s an exchange of Aksai Chin for Tawang would certainly have been perceived as reasonable by the Chinese. Signals, such as the August 1959 border clash at the Longju and Kongka Passes, were demonstrations by the Chinese of their intent to resist the forward policy. Despite this, the Indian domestic political situation, which was critical of Indian acquiescence over the Chinese assertion of control over Tibet, Aksai Chin and the Passes, would not tolerate a settlement based on such an exchange of territory. India's refutation of the offer and continued assertion of the forward policy antagonised the Chinese into the border demonstration of 1962.

Richard Lebow postulates that it was the politicisation of the Indian military that was an important cause of India's misperception of the Chinese reaction to India's forward policy. This is not in itself enough to fully explain the extent of cognitive closure that characterised the decision-

⁸⁶ Interestingly this frontier has been breached from both the Indian side of the border, with the Younghusband military expedition of 1903, as well as by the Chinese in the 1962 War. Parushotan L. Mehra, "India, China and Tibet, 1950-59," in Verinder Grover, *International Relations and Foreign Policy of India, vol. 3 China, Japan and India's Foreign Policy*, (New Delhi: Deep & Deep Publications, 1992), pp. 464-487.

making process at that time. Lebow goes on to speculate that heavy doses of wishful thinking in conjunction with the politicisation of the military led to the intelligence failure and military defeat at the hands of the Chinese in 1962. Lebow draws from the work of Janis and Mann in their work *Decision Making*. Such studies have hypothesized "that sensitivity to warnings is related to the subject's capacity to cope with the reported danger. The lower their perceived ability to cope, the lower their sensitivity to information reporting danger."⁸⁷ In April of 1961, Indian military reports suggested that "should the Chinese wish to carry out strong incursions into our territory at selected points, we are not in a position to prevent them from doing so."⁸⁸ So it would seem that India's inability to deal with the Chinese in the Himalayas led it to the point that despite warnings the top leadership could not accept the reality of India's inferior position. This misperception made the defeat a much more momentous blow to the national security psyche of the country than it would have been if India had entered the conflict with realistic notions of its capabilities and limitations. The effect was to lead India to seek greatly expanded capabilities. Having discussed Punjab, Kashmir, Siachen and Aksai Chin as zones of conflict the section will conclude its examination of India's NWF with a brief look at events as they are beginning to unfold in Sindh.

40.215 Sindh

Pakistan has provided assistance to Kashmiri and Sikh insurgents in order to counter India's increased margin of superiority in conventional arms. By emphasising covert operations, Pakistan's armed forces can share their security burden with their intelligence arm, while running less risk of encountering another humiliating defeat. India has responded to continued Pakistani efforts with similar levers in Pakistan's Sindh and northwest frontier Provinces. Further, Indian diplomatic initiatives have, in Kautilyan fashion, sought to gain influence with Afghanistan and Iran in order to divert Pakistani attention away from its Indian border. These

⁸⁷ R.N. Lebow, *Between Peace and War*, p. 171.

⁸⁸ R.N. Lebow, *Between Peace and War*, p. 166.

initiatives give India more policy options as it seeks to respond to Pakistani meddling in its internal security situations.

The fissiparous tendencies of South Asia are not confined to India. Pakistan has extreme problems of regional division and is therefore similarly vulnerable to external manipulation. Due to its military inferiority, Pakistan is more reliant upon covert operations to promote its position. The continuing pressure of Pakistan-backed secession is contributing to India's will to take a more assertive stance against Pakistan.

Pakistan's attempts to increase its level of security from India may, counter to intentions, lead to a undermining of its security posture. In this way Pakistan falls into the security dilemma. This may happen either through Indian counter operations in Sindh, Baluchistan or the Northwest Frontier Province, or from the more general build-up of ill will in India towards Pakistan. India, like Pakistan, continues to deny involvement with insurgents. Home Minister Chavan has described Pakistani allegations that India was sending infiltrators into Sindh as, "absolutely false."⁸⁹ Indian diplomatic support for Afghanistan's position on Azad Paktoonistan was initially given to counter Pakistan acquiescence to the use of East Pakistan as a staging ground for assistance to the Naga and Mizo by the Chinese.⁹⁰ India is likely to continue to maintain good relations with Afghanistan. This will help maintain leverage on Pakistan.

The situation in Sindh, Pakistan's second largest province, is ripe for exploitation by those wishing to destabilise Pakistani central control over the area. The Muslim Muhajirs, who emigrated to Pakistan at partition, are of different ethnic origin from the Sindhis. The Urdu speaking Muhajirs make up sixty percent of the ten million inhabitants of Karachi. They also settled in the Sindhi city of Hyderabad. The Muhajir Qaumi Movement (MQM) was formed to promote their interests within the province and the country at large and has a well trained commando force. This was created with the initial support of General Zia who saw this organisation as a means

⁸⁹ "Chavan Denies Charge," *The Hindu*, (int. ed.) 6/13/92.

⁹⁰ Richard Sisson and Leo Rose, *War and Succession Pakistan, India, and the Creation of Bangladesh*, (New Delhi: Vistaar Publications, 1990), p. 43.

of undermining the support of the Pakistan Peoples Party in Sindh.⁹¹ But the MQM has been seeking increased autonomy within the province. Thirty percent of the population of Karachi is either Punjabi, or from the NWFP, while only ten percent of Karachi remains Sindhi.⁹² This has produced among the Sindhis a great deal of resentment of the immigrants from both within Pakistan and from India.

Sindhi discontent over the increasing position of the Muhajirs has given rise to the Jiye Sindh Movement led by G.M. Syed, which seeks independence from Pakistan for Sindh. To finance their separatist struggle for ethnic Sindhis, the Jiye Sindh Movement has resorted to hostage-taking. Both foreigners and Pakistanis have been taken prisoner. The Jiye Sindh Movement is generally considered to be opposed by both the PPP and the MQM, although the MQM has accused the PPP of being in collusion with the Jiye Sindh Movement. Such a mix of ethnic conflict and separatist movements is vulnerable to external intervention.

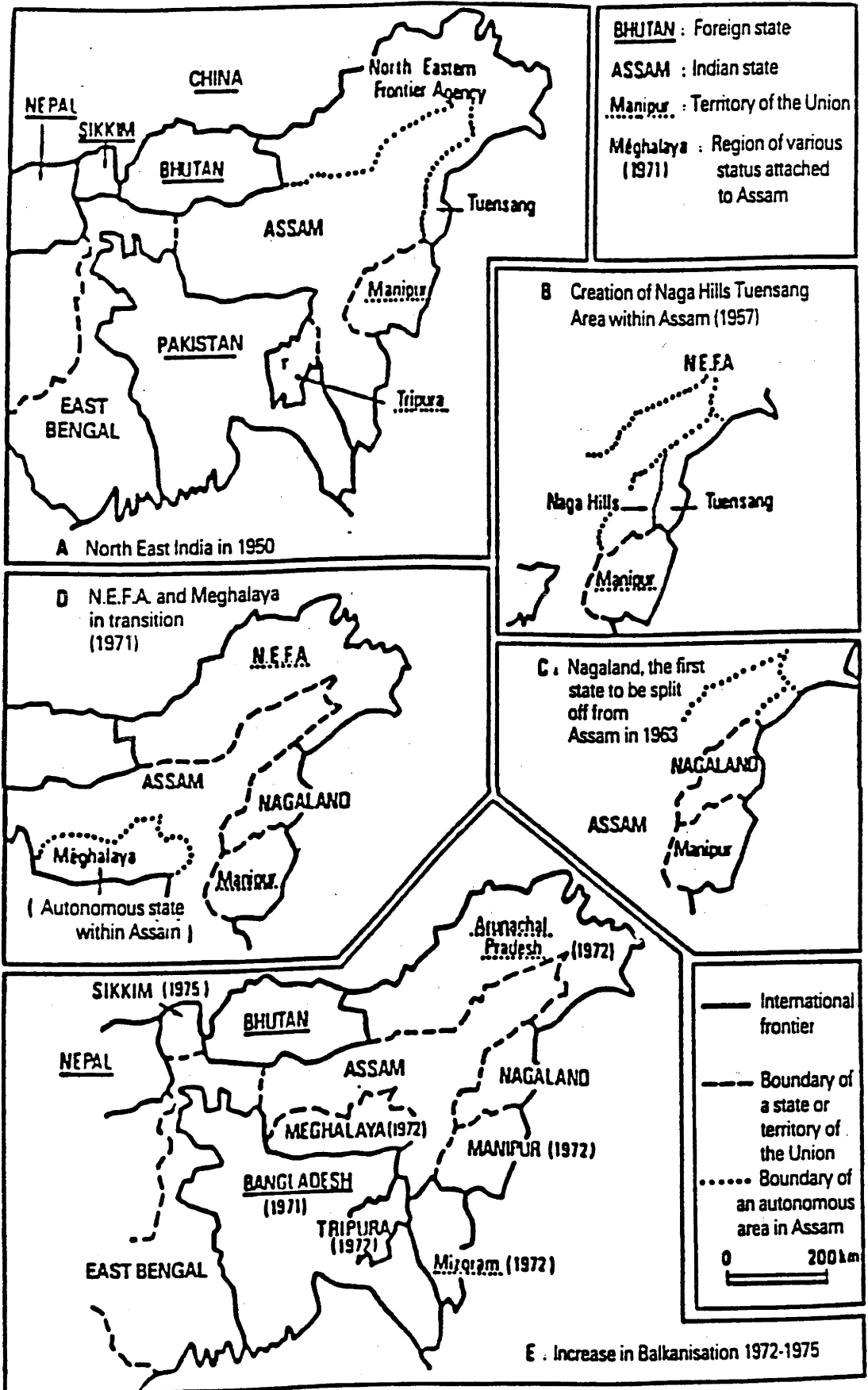
Amid the conflict between the MQM, the PPP and the Jiye Sindh Movement are counter allegations from Islamabad that these groups are conspiring against the government and are in collusion with RAW. On 9 August 1991, 147 individuals taken by the authorities allegedly confessed to being trained by India in the arts of sabotage. The Chief Minister, Jam Sadiq Ali, reported that there were some 5,000 trained saboteurs active in Sindh.⁹³ The Minister of State for Science and Technology, Javed Jabar, further made reference to the Indian "foreign hand" in both the deteriorating law and order situation in Sindh and the situation in Indian Kashmir. It was his opinion that Indian intervention in Sindh was an effort to relieve the mounting pressure in Indian Kashmir.⁹⁴ Former Prime Minister Sharif has

⁹¹ Salamat Ali, "Sindh Erupts in a Wave of Ethnic Killing," *The Far Eastern Economic Review*, 6/7/90, p. 22. There is a parallel between the dangers to the state of such machinations getting out of control. Indira and Bhindranwale in Punjab and Rajiv and the Tamils in Tamil Nadu and Sri Lanka are interesting previous cases.

⁹² Salamat Ali, "The Sindh Government is Paralysed by Ethnic Disorder," *The Far Eastern Economic Review*, 9/21/89, p. 20.

⁹³ "Indian Trained Saboteurs Active in Sindh," *Reuters News Service*, 8/9/91.

⁹⁴ N.D. Khan, "Foreign Hand Involved in Sindh Crisis," *The Pakistan Times*, 2/9/90.



Source: Jean Racine, "A Contribution to the Geopolitical Analysis of India," in P. Girot and E. Kofman eds. *International Geopolitical Analysis* (London: Croom Helm, 1987), p.93.

accused the PPP of being connected to RAW through its paramilitary arm the Al-Zulfiqar.⁹⁵

While weapons have always been valued in the NWFP, they have become commonplace in Sindh and throughout the country. This is a consequence of the Afghan war. Between 1983 and 1989 more than 1,500 people had been killed in ethnic violence in Sindh. A further eighty people died in Sindh during the first two months of 1990.⁹⁶ With this discussion of the northwest frontier complete, the chapter now turns to consider the second of India's three key geopolitical Frontiers, the Northeast Frontier.

40.22 The northeast frontier

The Northeast Frontier (NEF) is geopolitically more fractured than the NWF and its potential impact on the unity of the centre is less pronounced. The hilly terrain of the NEF is connected to the rest of India by a narrow land corridor. The vulnerability of this corridor dictated India's absorption of Sikkim in 1975. The proximity of this area to Bangladesh, China and Burma, its demographic problems and the tension between the centre and the regional ethnic groups make this a vulnerable region for India. The predominantly tribal and Christian orientation of the people, and their geographic, as well as cultural, isolation from the Hindi-Hindu centre, has led Delhi to perceive them as somewhat less "Indian." These peoples' primary identities are with their local ethnic-tribal group and not with the national territorial identity of India. Recognition of this has in the recent past led to a coercive policy by the centre rather than the accommodative approach of earlier policy. Such an approach, if continued, will accentuate conflict by exacerbating the sense of alienation among the ethnic groups. This will lead to increased polarisation and a further deterioration of relations between the centre and its northeastern periphery. If allowed to continue, this will then undermine India's geostrategic position in this quadrant of the subcontinent. If Indo-Chinese relations

⁹⁵ Aabha Dixit, "The Backlash in Sind," *The Telegraph*, 6/22/90.

⁹⁶ Aabha Dixit, "Kalishnikov Culture is Blighting Sind," *The Times of India*, 2/28/90. See also "Pakistani Separatist Politician Says Kidnapping Justified," *Reuters New Service*, 6/27/91.

deteriorate, China could easily escalate centre-periphery conflict on the NEF as Pakistan has on the NWF.

40.221 The territories of the northeast: Assam Tripura, Nagaland, Mizoram, the Chittagong Hill Tracts, Gorkhaland, Manipur, Naxalbari District,

Both the borders of the northeast and the northwest of India are permeable to cross border support. Recent restraint on the part of India's neighbours on the NEF is responsible for the lack of even higher levels of assistance to India's secessionists. The ambience of China's, Bangladesh's and Burma's relationships with India determines the degree to which those countries provide support for the insurgents operating inside India. This cross border support of insurgents has become a tool for national foreign policy objectives when diplomatic relations are poor. This "carrot-and-stick" approach attempts to influence neighbours to move to a position compatible with a state's aims. The establishment of Chinese training camps for Naga and Mizo rebels in East Pakistan in 1969 put China in a position to undermine Indian security in the region. Within the context of an unresolved Indo-Chinese border, such a lever improved China's bargaining position. These camps, and the Chinese line of support to insurgents in India were curtailed in 1971 as a result of India's victory in the war of that year. This war was aided by assistance from the Mukti Bahini, which India had been supporting.⁹⁷ China held military manoeuvres on the border of Arunachal Pradesh in 1986 in response to Delhi's decision to grant the northeast Frontier Agency state status. China thereby expressed its dissatisfaction with a possible alteration in status of the disputed border.⁹⁸ One reason why China has exercised restraint in its support for Indian insurgent groups is its awareness of its own vulnerability to external support for dissatisfied elements in Tibet and Sinkiang. India's involvement in Sindh implies that it would consider countering Chinese interference by such a course of action.

⁹⁷ Richard Sisson and Leo Rose, *War and Succession*, pp. 43, 286. China subsequently reestablished its lines of support to these groups through Bangladesh and Burma until 1978 when it decided to cut its support to improve the diplomatic relationship with India. In 1991 the Governor of Assam again accused China of resumption of its support for Northeast insurgents.

⁹⁸ R. Bradnock, *India's Foreign Policy Since 1971*, p. 34.

Northeast India has been a source of almost perpetual agitation and insurrection despite receiving a disproportionate share of India's development funds. The problem is essentially one of alienation amongst the population. This is due to the centre's inability to placate sub-national demands despite some attempts to do so. During the 1970s Assam was subdivided to give local autonomy to disgruntled groups. Bangladesh was assisted in its desire for autonomy from Pakistan, and Sikkim was incorporated into India. All these measures were undertaken to stabilize a volatile and vulnerable region. It was hoped that bending to local demands would alleviate the pressures of discontent. Despite these measures the NEF continues to remain vulnerable to external manipulation. By failing to accommodate more fully the legitimate needs of the indigenous peoples of the region, central authority has undermined Indian security. But while the policy of accommodation seems the most prudent way to prevent the rise of dissent, it too has its own liabilities. The myriad of tribal and subtribal groups could lead to an unending subdivision of territory as smaller and smaller groups sought self realization.⁹⁹

The key source of stress for the indigenes of the northeast is demographic. This pressure is created by immigration rather than local population increase. It is this pressure that threatens their culture and way of life. The majority of immigrants come "lured by opportunities of casual labour and cheaper rice."¹⁰⁰ This is understandable given Bangladesh's population density of over 1,500 people per square mile. These migrants have come into a land characterised by its diversity and differentiation from the rest of India and Bangladesh. There are majority Christian areas in Nagaland and Mizoram. The tribal groups of the northeast have become a minority in their own land due to the immigration of Bangladeshi Muslims. In Tripura the tribals have been reduced to 29% of the total population of the state.¹⁰¹ This demographic pressure has come to threaten

⁹⁹ Among the 26 million inhabitants of the seven districts of the northeast there are 116 scheduled tribes who speak some 420 languages with 1652 dialects.

¹⁰⁰ Jaswant Singh, "Assam's Crisis of Citizenship," p. 1059.

¹⁰¹ L.P. Singh, "The Northeast: The Problem," *Seminar*, No. 366, Feb. 1990, p.15. L.P. Singh is a former Home Secretary of India.

the cultural integrity of the ethnic groups of the northeast. Many have responded by joining insurgent groups that seek to defend their identity.

The insurgency by the United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) has existed since the early 1980s. The most recent phase of escalation, spanning 1989 to early 1992, has threatened to plunge the state further into strife. The military *Operation Rhino*, resulted in the arrest of some 2,000 guerillas and the capture of a significant number of the movement's leaders.¹⁰² Through pressure from the centre, the ULFA was brought to the negotiation table in 1992. This breakthrough in Assam was brought about not through a negotiated settlement but through the above mentioned force of arms. Such a military show of strength is a necessary, though not a sufficient cause, for a settlement of the autonomous/secessionist movement in Assam.¹⁰³ The military operations need to be linked to economic and cultural programs that change the way the periphery perceives the centre and vice versa. Continuing employment of military solutions, independent of meaningful reforms, will serve only to further alienate the populace.

The discontent of the peoples of Assam has created another tense relationship between the centre and this northeastern corner of India's periphery. An attempt to obtain a negotiated settlement was made with the 1985 Assam Accord. The chief grievance of the Assamese has been the influx of foreigners into the state. This animosity led to the death of over 4,000 Muslim Bangladeshis during the 1983 elections. During 1990, the Asom Gana Parishad (AGP) state government came under criticism from the All Assam Students Union (AASU). The major issue was the non-implementation of the deportation of post 1971 entrants under the 1985 accord.¹⁰⁴ Insurgencies and protests will continue to erode the basis for association between Assam and India unless underlying substantive issues are addressed.

The peace in Assam is not entirely a matter of the appeasement of the sub-national loyalties of the Assamese whose identity is separate from the

¹⁰² "Army, Rebels Cease Fire in Hope of Assam Peace Talks," *The Australian*, 1/15/92.

¹⁰³ This also holds true for Punjab and Kashmir.

¹⁰⁴ F. Ahmed, "Assam: The Split Within, Discord over the Accord," *India Today*, 3/15/90.

Indian mainstream.¹⁰⁵ The relative isolation of Assam and the northeast in general makes it difficult for the centre to exert influence in the region. One of the various tribal groups yet to realise independent statehood, as a first step towards realizing their ethnic identity within India, is the Bodo. This group comprise some ten percent of Assam's 23 million people. The Bodo began agitating against the Assamese majority in the state in 1988. They are strategically placed to carry out their threats as their territory spans the narrow corridor of Indian territory connecting the northeast with the rest of India. The Bodo can periodically cut off the northeast through bombings of bridges and rail lines.¹⁰⁶ Their demands for a separate state follow on the demands of the Naga, Mizo, Tripuri and other tribes active in the 1960s and 70s. Under interrogation captured activist Benjamin Daimary of the Bodo Security Force acknowledged the existence of training camps in Bhutan opposite the Darrang district of Assam.¹⁰⁷

Assam was split into five units in 1971 to reduce tensions by providing a territorial identity for the dominant ethnic groups of the region. For these groups, the choice is either for greater autonomy from the centre or for succession. In the words of Bodo legislator Binoy Basumatari "If sub-nationalism is not accepted, then India can not remain as one complete nation."¹⁰⁸ While these movements operate on a smaller scale than those in Punjab or in Kashmir, they are potentially equally volatile and vulnerable to external manipulation. On 2 April 1992 Assam Chief Minister, Hiteswar Saikia, accused Pakistan of colluding with Bangladesh in support of the ULFA.¹⁰⁹ This view of Pakistani involvement was reiterated by the Home Minister, Mr. Chavan, on 9 May 1992. He accused ISI of "aiding and abetting" the terrorists of Assam.¹¹⁰ Furthermore, there is fear that

¹⁰⁵ In Assam alone there are nine scheduled castes and 23 scheduled tribes recognised by the Indian government with an additional 37 sub-tribes. Since the Mandal commission agitation, Other Backward Castes (OBC) are also seeking recognition.

¹⁰⁶ "Militants Step Up Bombing Campaign," *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 4/14/90.

¹⁰⁷ "Top Bodo Militant Admits Existence of Camps in Bhutan," *The Hindu*, (int. ed.) 6/6/92.

¹⁰⁸ Sanjoy Hazarika, "New Ethnic Violence is Shaking India's Northeast," *The New York Times*, 6/11/89.

¹⁰⁹ "Pak Bangladesh Fomenting Trouble: Saikia," *The Hindu*, (int. ed.) 4/11/92.

¹¹⁰ "Pakistan Aiding ULFA," *The Hindu*, (int.ed.) 5/9/92.

precedents set in the northeast could influence the course of events in other autonomous or secessionist struggles.

The regeneration of insurgent organisations, after being militarily suppressed or co-opted, highlights the tenuous nature of existing attempts at conflict resolution. When symptoms rather than causes are addressed, conflict resolution will be short lived. The situation in Tripura supports this regenerative perspective on insurgencies. This is an example where the insurgent group itself, rather than the underlying grievances which caused the formation of the group, became the target of conflict resolution. In February 1988, the coalition between the Congress Party and the Tripura Upajati Juba Samity (TUJS) was successful in bringing Bijoy Hrankawl's Tripura National Volunteers (TNV) into Parliamentary politics and the political mainstream. This surrender by the TNV, however, did not stop insurgent activity in Tripura. Shortly afterwards, the cause was taken up by the Tripura National Liberation Front (TNLF). The TNLF's leadership was also subsequently co-opted through the offer of government jobs and contracts in 1989. As the TNLF faded it was replaced by the All Tripura Tribal Force Volunteers (ATTFV). The ATTFV ambushed a group of Border Security Forces jawans on 12 December 1990, just four months after the TNLF was brought into the mainstream. This indicates a continuation of the rank and file of the movement, if not of their leadership. In keeping with the established pattern, the TUJS struck a bargain with elements of the ATTFV on 27 January of 1991. Shortly thereafter the ATTFV leader, Nihar Chakma, was arrested. The periodic absorption or suppression of the dissident leaders, either through cooption or the use of force, has not stemmed the regenerative powers of insurgency in the state. The continuing presence of insurgency indicates that by addressing symptoms, and not the underlying causes, a long term resolution will remain illusive.¹¹¹ It remains to be seen whether this will be the case in Punjab where the governemnt had a measure of success in 1992.

While the regeneration of the insurgent groups is facilitated by Bangladeshi support from across the border, such assistance could not create

¹¹¹ This question is similarly of importance to Punjab in 1993.

the various groups themselves. It has been alleged that Bangladesh has been supporting the ATTFV from three bases within its territory.¹¹² Jagadish Debbarma, the chairman of the Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council, stated in March of 1991 that a, "large number of the ATTF recruits have received training in the use of arms in the Chittagong Hill Tracks."¹¹³ The presence of a dissatisfied populace is a prerequisite for establishing such insurgencies as in Tripura or the other northeastern states. While external support can raise the level of conflict, it cannot create it.

Conflict in the northeast has led to direct border incidents between India and Bangladesh. On 21 April 1984, the Bangladesh Rifles and Indian Border Security Forces had a border skirmish over India's decision to begin the construction of a barbed-wire fence to curb illegal immigration and other cross border movements from Bangladesh into Assam.¹¹⁴ Burma's persecution of its Muslim population similarly led to border tensions with Bangladesh.

The Naga's desires for autonomy represents yet another group whose identity is separate from the Indian state. As early as 1929 the NNC sought independence from British authority. Having fought alongside the British against the Japanese in World War II, the Nagas believed they would achieve independence at the war's end. To their dissatisfaction they were incorporated into India. After the Nagas incorporation into an independent India they resumed their efforts for independence in different ways and to differing effect. In the 1950s the Naga conducted a satyagraha campaign to highlight their independent character within India. The most intense fighting took place between 1956 & 58. As a result, the Naga became split between those supporting autonomy within India and those who wished to continue to push for independence.

¹¹² "Tripura Rebels to Make a Come Back," *Business and Political Observer*, 12/7/90.

¹¹³ Subir Bhaumik, "Shot Down: A New Insurgent Group Lays Down Arms." *Sunday*, 3/10-16/91.

¹¹⁴ Jaswant Singh, "Assam's Crisis of Citizenship: An Examination of Political Errors," *Asian Survey*, 10/10/84, p. 1056. India decided to go ahead with the construction of a similar fence on the Pakistan border early in 1992.

In 1960, an agreement was reached that granted the Nagas their own state within India. Nagaland was made a state in 1963 and the first elections were held in 1964. Despite this, Nagas continued to agitate for increased autonomy and independence. The fighting resumed in the late 1960s. The National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN) rebels have continued insurgent operations with their force of some 3,000 members. The NSCN has had associations with the Peoples Liberation Front of Manipur and the UNLF.

The resumption of fighting in 1972 led to the deployment of three army divisions and additional paramilitary forces. Military pressure on the Naga led to an agreement between the more moderate Naga and the militants to shift from secessionist to autonomous goals. The Shillong accord was signed between the Naga government and the militants in 1975. Despite this, the Phizo and Maivah groups continue their resistance from Burma. The Maivah group is reported to have sought close ties with China.¹¹⁵ In 1992, the NSCN, a pro-Chinese organisation, remains the strongest force in Nagaland in opposition to the centre.¹¹⁶ There are signs that the Naga's members are becoming more professional. In 1992 they adopted the fund raising tactic of going directly to the people for funding rather than relying on bank hold ups or other sporadic fund raising efforts. This involved 25% to 50% individual income tax and additional payments by businesses. The NSCN reportedly raised \$1.1 million in the year to November 1992 and was seeking "twice that amount" in the following year to finance "large scale arms purchases."¹¹⁷

A similar, yet smaller, insurgency to that of the Nagas has been waged in Mizoram. The first large scale Mizo uprising in the Assam district of India occurred in 1960. The Mizo National Front (MNF) was one of the smaller insurgency groups of the northeast with some 600 members fighting for greater autonomy within India for Mizoram's 500,000 inhabitants. Mizoram was made a Union Territory, along with Meghalaya, Manipur and

¹¹⁵ Z. Khalilzad, T. George, R. Litwak and S. Chubin, *Security in South Asia*.

¹¹⁶ "Naga Extremists Kill 10," *The Hindu*, (int. ed.), 6/20/92.

¹¹⁷ "Indian Separatist Seek to Boost 'Loyalty Tax,'" *Reuters News Service*, 11/1192.

Tripura, in 1971, but Mizoram did not receive full statehood until 1987. Like the ATTFV it was alleged that the Mizo have received support from Bangladesh. Bangladesh's motive has been to "attempt to counter their own dissident group, the Shanti Bahini" whom the Indians have been supporting.¹¹⁸ On 30 June 1986, the MNF signed a peace accord with the centre putting an end to their twenty year old insurgency. Since the accord, the short lived Zoro movement, for an autonomous tribal region within the state, has also subsided. Despite the accord, some Mizos continue to wish for a greater Mizoram including the Mizo areas of Tripura, Bangladesh and Burma.¹¹⁹ Another, as yet insignificant, insurgent group, the Brachin National Union (BNU) seeks to incorporate the northeast of India, the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) and parts of Burma to form another new state.¹²⁰

Through the examples of Tripura, and the northeast in general, the connection between the centre/state relationship and internal and external politics is evident. India is strategically vulnerable to cross border subversion because of the profusion of disaffected groups along the northeast and northwest frontiers of India. If Indian relations between the centre and the periphery were grounded on a mutually beneficial basis, then Bangladesh would not be able to exert even a limited counter to the influence which India can wield over it. India's other neighbours are similarly vulnerable to such pressures.

The Chakma, who inhabit the 5,500 square mile Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) of the southeast of Bangladesh, bordering on Tripura and Mizoram, have increasingly been the victims of demographic pressure caused by the influx of some 300,000 Bengali settlers into their tribal homeland. In an effort to preserve their position, relative to the growing numbers of Muslim Bengalis from lower lying areas of Bangladesh, the Chakma have established a defence force of Marxist orientation called the

¹¹⁸ Brian Cloughley, "The Troubles in Nagaland," *TVI Journal*, summer, 1985, p. 38.

¹¹⁹ "Mizoram Most Peaceful State in India," *The Statesman*, 2/22/91.

¹²⁰ The BNU was formerly the Kangleipak National Union. See also B. Cloughley *TVI Journal*, summer, 1985, p. 38.

Shanti Bahini.¹²¹ In 1986, the Shanti Bahini killed hundreds of Muslim settlers. In response, Bangladesh security forces conducted retaliatory raids which produced a mass exodus of 60,000 Chakma to Tripura. During the 18 year old conflict 3,000 have been killed. In wishing to see an end to the encroachment of Muslim settlers from Bangladesh, the Chakma's demands are similar to those of the Assamese. Both groups would like all Bengalis to leave their traditional areas. According to the Chakma political wing, the Parbatya Chattogram Jansanghati Samity (PCJS), prospects for the repatriation of the Chakma in Tripura are dim despite the more democratic predisposition of the post-Ershad government. The Greater Chittagong Hill Tracts Pahari Chatra Parishad student organisation has also reaffirmed extant Chakma demands.¹²² Despite static policy by Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia, the Shanti Bahini stepped up their low level insurgency against the settlers and the security forces in the CHT to press their demands. This was done from both within the CHT and from bases across the border in Tripura.¹²³

The Chakma have shifted from moderate demands to radical ones as their grievances have gone unaddressed. Initially, Chakma demands centred on increased autonomy, based on a separate legislature for the region and the regulation of Bengali settlement in the region. With continued influx of settlers, and attempts to convert the population to Islam, the movement shifted its demands to self determination and a total ban on Bengali settlers, with their expulsion and return to Bengali Bangladesh. Chakma desires for a separate state in the CHT increased in 1971 as the Bengali Muslims achieved their independence from West Pakistan. This progressive radicalisation of autonomous demands into secessionist objectives is consistent with other groups within South Asia. In the process, communist ideology found fertile ground as witnessed by the establishment

¹²¹ Shanti Bahini's meaning is peace force. Manash Ghosh, "Chakma Chief Looks at Kurdish Have," *The Indian Ocean Review*, Sept. 1991, p. 6.

¹²² Subir Bhaumik, "Waiting in the Hills: The Fall of Ershad Raises Hopes for the Homeless Chakmas," *Sunday*, 1/27-2/2/91.

¹²³ "Eight Die in Separatist Campaign in Bangladesh," *Reuters News Service*, 6/30/91.

of the Rangamati Communist Party (RCP) with its open forum with the PCJSS and the PCJSS's military wing the Shanti Bahini in May of 1972.¹²⁴

Other groups which are becoming increasingly alienated as they seek greater self expression are the Gorkhas, the Manipurese and the Naxalites. The Gorkha movement aims to create an independent state for the Gorkha group from the Dooars district of West Bengal. Although this is not yet a serious militant movement it does show signs of following the South Asian pattern of increasing radicalisation. Gorkha issues can also be viewed as an example of the creeping potential for unending territorial subdivisions. Nepali speakers are only 15% of the population, while 60% are tribal in Gorkha areas.¹²⁵ The Gorka National Liberation Front (GNLF) seeks the inclusion of Nepali as one of India's official languages. The inroads made by the ULFA inspired the Gorkha movement to raise their demands despite their weakness. A domino effect is discernible here. As one group gains concessions from the centre others are encouraged to try. The tendency for increased radicalisation of groups as conflicts become protracted, highlights the efficacy of dealing with the root causes decisively and quickly. The Gorkhas testify to importance of achieving a formula for the resolution of conflicts which stem from the incompatibility of the individual and sub-national group's core identities, and their allegiance to India. To date, attempts by the centre, such as the Darjeeling-Gorka Hill Council Act, have been received as insincere gestures.¹²⁶ Some of these same issues are witnessed in Manipur.

Manipur's subjugation is a relatively recent phenomenon. Manipur lost its independence to the Burmese in 1819. In 1826 it regained a degree of independence by taking British assistance to break with Burma. After an uprising in 1891 this independence was lost. Manipur was made a Union territory of India in 1956, and a state in 1971. A plethora of Manipuri sub-nationalist groups have sought varying degrees of autonomy and

¹²⁴ Mohammad Nurul Amin, "Secessionist Movement in the Chittagong Hill Tracts," *Regional Studies*, (Islamabad) winter 1988-9.

¹²⁵ Utoal Chatterjee, "Gorkhas Set on Autonomy," *Illustrated Weekly*, 3/9-10/91.

¹²⁶ Marcus Dam, "An Insincere State has Failed Us," *The Statesman*, 7/23/92.

independence from the centre.¹²⁷ Some of these groups have called for union with Nagaland and parts of Mizoram. Tension continues between people inhabiting the valleys and those of the hills. The profusion of political organisations within Manipur, and the northeast in general, indicates a high degree of local identity and a lack of identity with the Indian state of the centre.

Like the Naga the "Meiteis insurgents in Manipur are able to operate only because they can cross over to their bases in Burma."¹²⁸ Similar to other movements, the key issues in Manipur are, the exclusion of the local Manipuri language from the eighth schedule of the Constitution, restoration of indigene lands taken by immigrants and the lack of upward mobility of Manipuris in the bureaucracy, despite their 69% share of the state's population.

While most insurrectionist movements in India are based in a given territory and with a specific ethnic group who identify with that territory, there has existed a degree of ideologically inspired opposition. The Naxalite rebellions in the Naxalbari area of the Darjeeling district of West Bengal in 1967, and Srikakulam district of Andhra Pradesh in 1968, were to an extent inspired by ideological factors though tribal, political, and economic factors also played a significant role. The movement also had an external aspect through the CPI(M)'s relationship with the Chinese. Unlike the other tribal groups, the Naxalites do not occupy lands exclusively on the periphery of India. The rebellion in Srikakulam again highlights the extent to which frustrations within a group can be mobilized when the government is ineffectual in addressing the central concerns or values of a disaffected element in society. The Naxalites are interesting, partly for their

¹²⁷ Among these groups are Meitei Marup, the Manipur Cultural Association, the Pan Manipur Youth League, the Manipur Peoples Convention, the Cultural Integration Conference, the Meitei Satate Committee, the Revolutionary Nationalist Party, the Pan Mongoloid Movement, the United Nationalist Liberation Front, the Naga Integrational Council, the Manipur National Party, the Manipur Peoples Party, Manipur Hill Union, the Janata Party, the Peoples Revolutionary Party of Kanglepak, the Peoples' Liberation Army and the National Socialist Council of Nagaland. L.P. Sinha, "The Politics and Government of Manipur," *The Indian Journal of Political Science*, Oct.-Nov. 1987, p. 490.

¹²⁸ L.P. Singh, "The Northeast," p.14.

mobilization of a marginalised group, through a Maoist communist agenda shortly after the Sino-Indian war of 1962, but also because they are an example where religious, ethnic or tribal identities are melded to ideological values.¹²⁹ The Naxalites illustrate the erosion of governmental authority and legitimacy. They demonstrate the process whereby alienated peoples are mobilised against the centre. This highlights the importance to the government of maintaining the respect of the people as a source of legitimacy lest it lose control over other alienated groups. It is essential for the GOI to be perceived as maintaining order in an effective way.¹³⁰

While Delhi has not succeeded in satisfying the various group's calling for separate identities within India, it has used routes for maintaining regional control and dependency. Appreciating the strategic and political importance of communications and transit links, Delhi has established direct air links with six of the seven state capitals.¹³¹ Despite this centre-periphery focused infrastructure, the seven northeastern states themselves suffer from poor intra-regional transit and communications. The fastest way to Guwahati Assam, from Aizawl Mizoram, is via Calcutta. Rail links extend from India into five of the region's seven states. None of the other state capitals are linked to Guwahati.¹³² In her discussion of the influence of routes on the centralisation of state control, and their relationship with the linkage between security and development in Southwest Asia, Mahnaz Isphahani has further pointed out the importance of the "anti-route."¹³³ The dynamics of communications and transit in the northeast indicate a desire on the part of Delhi to facilitate centre control while maintaining the anti-routes between the regional states. This is indicative of a non-accomodative strategy of suppression that may redound to the centre's disadvantage.

¹²⁹ Sreemati Chakrabarti, *China and the Naxalites*, (New Delhi: Radiant Publishers, 1990).

¹³⁰ Leslie Calman, *Protest in Democratic India*, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1985).

¹³¹ The seventh, Itanagar, Arunachal Pradesh's capital, is only a two hour drive away from the airport at Lilabari. There are also military airfields in the region.

¹³² M.S. Prabhakara, "Communications Links in the North East; A Distance Maintained," *The Hindu*, 11/10/91.

¹³³ Mahnaz Z. Isphahani, *Roads and Rivals: The Political Uses of Access in the Borderlands of Asia*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989).

The problems of the Bodo, Tripuri, Nagas, Meitei, Chakma and other tribal groups in northeast India are a microcosm of the predicament which confronts India as a whole. The problem of accommodating the autonomous desires of subnational, or sub-state affinities, while maintaining a functioning and viable national government is one which India will be forced to grapple with for some time. This is exacerbated by the strategic importance of peripheral areas to internal security. Chief Minister of Assam, Prafulla Mahanta's 1989 remarks concerning the Bodo hold true for many of India's autonomous movements: "If we give them [the Bodo] a separate state, then we will get similar demands from all the other smaller tribes."¹³⁴ The fear is that to allow autonomy will open the floodgates of secession. The problem is that to resist all demands only serves to radicalise the movements. The "centre", whether it be in Delhi for the tribal groups who have already gained a territorial identity, or Gauhati, for the Bodo who have yet to achieve their territorial identity from Assam, has a choice between suppression or accommodation. Suppression may achieve short term gains but will strengthen the alternative identities, whereas accommodation of the competing identities and loyalties would diffuse the underlying cause of tensions.

In dealing with the secessionist/autonomous issue the central government's policies have increasingly relied on the imposition of Presidential rule, the use of paramilitary and regular armed forces, special powers and the co-option of dissident leaders into mainstream politics. These measures have achieved limited short term success in dispersing or diffusing insurgent groups, but have yet to achieve the longer term objective of substantially changing the insurgent's perception of the centre as a threat to their primary identities. Only by changing the circumstances to accommodate these groups' need to find expression for their collective identities can the centre moderate perceptions so that allegiance to the centre is not mutually exclusive to their more primary identities and allegiances. By creating dissatisfied groups which are seeking assistance from across the frontier, and by avoiding the meaningful resolution of internal conflicts,

¹³⁴ S. Hazarika, "New Ethnic Violence is Shaking India's Northeast," *The New York Times*, 6/11/89.

India becomes increasingly unstable and vulnerable. In such an unstable environment international conflict is more likely than it would be in a stable situation.

The numerous references to cross-border assistance given to the various insurgent groups in the northeast by Bangladesh, Burma and China establish the connection between internal and external conflict. Bangladeshi support for Indian insurgents can be viewed as a counter to Indian attempts to gain influence through the Chakma. With Burma, the cross-border support comes from the Burmese insurgents operating out of the Kachin region. A certain level of cooperation has been effected in the past between Delhi and Rangoon in dealing with this common problem. In February of 1988 Indian air forces and Burmese ground forces conducted a joint attack on NSCN and NFG bases in Kachin.¹³⁵ Given Burma's continued inability to control its periphery, the region will probably remain a sanctuary for northeastern insurgents. It is alleged that the "Chinese have extended moral and material support to the Naga, Mizo and Meitei Manipuri insurgents by arranging for their training in guerilla warfare and subversion in training centres in the Yunan province of mainland China and Lhasa, Tibet."¹³⁶

India's complaints over such intervention have remained muted as India has sought to improve relations with China. Rajiv Gandhi's 1988 visit to Beijing and Li Peng's 1992 visit to Delhi are efforts seeking to rebuild a fragile relationship which seems unaffected by low level support for insurgencies. Through its ability to intervene in the northeast, China can remind Delhi of its leverage in the region. This could also be exploited, to a certain extent through Indian involvement with Tibet. India's reluctance to do so suggests that Delhi has calculated that it stands to gain more through diplomacy than through covert operations.¹³⁷ For its part, China has, at

¹³⁵ Shaheen Akhtar, "Insurgency in NE India: A Search for Autonomy," *Regional Studies*, (Islamabad) Autumn, 1989, p. 105.

¹³⁶ M.K. Dhar, "Worry at Chinese Hand in NE," *The Hindustan Times*, 1/11/87. See also Shaheen Akhtar, "Insurgency in NE India," p. 105.

¹³⁷ It is interesting to note that on 8 May 1965 Sheik Abdulla was arrested upon his return from a Haj to Mecca because of his meeting with Chou En Lai in Algiers. Lamb, pp. 118-9.

least since 1988, largely complied with a policy of non-interference despite the low level support which does reach these groups. It should be noted that between 1988 and 1993 the Chinese defence budget doubled.¹³⁸

Despite the recent improvements in Sino-Indian relations, the period between 1954 and 1988 was marked by intermittent border clashes, war and cross-border insurgency support. This period of Indo-Chinese relations was important for causing India to lose its innocence. It was as a result of this that India moved to a pragmatic and realist outlook on international affairs.

Should large segments of the northeast remain disaffected, the region would be a source of concern if the Indo-Chinese relationship were to deteriorate in the future. This would be in some ways similar to the uncertainty over Punjabi and Kashmiri loyalty with regard to Pakistan in a possible future conflict. The destabilised situation in Burma, and the potential for increased Sino-Burmese collaboration, further undermines India's position in the northeast.

The problem of how the centre can appease the militant groups without allowing their concessions to be seen as proof of the efficacy of militant agitation remains unresolved. If marginalized elements perceive that the centre has been forced to make concessions to militant groups, then concessions will be met with further demands.¹³⁹ Conversely, if the centre quickly and decisively moves to accommodate some subnational group demands its actions may ameliorate the source of frustration of the group in question, creating the perception that the centre is not necessarily an adversary. Within this context a dual track policy of first establishing the state's authority and then dispensing a liberal justice would seem to be the only means of reducing tension and maintaining India's territorial integrity. With this review of the insurgent movements of the NEF complete the chapter will now assess India's relations with the Himalayan kingdoms.

¹³⁸ The government announced military budget for 1993 represented a 15% jump from 1992 to \$7.4 billion. It is speculated that Chinese government statistics account for only half of total military expenditure. Nicholas Kristof, "China raises Military Budget Despite Deficit," *The New York Times*, 3/17/93.

¹³⁹ This opinion is represented in Brian Cloughley, "India's Stresses and Strains," *The Pacific Defence Reporter*, Aug. 1985, p. 10.

40.222 The Himalayan Kingdoms (Nepal, Bhutan, Sikkim) and Burma

These Himalayan kingdoms and Burma form an integral part of the subcontinent's NEF by acting, to greater and lesser degrees at different points in history, as buffer states between India and China, or, as was the case with Burma during WWII, between India and Japan. For these reasons they are included in a discussion of the geopolitics of the NEF.

The historical relationship between India and Nepal is a deep one. Nepal is the only other Hindu nation in the world. Further, Nepal has a even higher concentration of Hindus than does India. Despite the cultural and religious similarities, the asymmetrical power relationship and differing system of government have created tensions between the two states in the modern period. Indian involvement in the affairs of the Ranas, the monarchy and most recently with the Nepali Congress has sought to create a more pro-Indian attitude in Kathmandu.¹⁴⁰

India's absorption of Sikkim on 16 May 1975 was its last significant territorial adjustment.¹⁴¹ The Chogyal's loss was a cause for concern for Nepali King Bhirendra. The Foreign Minister, G.B. Karki stated Nepal's position that "it is our irrevocable policy that there should be no outside interference in the internal affairs of any nation."¹⁴² There was obvious fear in Kathmandu that similar pro-democracy demonstrations could be manipulated by India as a pretext for Indian intervention in Nepal's internal affairs.

Similar concerns were expressed by Prince Wangchuck Namgyal of Bhutan. If India "believes in the principles of Panchsheel, I think it should

¹⁴⁰ For more information on the evolution of the Indo-Nepal relationship see Leo Rose and John Scholz, *Nepal: Profile of a Himalayan Kingdom*, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1980), S.D. Muni ed., *Nepal: An Assertive Monarchy*, (New Delhi: Chetna Publications, 1977), S. K. Jha, ed. *Indo-Nepal Relations*, (New Delhi: Archives Books, 1989), S.K. Chaturvedi, *Indo-Nepal Relations in Linkage Perspective*, (New Delhi: B.R. Publishing Corporation, 1990) and Rishikesh Shaha, *Three Decades and Two Kings, 1960-90: Eclipse of Nepals Partyless Monarchic Rule*, (Katmandu: Ratna Pushtak Bhandar, 1990).

¹⁴¹ For a detailed account of India's involvement in Sikkim see Datta-Ray, Sunanda K. *Smash and Grab: Annexation of Sikkim*. (Delhi: Vikas Publishing House, Pvt. Ltd. 1984).

¹⁴² As quoted in A. Appadorai, *India's Foreign Policy and Relations*, p. 583.

do justice to us."¹⁴³ Events such as the October 1990 ethnic conflict between Bhutan's Nepali-Gorkha and Drupka groups¹⁴⁴ raised fears of creating opportunities for Indian involvement.¹⁴⁵ The agitation centring in the south of Bhutan is also intertwined with the Gorkha National Liberation Front. There have been accusations that India was instigating the agitations¹⁴⁶ or that China was behind the disturbances.¹⁴⁷ If the ethnic Drupka majority is overturned by illegal ethnic Nepali immigration the monarchy's support will erode. Some fear this could be used to increase Indian influence in Bhutan. To prevent India feeling a need to annex Bhutan, Bhutan has charted a policy of accommodation with India. Further, China's former policy of regarding Bhutan as part of Tibet, and therefore a natural part of its territory,¹⁴⁸ makes Bhutan's position that much more precarious. This was demonstrated during the 1962 war when China occupied the Towang district just to the north of Bhutan.

The Indo-Nepalese trade and transit dispute of 1989-90 is an example of India's subcontinental security doctrine in practice. India made a unilateral decision not to renew separate Trade and Transit Treaties with Nepal in March of 1989. India preferred to combine the issues with Indo-Nepalese security concerns. Specifically, India sought to quash any notions in Nepal of seeking a middle way between China and India. For some time there has been the perception in Nepal that "Indian policy is designed for

¹⁴³ Prince Wangchuch Namgyal, as quoted in Sunanda K. Datta-Ray *Smash and Grab: Annexation of Sikkim*. p. xiii.

¹⁴⁴ Statement by Mr. Sonam T. Rabgye, First Secretary, Royal Bhutanese Embassy at the India International Centre, 16 October 1990.

¹⁴⁵ James Clad, "The Kurkri's Edge," *The Far Eastern Economic Review*, 12/20/90, pp. 22-6. see also Barbara Crossette, "India-Based Groups Seek to Disrupt Bhutan," *The New York Times*, 10/7/90.

¹⁴⁶ "Trouble in the Kingdom," *Newsweek*, 10/29/90.

¹⁴⁷ B. Bhanumathy, "Bhutan Crisis Boils Over," *The Business and Political Observer*, 1/8/91.

¹⁴⁸ Though ethnically largely Tibetan, Bhutan has been politically independent from Tibet for some three hundred years. At that point the influential Tibetan Lama, Shepton La-Pha declared himself the Dharma Raj of Bhutan. The current King, Jigme Dorji Wangchuck, or Fearless Thunderbolt, Master of Cosmic Order, is the third in the line of Kings descendant from Tongsa Penlop who made himself hereditary ruler of Bhutan in 1907 with the assistance of the British. Pradyumna P. Karan, "Geopolitical Structure of Bhutan," in Verinder Grover, *International Relations and Foreign Policy of India*, (New Delhi: Deep & Deep Publications, 1992), pp. 186-98.

the projection of power."¹⁴⁹ The feeling of many Nepalese is that they are "sleeping between two elephants"¹⁵⁰ and that to sleep too close to either India or China would be to run the risk of being crushed.

Nepal's attempt to establish a modicum of independence from the Indian sphere of influence led India to seek to disabuse Nepal of that notion. Under the Indo-Nepal Treaty of 1950 India and Nepal have maintained an open border and a special security relationship.¹⁵¹ As a result of the trade and transit dispute all but two of the border transit points between the two countries were closed.¹⁵² This had the effect of decreasing Nepal's economic growth rate for 1990 from an expected 5% to 1.5%.¹⁵³ The dispute was India's way of sending a strong signal to Kathmandu that it would not tolerate a security relationship between Nepal and China. The Nepali attempts to import anti-aircraft weapons and other arms from China were themselves in reaction to Indian interventions in Sri Lanka and the Maldives. The common theme linking these three incidents is that New Delhi draws its defence perimeter in subcontinental terms rather than along the lines of India's international border. Pakistan is the lone exception among SAARC countries capable of contesting this notion of India's security perimeter. King Mahendra's visit to China in October 1961, which led to the Kathmandu-Kodari road agreement during the lead up to the 1962 war, created the impression in Delhi that the Himalayan frontier had been

¹⁴⁹ Interview with Yadu Nath Khanal, Katmandu, March, 1991. See also "Nepalese Diplomacy," *South Asian Forum*, (Katmandu) joint issue, 1983.

¹⁵⁰ Interview with then General Secretary of the Nepali Congress Party, Koirala, Katmandu, March, 1991.

¹⁵¹ While falling short of a military alliance the treaty did provide for consultations and had an arms import clause. "The two governments do hereby undertake to inform each other of any serious friction or misunderstanding with any neighbouring state likely to cause any breach in the friendly relations between the two governments." See Treaty of Peace and Friendship Between the Government of India and the Government of Nepal as reproduced in A. Appadorai, *Select Documents on India's Foreign Policy and Relations, 1947-1972*, Vol.II. (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1985), p. 13.

¹⁵² Salamat Ali, "A Matter of Time: Facing Up to Goliath," *The Far Eastern Economic Review*, 5/3/89, p. 24.

¹⁵³ Dhruva Kumar, "Managing Nepal's India Policy?" *Asian Survey*, July, 1990, pp. 697-710. The partial blockade severely affected Nepal's reforestation programme as the forests were cut down to compensate for the lack of imported petrol for fuel.

breached. As a result, the Chinese Vice Premier stated "if any forces attack Nepal, we the Chinese people will stand on your side."¹⁵⁴

India's intolerance of Nepal's attempts to assert its independence demonstrates India's reluctance to allow its junior partners in South Asia to drift outside its sphere of influence. Nepal's unsuccessful attempt in 1989-90 to move to a more neutral stance than defined by the 1950 Indo-Nepali Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation, shows that Nepal is subject to the Indira Doctrine. Sri Lanka's desire to redefine its position in a more independent way than is set out in the Indo-Sri Lankan Accord of 1987 is another example of opposition to the doctrine. The Indira Doctrine draws India's defence perimeter along subcontinental lines of Imperial India. While allowing autonomy in the small states of the Himalaya and the Indian Ocean it will not allow foreign influences to challenge its position. Pakistan alone remains capable of defying India's attempts to assert itself in this manner. The way in which the Pakistani anomaly in India's security doctrine will be redressed remains to be resolved. Its resolution may lead to yet another Indo-Pakistani war. Nepal, and the other smaller states of South Asia have little choice but to work within Indian defined parameters.

World War II left a lasting impression on independent India's strategic perceptions of the eastern approaches to its territory. Japan captured the Andaman and Nicobar Islands after capturing Singapore and gaining access to the Indian Ocean through the Straights of Malacca. The Japanese had also marched through Southeast Asia and Burma to India's frontier in Nagaland and Manipur. The Japanese incursion into the northeast Frontier made an impact on Indian security thinking.

.... the dramatic Japanese sweep through archipelagic and mainland Southeast Asian in a remarkably short time, had driven home the lesson to India's nationalist elite that India's eastern flank and seaward approaches to the

¹⁵⁴ S.D. Muni, "India and Nepal: Erosion of a Relationship," in *Nepal-India Relations: Views From Katmandu and New Delhi*, (Katmandu: Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies, Tribuvan University, CNAS Forum Series, 1989), p. 41.

subcontinent were as important for India's defence as the land boundaries of the northwest and the north¹⁵⁵

Later these fears of Japanese expansionism were replaced by the prospect of an expansion of Chinese influence in the region. Burma and the states of northeastern India continue to be vulnerable to outside intervention. The strategic lessons of history dictate that if India cannot itself draw a defence perimeter through the straits of Malacca, Burma, and the northeast, then it should at least attempt to exclude potentially hostile powers from gaining influence in these areas.

The internal turmoil and instability of Burma present particular problems to India in this context. Burma's internal chaos undermines the NEF of the subcontinent. Burma has been used as a haven and base of operations by insurgents operating in Nagaland and Manipur. Further, Burmese operations against the Rohingya Muslim minority of Burma led to border skirmishes between Burma and Bangladesh in January and February of 1992.¹⁵⁶ Such a destabilised situation may well be exploited by the Chinese to exert pressure on the Indian northeast frontier defence perimeter. This would occur only if relations between the two states deteriorated significantly. The situation could also be exploited to gain leverage in border negotiations if they were to come to a critical point.

The more recent movement of Muslim refugees escaping persecution in Burma by crossing the border into Bangladesh has given rise to tensions between those two countries. Troops were deployed on both sides of the border while Burma mined the 112 km Bandarban district border. The refugees are members of the Rohingya guerilla groups who are opposing the ruling Burmese Junta. Estimates place the Burmese refugee population in Bangladesh at 65,000.¹⁵⁷ They are predominantly located in and around Cox's Bazaar. This further exacerbates the situation in the CHT which in turn has repercussions for the Bangladesh-India relationship.

¹⁵⁵ Mohammed Ayoob, *India and Southeast Asia*, (London: Routledge Publishers, 1990), p. 8.

¹⁵⁶ "Burmese Terror on the Border," *Asia Week*, 2/21/92.

¹⁵⁷ Ahmed Fazal, "Burmese Troops Mining Border," *The Australian*, 1/24/92. See also Richard Ehrlich, "Burma, Bangladesh on the Brink of War," *The Australian*, 1/11-12/92.

Evidence exists indicating that China is seeking to extend its influence into Burma. India will feel compelled to respond to the Chinese overture towards Burma if they progress much beyond present levels. India provided military and economic assistance to Burma's U Nu government prior to its overthrow in 1962.¹⁵⁸ Khin Nyunt, accused India indirectly of "interfering in the internal affairs of our nation" by providing financial support to the pro-democracy movement in Burma. India has settled Burmese refugees in Manipur and Mizoram. In August of 1992, inconclusive discussions were held between Director General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, U Aye, and Indian Foreign Secretary J.N. Dixit in Delhi.¹⁵⁹

As China moves closer to the authoritarian regime, India will become closer to the democratic opposition as a means of countering Chinese influence in its northeastern defence perimeter. It was reported on 17 September 1992 that China was to build a naval facility in collaboration with the Burmese at Hanggyi Island in the Irrawaddy delta at the mouth of the Bassein River. Further reports have speculated on Chinese assistance for the upgrading of Burmese naval facilities at existing facilities on Great Coco Island, opposite the Andamans, at Mergui on the isthmus near the Thai border and at Sittwe in Arakan near the Bangladesh border. Diplomatic sources indicated that "India is worried and ASEAN should be worried too."¹⁶⁰

Since 1989 China and Burma have been developing their bilateral relationship through development projects and arms deals. In December of 1991 Indian Foreign Secretary Solanki expressed India's concern over the growing Sino-Burmese arms relationship.¹⁶¹ This was in reaction to an announced purchase by Burma of \$900 million worth of Chinese arms.¹⁶²

¹⁵⁸ Mohammed Ayoob, *India and Southeast Asia: Indian Perceptions and Policies*, (London: Rutledge Publishers, 1990), p. 13.

¹⁵⁹ High Commission of India, "Visit of His Excellence U Aye," *India News*, 8/28/92, p. 2.

¹⁶⁰ "Burma Builds New Naval Base," *Reuters News Service*, 12/2/92. William Ashton, "Chinese navy Base: Many Rumors, Few Facts," *Asia Pacific Defence Reporter*, June-July, 1993, p. 25.

¹⁶¹ "China Sends Top Military and Aerospace Delegation to Burma," *Reuters News Service*, 11/14/91.

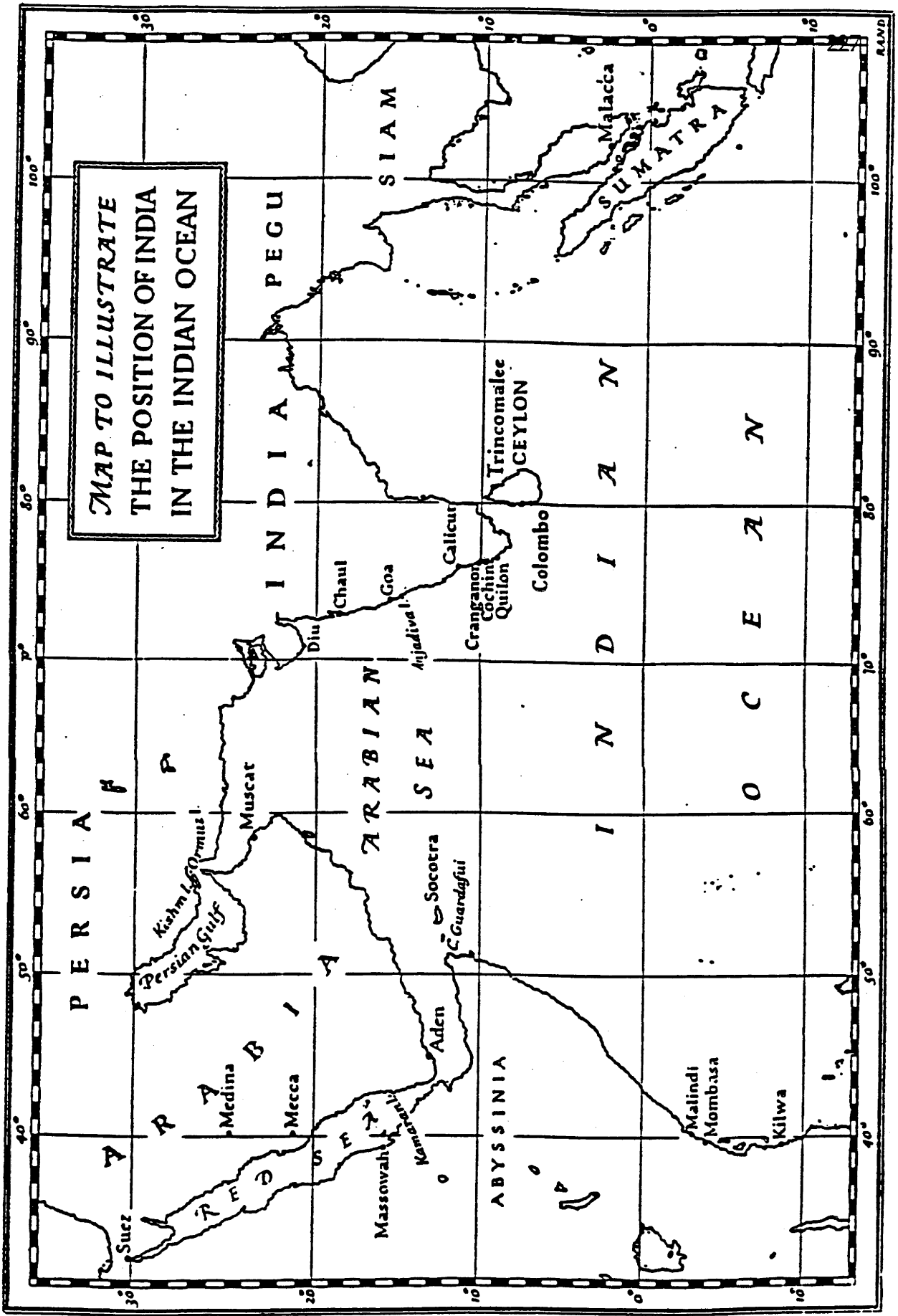
¹⁶² "China Sells Arms to Burma," *The Financial Times*, 2/11/91.

In 1992 Burma had initiated its plan to double its armed forces to 300,000. The Burmese navy was in 1992 considering adding Chinese corvettes to its inventory of six Hainan fast attack craft and three Yugoslav PB 90 patrol boats.¹⁶³ Sino-Burmese development projects include a hydro-electric scheme, road, rail and bridge construction, increased cross-border trade and satellite communications. It was announced in February of 1992 that China would send a survey team for the construction of a ground satellite station. This was part of a 50 million yuan agreement on economic co-operation. Sections of northern Burma, which are under heroin drug lord control, have close links with the Yunnan Province of China.¹⁶⁴ These ties and increased relations with the government imply that the Chinese are seeking greater influence. On 18 October 1989 a 24 man team, including Burmese Commander in Chief Lieutenant General Than Shwe and Brigadier General Khin Nyunt, met with Prime Minister Li Peng and Chinese military Chief Haotian.¹⁶⁵ This presaged the development of closer relations between Beijing and Rangoon. If this trend is to continue in the 1990s it may lead to friction between India and Burma and /or China. The chapter now turns to examine India's third strategic frontier.

¹⁶³ "China: Govt Allegedly Helping Burma to Build Naval Base," *BBC Monitoring Service*, 9/18/92. and "China: Beijing Navy Heading West," *South China Morning Post*, 9/13/92.

¹⁶⁴ Bertil Litner, "Triangle Ties," *The Far Eastern Economic Review*, 3/28/91, pp.19-20.

¹⁶⁵ Bertil Litner, "Tugging the Tigers Tail," *The Far Eastern Economic Review*, 11/16/89, p. 19.



40.23 The Indian Ocean

To the early Aryan peoples of north India, the Indian Ocean was traditionally of little interest. There, empires, wealth and trade were focussed on the rich and fertile Gangetic plain and overland trade routes to China and the Arab world. Conversely, the Dravidian peoples of the Deccan viewed the Indian Ocean with more promise. They did not avoid the sea to the extent that the north Indian Brahmins did.¹⁶⁶ Increasingly, India is looking out into the 73.6 million square kilometre ocean and viewing it both as a neglected frontier and as a potential source of opportunity. In the words of Admiral S.N. Kohli "... we had to pay a very heavy price for the neglect of the defence of the Himalayas, to neglect the seas in the future would be a blunder of the same Himalayan dimensions."¹⁶⁷ K.M. Panikkar states, "The Ocean, while it separates, also provides the highway of commerce and contact."¹⁶⁸ Opportunity in the sense of fishing, off-shore oil, deep seabed mining, maritime trade and as a conduit for engaging a broader region than India's immediate South Asian neighbours.

The Indian Ocean constitutes India's third geopolitical front. It ranks second after the NWF as an avenue of invasion to the subcontinent. The waves of invasion from the NWF were followed by the influx of new races and religions from Southwest and Central Asia. The more recent brief breaches of the NEF by the Japanese in Burma and the Chinese in the Himalaya were limited in their scope and impact on the subcontinent. Invasions from the sea, beginning at the end of the fifteenth century, have had a significant impact on India. While sea-borne invaders did not significantly affect the racial or religious composition of the subcontinent, they did significantly alter economic and political life.

It is necessary to emphasise that from that historic day when Vasco da Gama, with his fleet of warships arrived at Calicut, India has ever been under the relentless pressure of sea power, steady

¹⁶⁶ Their history of sea faring has been discussed above in chapter two's treatment of the Indian Navy.

¹⁶⁷ Admiral S.N. Kohli, *The Indian Ocean and India's Maritime Security*, (New Delhi: United Services Institution of India, 1981), p. 99.

¹⁶⁸ K.M. Panikkar, *Geographical Factors in Indian History*, p. 50.

and unseen over long periods, but effectively controlling our economic life and political life.¹⁶⁹

For these reasons Panikkar goes on to advocate that:

... the best and most effective reply is to develop our own naval power, strong enough to exercise control over the waters necessary for our defence.¹⁷⁰

As India consolidated its independence from the period of domination by colonial maritime powers, the Indian Ocean has changed from a source of subjugation to a source of opportunity for India. This enables India to engage a broader region than those land areas immediately contiguous with its own borders. India has initiated a process of establishing cultural, economic and strategic ties with the other states of the Indian Ocean littoral. India's naval expansion of the 1970s and 1980s brought it closer to the goal of displacing extra-regional naval supremacy with its own presence. Continued American and Western economic interests in Persian Gulf oil will continue to make this aspiration elusive for some time to come.

Nevertheless, India's increased naval capabilities do open possibilities for India to intervene beyond its immediate coastal waters. The IPKF's expedition to Sri Lanka and the Maldives operation are two examples. India is also intent on creating greater degrees of freedom of action from external maritime powers. This is understandable in light of its colonial subjugation by the maritime powers of Europe. In the words of Admirals Nadkarni and Kholi:

... there is no ocean in the world, other than the Indian Ocean, where the non-littoral presence is stronger than the littoral presence. The result is that the outside powers are in a position to seriously undermine the freedom of action of the countries in the region. The natural balance that should exist in a region, based

¹⁶⁹ K.M. Panikkar, *Geographical Factors on Indian History*, pp. 95-6.

¹⁷⁰ K.M. Panikkar, *Geographical Factors on Indian History*, p. 97.

on the relative sizes and capabilities of different countries, is thus not allowed to be established.¹⁷¹

The navy must adopt a strategy that does not leave the initiative with the aggressor. The neutralization of the opponent's instruments of maritime warfare is a prerequisite to achieving the exclusive control of the seas, which in turn sets the stage for victory.¹⁷²

As India joins the international market it will increasingly become a maritime state as its economy becomes more involved in exports and imports and other maritime related activity. The Indian merchant marine has increased dramatically from 350,000 tons in 1947 to over seven million tons in 1991. Its maritime trade is expected to double in the 1990s and its off shore oil assets have dramatically increased from one million tons in 1978 to over 20 million in 1991. Moreover, these increases in production are expected to increase as new oil fields are developed. In addition, India has plans to increase its fishing catch from the 1.5 million ton figure in 1991 to 25 million tons. India is a pioneer investor in the United Nations deep seabed mining scheme.¹⁷³

Unlike the Himalayan region, which has exercised more of a insular effect, the Oceanic region has enabled India to establish contacts with far flung states and peoples.¹⁷⁴

India is extending its contact as far as Antarctica. In 1991 the Director of National Institute of Oceanography, B.N Desai, in discussing plans to create an Antarctic Research centre highlighted the nexus between Antarctica, the Indian Ocean and India's desire to actively engage in this wider sphere.

¹⁷¹ Manorama Kholi, "Indian Foreign Policy: A Geopolitical Perspective," *India Quarterly*, Oct.-Dec. 1990, p. 39.

¹⁷² Admiral S.N. Kholi, "The Geopolitical and Strategic Considerations that Necessitate the Expansion and Modernization of the Indian Navy," *Indian Defence Review*, January 1989, p. 38.

¹⁷³ "An Interview with Admiral J.G. Nadkarni" *The Indian Ocean News and Views*, January 1991, pp. 9-10.

¹⁷⁴ M. Kholi, "Indian Foreign Policy a Geopolitical Perspective," *International Quarterly*, pp. 33-9.

We are now in Antarctica. We are in the polymetallic nodules business. We are scouring overseas to gather a fund of knowledge. All this is a matter of national pride.¹⁷⁵

M.A.H. Siddiqi of the National Defence Academy in an article on the security implications of Antarctica has pointed out that: "the stations in Antarctica may provide it [India] strategic footholds to monitor and control the India Ocean lanes effectively."¹⁷⁶ These above quotes are indicative of strategic thinking that is coming to perceive the Indian Ocean as indeed an Indian Ocean. The debate focuses on how to extend Indian influence rather than on whether it should be attempted.

This section will now address the Non Resident Indians (NRIs) issue and India's relations with the islands and states of the northern reaches of the Indian Ocean.

40.231 Non Resident Indians

One factor of the geopolitical equation that may draw India out into a wider region is the diaspora of its people. Many states, and especially those of the Indian Ocean, have significant ethnic Indian populations. These populations are significant both for their numbers and for their economic standing in some of the countries in which they reside. Out of a total NRI community of 12 million there are over two million in Sri Lanka,¹⁷⁷ 1.5 million in Southeast Asia,¹⁷⁸ 700,000 in Mauritius, one million in the Persian Gulf region, another million in South Africa, some 300,000 in other African states,¹⁷⁹ 350,000 in Fiji, 840,000 in the United States and a large

¹⁷⁵ "Antarctic Research Centre to be set up," *The Indian Ocean News and Views*, January 1991, p. 14.

¹⁷⁶ M.A.H. Siddiqi, "Antarctica and its Implications for Indian Security," *The Geographer*, [Aligarh] July 1990, p. 26.

¹⁷⁷ Usha Mahajani, "India and the People of Indian Origin Abroad," in M.S. Rajan, *India's Foreign Relations During the Nehru Era*, (Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1976), p. 236.

¹⁷⁸ For a study of the Indian minority in Thailand see, Zakir Hussain, *The Silent Minority: Indians in Thailand*, (Bangkok: Chulalongkorn University, 1982).

¹⁷⁹ Colin Clarke, C. Perch and Steven Vertovec, *South Asians Overseas: Migration and Ethnicity*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 2. These statistics date to 1987 and, while more comprehensive, are lower than the more recent figures in other sources.

number in the United Kingdom.¹⁸⁰ There were only 3.5 million NRIs in 1966.¹⁸¹ The large numbers of Tamils who were brought from Tamil Nadu to Ceylon during the colonial period continues to add to the complicated relations between India and Sri Lanka. Though numbering 12 million people, South Asian NRIs represent approximately one percent of South Asia's population. When compared to the Jews, of whom 11 million live world wide and 3.5 million in Israel, this diaspora seems small in comparison.¹⁸² They nevertheless represent a significant interest for India.

Since the beginning of the Congress movement there has been concern in India for its ethnic community in other countries. In 1936, the All Party Congress Committee instructed its Foreign Department to maintain contacts with overseas Indians. It further stated that "a radical amelioration in their status must ultimately depend on the attainment by India of independence and the power to protect her nationals abroad."¹⁸³ Nehru also expressed his concern for their welfare,

... while on the one hand we are obviously intent on protecting the interests of Indians abroad, on the other we cannot protect any vested interests which injure the cause of the country they are in. There is that difficulty. Nevertheless, undoubtedly, we shall try to do our best to protect all legitimate interests.¹⁸⁴

The socio-economic configuration of NRIs today has changed. Whereas earlier waves came with the British as soldiers and labourers, and later as guest workers to the Gulf, the new Indian emigres are relatively well educated and affluent. Shortly after graduation 25% to 30% of Indian Institutes of Technology students find their way abroad. Because of the different types of emigres the socio-economic conditions of the NRI vary

¹⁸⁰ James Clad, "Paradise Abroad," *The Far Eastern Economic Review*, 4/26/90, p. 26. When the NRIs were forced to flee Uganda many went to the UK. This was made easy as many had British passports.

¹⁸¹ Usha Mahajani, "India and the People of Indian Origin Abroad," p. 217.

¹⁸² C. Clarke et al *South Asians Overseas*, p.1.

¹⁸³ Usha Mahajani, "India and the People of Indian Origin Abroad," p. 202.

¹⁸⁴ Jawaharlal Nehru, from a speech in the Constituent Legislative Assembly on 12/4/47 as reproduced in *India's Foreign Policy: Select Speeches, Sept. 1946-April 1961*, (Delhi: The Publications Division of the Government of India, 1961).

significantly among countries. In Hong Kong, the small population of 18,500 Indians reportedly contributes over 10% of Hong Kong's overseas trade of \$52 billion.¹⁸⁵ Increasingly wealthy NRIs are making demands on India. As a *quid pro quo* for increased investment in India NRIs are pressing for dual citizenship, voting rights and a free economic and export processing zone in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.¹⁸⁶ This group contrasts sharply with the poor, rural, unskilled Indians of the Malaysian rubber plantations. Of these, many families live at the poverty line of thirty dollars a month. There, Indian share of corporate ownership is less than one percent.¹⁸⁷

The status of ethnic Indians abroad has been uncertain in some countries. After independence Burma adopted policies that forced the vast majority of Indians to leave the country. Prior to World War II ethnic Indians numbered over a million out of a total population of 14.5 million. By 1964 this number was reduced to 450,000.¹⁸⁸ Malaysia's New Economic Policy uses reverse discrimination to help Bumiputras raise their socio-economic status relative to ethnic Chinese, but Indians have been left outside the scheme.¹⁸⁹ Indians from Malaysia account for 15.5% of the total number of emigres while constituting only 8% of the population. Although 6.5% of the population, NRIs accounted for 14.9% of the emigres from Singapore in 1990. These statistics reflect the rising uncertainty among the Indian community abroad about their status in their host countries.¹⁹⁰

Indians have also been made to feel unwelcome in countries such as Uganda and Fiji. In 1972 under Idi Amin those of South Asian descent were expelled from Uganda. Some returned only to have their businesses looted during a coup in 1985. At that point many left permanently. During a visit to Delhi by Ugandan President Museveni on 12 October 1992 it was

¹⁸⁵ D.R. Rajagopal, "The Life and Times of Indians in Hong Kong," *The Business and Political Observer*, 2/7/91.

¹⁸⁶ Salil Tripathi, "NRIs Asking For More," *India Today*, 12/31/90, p.106.

¹⁸⁷ N. Balakrishnan, "Ethnic Exodus," *The Far Eastern Economic Review*, 5/10/90, p. 13.

¹⁸⁸ Usha Mahajani, "India and the People of Indian Origin Abroad," p. 222.

¹⁸⁹ Suhaini Aznan, "The Forgotten Ones: Ethnic Indians Fall Behind," *The Far Eastern Economic Review*, p. 15.

¹⁹⁰ N. Balakrishnan, "Ethnic Exodus," p. 13.

announced that Uganda would seek to encourage the return of Asians who had previously been forced to leave. The visit and the announcement were said to "provide a fresh stimulus to Indo-Ugandan relations in political and economic fields."¹⁹¹ It would seem that this policy reversal on the part of Uganda was an Indian precondition for political and economic cooperation. Asian businesses have also been the target of looting in Kenya.¹⁹² In Fiji the native Fijian community rose up against an elected Indian dominated coalition government in two coups and then institutionalised, through a new constitution, Indian political inferiority.¹⁹³

The ethnic Indian community in politically volatile South Africa is arguably the most vulnerable to abuse in the 1990s. As the African National Congress gained against the National Party in South Africa in 1992, many Indians started to feel marginalised in a movement within which many ethnic Indians had been prominent activists. The fear was that the Indians would be expelled as they had been from Uganda. One radio announcer summed up public sentiment towards the Indian community in the following manner, "Their money is in Switzerland, children in England and their hearts are in India. So why are they in South Africa?" In 1985 blacks destroyed the Pheonix Ashram built by Mahatma Gandhi. Many of the affluent have already left. Even after 130 years in the country the Indian community is not perceived as a part of the nation. The distinctiveness of Indians abroad makes them easily identified as a community of outsiders. For this reason they are vulnerable. As India acquires the capabilities, it may wish to assist NRIs in cases where they or their rights are threatened.

With the growth of India's naval and air power projection capabilities, the country will increasingly be able to intervene on behalf of NRIs should they come to strife. In this way the potential for India to come into conflict with a nation that maltreats its Indian minority is raised. At

¹⁹¹ High Commission of India, "India Hails Uganda's Decision for Return of Asians," *India News*, 11/2/92.

¹⁹² Michael Twaddle, "East African Asians Through a Hundred Years," in C. Clarke et. al. *South Asians Overseas*, p. 150.

¹⁹³ Victor Lal, "The Fijian Indians: Marooned at Home," in C. Clarke et. al. *South Asians Overseas*, p. 114. The situation in Fiji is also discussed in Chapter Six.

present the on-going conflict in Sri Lanka, and the Tamil question, is the most likely situation involving NRIs that would bring India into conflict with another Indian Ocean countries.

It is not only NRIs but displaced populations from other countries that affect the security equation of the region. Instability due to major refugee situations has been demonstrated throughout South Asia. The influx of Afghans and Paktoonistanis to Pakistan's Northwest Frontier Province and the earlier mass exodus of Bengalis from East Pakistan to Bengal prior to the 1971 Indo-Pakistani war, as well as the more recent events on the Burma- Bangladesh border, all serve as examples of internal tension spreading to neighbouring countries. In these cases internal conflict has created refugee movements of such proportions that the migrants have become a destabilising group for the adjoining state or province. By May of 1971, 3,435,243 refugees had fled into refugee camps in West Bengal to escape the mounting conflict in East Pakistan.¹⁹⁴ The cost of feeding and caring for such numbers is a substantial drain of state resources. The masses of Afghans in camps in Pakistan's North West Frontier Province and Baluchistan is one of the largest concentrations of refugees in the world. There were some five million Afghan refugees in Pakistan and Iran. The UN Afghan refugee assistance programme costs \$750 million annually.¹⁹⁵ The prospect that a significant proportion of the refugees will become quasi permanent residents, and thereby incur additional costs in terms of relocation and employment, is a further reason for policies to prevent potential refugee problems.

40.232 Sri Lanka

Indian involvement in the affairs of Sri Lanka in the 1980s, was motivated by a desire to both assert the Indira Doctrine and resolve the Tamil problem, lest it spill over to Tamil Nadu. This developed along three paths. The first negotiation track was to persuade the Tamil insurgents to moderate their demands from those of separatism to autonomy. Tamil

¹⁹⁴ Richard Sisson and Leo Rose, *War and Succession*, p. 295.

¹⁹⁵ Salamat Ali, "Zones of Tranquillity: UN Urges Repatriation of Refugees to Safe Areas," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 4/12/90.

separatism would have negative implications for the Indian multi-ethnic state if it was perceived as possible to successfully wage a separatist movement. The second diplomatic channel was to persuade the Sri Lankan government to offer liberal autonomy to the Tamils of the northern and eastern Provinces under a federal governmental system. These first two aspects of Indian foreign policy were carried out through diplomacy. The third track, which gave the Indians leverage in the first two, was to supply the Tamils with arms and supplies.¹⁹⁶

Indian policies toward Sri Lanka have been guided by two key geopolitical imperatives. The need to keep Sri Lanka's ports free from potentially hostile extra regional powers and secondly the need to contain Tamil independence movements together mould Indian policy towards Sri Lanka:

There is a general lesson implicit in this pattern of political change. In Tamil Nadu, India's main nationalist party was deposed by a party championing regional nationalism at the state level. That provided a legitimate and popular government for a while.¹⁹⁷

At present there are approximately 50 million Tamils in Tamil Nadu. In 1983 there were an additional 160,000 Tamil refugees from Sri Lanka.¹⁹⁸ By January of 1992, this number had been reduced to 30,000.¹⁹⁹ In 1992 support in Tamil Nadu for the Sri Lankan Tamils was again growing. To prevent Sri Lanka from serving as a host to a foreign presence, India has sought to control port access to foreign powers at Trincomalee and Colombo. Fears that Sri Lanka's civil war between the Tamils and the Sinhalese will spill across the Palk strait and create social unrest in the Indian state of Tamil Nadu have further involved India in Sri Lanka's internal concerns. Indeed, the state government of Tamil Nadu has at times pursued its own policy of

¹⁹⁶ See Bhabani Sen Gupta's, "Indira Doctrine," *India Today*, 9/15/83 and by the same author "At Ease With the World," *Seminar* No. 358, June 1989, p. 29.

¹⁹⁷ Atul Kohli, *Democracy and Discontent: India's Growing Crisis of Governability*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 183.

¹⁹⁸ R. Bradnock, *Indian Foreign Policy Since 1971*, pp. 31-2

¹⁹⁹ Vilma Wilmaladasa, "Tamil Refugees Start Tentatively for Home," *The Australian*, 1/24/92.

assistance to the Tamils in Sri Lanka.²⁰⁰ It was the combination of both these factors that led to Indian assistance for the Tamil insurgents and then the IPKF intervention.

To help alleviate some of the ethnic tensions with Sri Lanka's Tamil minority the Shastri government agreed in 1964 to repatriate some 750,000 Tamils originally brought from Tamil Nadu to Sri Lanka by the British. Relations between Delhi and Colombo began to deteriorate with the election of President Jayawardene in 1978. His liberalizing economic policy, and the concomitant tilt to the West, threatened to establish Sri Lanka's foreign policy as separate from India's. By 1985 the view in Delhi that Colombo might grant the United States base rights in the country was causing concern. This view was prompted by the Sri Lankan decision to permit the Voice of America to install large new transmitters on the island. India came to fear "the intrusion of foreign agencies in Sri Lanka, the British SAS, Israel's Mossad, the CIA and the facilities given to the Voice of America."²⁰¹ Indian concerns over the refugee problem are illustrated by the somewhat premature repatriation of the estimated 30,000 Tamils who sought to avoid the civil war by taking refuge in Tamil Nadu. The first boat of Tamil refugees was sent back to Sri Lanka on 23 January 1992 amidst continued bloodshed. Liberation Tigers of Tamil Ealam (LTTE) forces had ambushed an army patrol the previous day killing 20 soldiers.²⁰²

In 1982-83 the inter-communal relations between the Sinhalese and the Tamils deteriorated. It was in response to a massacre of Tamils in Colombo in 1983 that the waves of refugees began to flow into Tamil Nadu. During this period conflict mounted and the LTTE began to establish their control of areas of the northeast. Similarly beset by a Sinhalese insurgency of the Janata Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP), the Sri Lankan government was losing control of the country. To establish a lever of influence on events in

²⁰⁰ Stephen Cohen, "South Asia," in R. Litwak, and S. Wells, *Superpower Competition and Security in the Third World*, (Cambridge: Ballinger Publishers, 1988), p. 170.

²⁰¹ *Lok Sabha Debates*, April 1985. See also Dennis Austin and A. Gupta, "Lions and Tigers," *Conflict Studies* #211, (London: Centre for Security and Conflict Studies, 1986).

²⁰² Vilma Wimaladasa, "Tamil Refugees Start Tentatively for Home," *The Australian*, 1/24/92.

Sri Lanka, India gave arms and sanctuary to Tamil insurgents in Tamil Nadu. As Colombo increasingly sought a military solution and blockaded Jaffna, India intervened by airlifting supplies to the Tamils.²⁰³ This lever was used to obtain concessions as outlined in the Indo-Sri Lankan Accord of 29 July 1987. This Sri Lanka had been trying to avoid, even at the cost of obtaining external military assistance to maintain its independence. President Jayawardene tried to revive the Anglo-Ceylon defence arrangement in 1984. In 1985 he reportedly invited Britain to station troops in Sri Lanka, as it does in Belize, to provide a security guarantee.²⁰⁴ In the accord Sri Lanka fell under the Indira Doctrine as had Nepal Sikkim and Bhutan before it. India then reversed its policy for support of the Tamils and sent in its troops to assist the Sri Lankan government in disarming the Tamil insurgents in the north and east of the country. India also agreed to deny its territory as a base of operations for the Tamil insurgents. In return this allowed the Sri Lankan government to focus its energy on the JVP.²⁰⁵ It was at this point when assistance was withdrawn by the centre that the Tamil Nadu state government of Chief Minister M.G. Ramachandran interceded. The Sri Lankan government began to think differently about the IPKF's presence once their authority had been reestablished. The IPKF was eventually withdrawn by Prime Minister V.P. Singh in March of 1990 at the request of President Premadasa, who had been elected on 19 December 1988.

The central objectives of India's involvement in the affairs of Sri Lanka since 1983 have been to ensure that Sri Lanka's air and naval facilities were denied to foreign powers and to prevent the inter-communal tensions between the Tamils and the Sinhalese from spreading across the Palk strait to destabilise Tamil Nadu. The policy also allowed India to assert itself as

²⁰³ Five An-32 transport aircraft dropped 22.5 tonnes of food and medicine over Jaffna. They were escorted by four Mirage 2000 aircraft. It has been said that this incident led Nepal to seek anti-aircraft weapons. See Manoj Joshi, "IAF Drops Relief Supplies over Jaffna," *The Hindu*, 6/4/87.

²⁰⁴ P. Venkateshwar Rao, "Foreign Involvement in Sri Lanka," *The Round Table*, no. 309, 1989, pp. 88-100.

²⁰⁵ With the capture of the movement's leader, Wijeweera, and a number of his lieutenants, the army was soon able to annihilate the movement. With the fall of the JVP some "50,000 of its members and sympathisers" were killed. Jayadeva Uyangoda, "The Politics of Sri Lanka in 1989," *South Asian Bulletin*, vol. 9, no. 2, 1989, p. 6.

the regional policeman. These concerns are consistent with the long term objectives of Indian security and influence in the region. This phase of Indo-Sri Lankan relations highlights both the degree to which India has been able to assert itself in its immediate region and the importance that it places on opposing external naval powers' attempts to gain influence in its region.²⁰⁶ Considering India's history since the close of the fifteenth century, this is not surprising.

The success of the military option against the JVP has led the Sri Lankan Government to pursue a military solution to the Tamil problem. This has proved to be a bloody and protracted conflict for Sri Lanka. Similar to the situation in Kashmir, the army wages its war against the Tamils with a "sense of impunity" for war atrocities.²⁰⁷ The struggle with the JVP was primarily ideological. With the Tamils it is ethnic. This difference in the source of conflict may have a bearing on the efficacy of a military solution. Though from the Indian perspective Sri Lanka is the single most important island state in the Indian Ocean, the others are also of increasing importance.

40.233 The Islands of the Indian Ocean

The geography of the Indian Ocean is more like that of the Pacific than the Atlantic Ocean. This is due to the large number of islands that span its waters. The strategic implications of the islands of the Pacific were made evident by both the Japanese and allied campaigns of the Second World War. The beginnings of this island strategy were employed by Japan in its brief campaign against the British Indian Ocean squadron through its attacks on Sri Lanka and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. The American-leased air and naval facility on Diego Garcia, like other European bases on Indian Ocean Islands in earlier periods, provides the United States with a base of operations from which it can project power into the littoral of the Indian

²⁰⁶ This policy has not been without significant costs for India. The loss of Indian soldiers during the IPKF expedition, the assassination of Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, turmoil in Tamil Nadu and further terrorist attacks in India are a result of India's involvement in the internal affairs of Sri Lanka.

²⁰⁷ "The Tamils are Trapped," *The Guardian*, 6/2/92. In the year June 91 to June 92, 8,000 died in the conflict.

Ocean. Its 12,000 foot runway, deep lagoon, prepositioned supplies and submarine berths facilitated the coalition effort against Iraq during the Gulf War of 1991. Just as the islands can be utilized as bases from which to project power from the ocean to the littoral they can be used as forward bases of defence to extend defence perimeters of littoral regions. This forward defence role is certainly part of the motivation behind Indian air and naval base construction in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

Among the Indian national security community the most strategic vision is demonstrated by those in the navy. The army and airforce are focused on more traditional defence related issues such as border disputes with Pakistan and China. The navy has included in its sense of mission, a perception of security that demonstrates its awareness of the interrelationship between the military, politics and space. Admiral Nadkarni demonstrates this awareness and goes on to conceptualise the Indian Ocean as part of India's sphere of influence in the following quotes:

Besides the military posture, it is also important for us to take concrete politico-military initiatives to ensure that the littoral countries look up to India as an equal partner and do not look to external influences. Our main aim should be to protect our legitimate interests which are likely to be considerable in the maritime sphere in the next 25 years.

As our population increases, the pressure on land resources will considerably increase. We may run out of land and mineral wealth and at that time it will be inevitable that our countrymen will be compelled to look to the sea to better their economic prospects.²⁰⁸

The island states of the Indian Ocean have proven to be vulnerable to coups. These coups have also been externally inspired. The Comoros Islands were ruled by a band of 50 European mercenaries who took control of the island in 1978 under the figure head President Abdallah.²⁰⁹ "Mad Mike Hoare" unsuccessfully led a band of mercenaries in an attempt to take

²⁰⁸ "An Interview with Admiral J.G. Nadkarni" *The Indian Ocean News and Views*, January 1991, pp. 9-10.

²⁰⁹ "France Likely to Intervene," *The Wall Street Journal*, 12/11/89. "Murdered President Buried." *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 11/30/89.

control of the Seychelles, possibly with the backing of the South African government. India successfully averted a coup that sought to overthrow the government of President Gayoom of the Maldives through *Operation Cactus* by sending 300 paratroopers and other forces to the island to thwart the 150 to 400 attackers involved.²¹⁰ In addition to its interventions in the Maldives there were rumours of a proposed intervention in Mauritius in November 1988. "Indian forces might have been sent to Mauritius if an assassination attempt on its Prime Minister had been successful."²¹¹ In May of 1990 there was a further coup in Malagasy.²¹²

India and Mauritius have significantly expanded ties in recent years. As part of its growing relationship with Mauritius, India sold four Indian-produced Dornier maritime patrol aircraft. The State Bank of India has entered into a number of joint ventures with Mauritius including a seven million dollar fund and a joint radio telecommunications project.²¹³ It is generally accepted that India could have naval facilities on Mauritius. Sir Veraswamy Ringdoo, prior to becoming Governor General in Mauritius, stated that India "would no doubt be able to get facilities here if it wanted them."²¹⁴

By giving its assent to *Operation Cactus* the United States tacitly accepted India's role as a regional policeman. In a message to Rajiv Gandhi after India foiled the coup attempt in the Maldives, President, Reagan made this clear: "I would like to extend my appreciation to you and your government for thwarting the attempted coup against the Maldivian Government ... with warm personal regards ..."²¹⁵ While there are many areas of common understanding, including approval of the liberalising of

²¹⁰ Sanjoy Hazarika, "Indian Troops Arrive to put Down Coup Attempt," *The New York Times*, 11/4/88.

²¹¹ Rodney Willox, "The Military Three Step: Trends in Rapid Deployment," *Defence and Foreign Affairs*, Sept. 1989, p. 36.

²¹² "Malagasy Coup Bid," *The Canberra Times*, 5/14/90.

²¹³ "Mauritius Keen on Tie-ups," *Indian Express*, 12/8/90. "India," *Asia-Pacific Defence Reporter*, 7/90. "India Plans Revolving Fund to Promote Joint Ventures," *Reuters News Service*, 7/27/92.

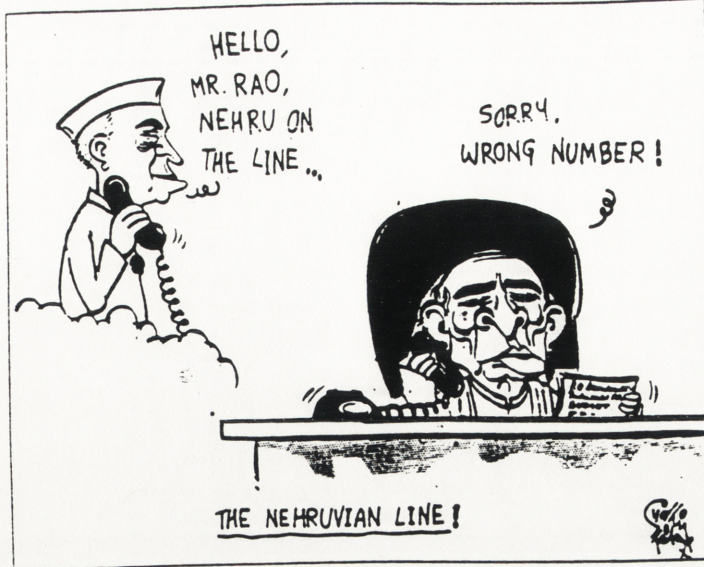
²¹⁴ As quoted in Selig Harrison. *India and the Indian Ocean: New Changes for American Policy*. (Washington: Washington Institute for Values in Public Policy, 1986), p. 5.

²¹⁵ R.S. Sassheen, "Maldives," *Asian Defence Journal*, 12/88.

the Indian economy, nuclear proliferation and missile technology may cloud an otherwise improving relationship.

With this review of India's changing conceptions of region, its centre periphery relations and its three key strategic frontiers concluded a number of observations are evident. To begin with "India" is not a static concept. Indeed the present is a period of transition for that territory known as India. It is both altering its sense of region and its ability to involve itself beyond its post partition borders. In historical terms the powers of the subcontinent have expanded and contracted though few can lay claim to pan-India status. What is unique about present day India is that it has both united the north and the south of India while similarly acquiring the capabilities and desire to become involved in an extended sphere. At the same time that there are movements towards a more expansive involvement there are increasing fissures within India. These are a threat to India's cohesion. By being located on India's periphery they further offer opportunities for India's rivals.

India continues to have unresolved border disputes with Pakistan and China. These two states remain as obstacles to India's desire to acquire greater position and status in both South Asia and the larger Asia-Pacific regions. Whether India will be able to project its power beyond its immediate region, and thereby become a great power, is dependent on its ability to subordinate Pakistan, as it has the other states of South Asia, and to meet China as an equal. India's acquired capabilities, as discussed in Chapter Two, and its changing sense of region both indicate that there are influential elements within the decision-making structure that seek this direction for India. After the following chapter reviews India's economic factors, which could potentially focus India's energies into a more benign sphere of competition, we will turn to discuss the process of decision-making for foreign and defence policy.



CHAPTER FIVE

From thy propitious gaze, oh mighty goddess, men obtain wives, children, dwellings, friends, harvests, wealth. Health, strength, power, victory, happiness are easy of attainment to those upon whom thou smilest ... Oh thou who purifiest all things, forsake not our treasures, our granaries, our dwellings, our dependents, our persons, our wives.

-Hymn to Lakshmi, *Vishnu Purana*¹

Economic aspects of India's strategic posture and external relations

Economics have influenced India's strategic and defence posture by defining the size of the pool of resources that can be drawn upon to augment existing capabilities. The Prime Minister's office, the CCPA and bureaucrats from the Defence and Finance Ministries have played a key role in defence expenditure.² Economic scarcity also leads to frustration and increased tension within the society. Because Indian defence spending has remained a fairly constant percentage of India's GNP the growth of the defence budget in absolute terms has been made possible by the expansion of India's overall economy.³ This expansion during the 1980s was facilitated by the beginnings of economic reform. These gains were slowed in the early 1990s. This led India to realise that its centrally planned economy was being outpaced by other models of development such as those employed in ASEAN and East Asian countries.

India has, under Prime Minister Rao, embarked on a truly substantial set of economic reforms. If these reforms are allowed to be established and expanded upon India may well realise GNP growth rates up to, or in excess of, 5%. This economic growth could help placate, at least in part, many of India's dissatisfied groups. With economic prosperity, general levels of frustration within the society would be reduced and, as a result, so would

¹ Lloyd I. Rudolph and Susanne Hoeber Rudolph, *In Pursuit of Lakshmi: The Political Economy of the Indian State*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1987). p.i.

² The decision-making process will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter.

³ For an excellent discussion of Indian defence spending see Sandy Gordon, "Indian Defence Spending: Treading Water Through the Fiscal Deep." Canberra: Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, 1993.

centre-periphery tensions. Renewed economic growth would also, if past trends are repeated, lead to renewed increases in defence expenditures.

50. The economy as a component of India's evolving posture

Just as there are two main schools of Indian strategic and foreign policy thinking, the realist and the idealist, there are two main schools of thought on Indian economic development strategy. The two key philosophical camps put forward varying models for economic development in India. The first camp derives its ideas from outside the subcontinent. It emphasised industrial development as the path to true independence. The second developed from the idealistic and agrarian based traditions of Mahatma Gandhi. What has resulted out of the mix of Western economic theories and Gandhian values was an alternative model. This model, which was articulated by Director of the Planning Commission, Professor Mahalanobis in the second Five Year Plan of 1956, sought to create economic self reliance. In this way economic planning was influenced by the larger goals of the freedom struggle.

Nehru and Mahatma Gandhi both advocated a mixed economy which incorporated Indian values of independence. Nehru believed that "production comes first" and that "industrial capitalism ... solved the problem of production." He also would state "I shall continue to believe in and work for socialism."⁴ The result was a mixed economy which emphasised state intervention while working with capitalists under state control. Nehru took the view that communism and democratic socialism would "ultimately ... be tested by the results achieved."⁵ As a pragmatist Nehru would approve of the reorientation of his failing economic policies which were begun under Prime Minister Rao. Nehru was of the opinion that "[i]f we fail to solve these major problems, [food, clothing, housing] we

⁴ J. Nehru at addresses before the Constituent Assembly on 2/17/48 and before the business community on 3/4/49 in Appadorai, *Documents on Political Thought in Modern India*, pp. 466-7

⁵ Extract from an address at the annual meeting of the Chemical Manufacturers Association in New Delhi on 26 December 1950. As referenced in A. Appadorai, *Documents on Political Thought in Modern India*, p. 470.

shall be swept away and somebody else will come in and try to solve them."⁶ Mahatma Gandhi felt that "capital and labour need not be antagonistic to each other."⁷ He further was of the opinion that organising national power involved the best methods of production and distribution. He advocated a harmonious relationship between the two groups that would be equitable based on their shared belief in a common set of social values.

It has been the failure of the mixed economic approach of Nehru that has led Prime Minister Rao to seek to abandon it. The move away from a planned economy comes at a time when India is also having to confront the redundancy of a Non-Aligned Movement in a post cold war world. These changes force the issue of the trade offs between independence and economic development. India is having to come to terms with the limits of its economic autonomy in the world economic system.

Since independence, India has had to grapple with its desire for autonomy and its need for development. Many obstacles have stood in the way of India's independent path of development. The structure of India's economy has been changing from the rural sector to the industrial and service economies. In 1992 agriculture occupied 30% of India's economy while Industry and services were 32% and 38% respectively.⁸

India's population is staggering. The 1991 census estimated India's population to be 843.9 million. World Bank projections estimate that by the year 2000 India's population will exceed one billion. During the 1980s India's population grew by 160.6 million people. The increase in the average age of death and the decline in the infant mortality rate are responsible for this change. At its current rate, India will surpass China as the world's largest nation in the first half of the twenty first century. Such an awesome population increase erodes much of the economic growth that India has

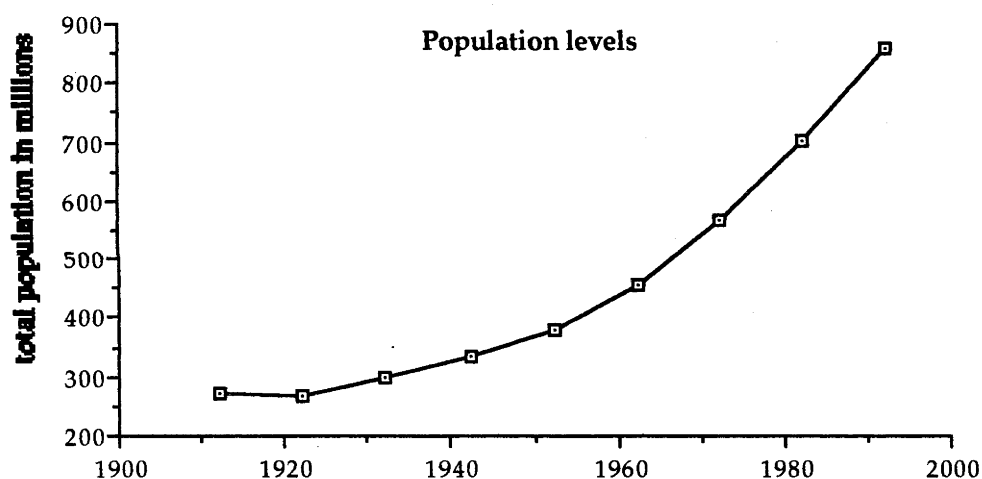
⁶ J. Nehru before the business community on 3/4/49 in Appadorai, *Documents on Political Thought in Modern India*, pp. 468.

⁷ Extract from a speech at Jamshedpur in August 1925 in A. Appadorai, *Documents on Political Thought in Modern India*, pp. 520.

⁸ *International Economic Data Book*, The Australian National University drawn from World Bank statistics for 1990 in Jytte Laursen, "Trade and Growth in India," unpublished paper, The Australian National University, 1992, p. 7.

achieved.⁹ Despite this erosion the overall size of the Indian economy is expanding.¹⁰

The interrelationship of population and economic growth in developing societies can be characterized as having to proceed through three phases. Both the rate of economic development and the rate of population growth increased during the first phase. In the second phase income and population continue to increase though the rate of population growth begins to outstrip the income growth rate. This is largely due to improved health care and diet which are made possible by improved incomes. In the third phase the rate of population growth levels off and begins to decline vis-a-vis the income growth rate.¹¹ India is in the latter stage of the second phase and as such is poised for economic take off. When India curbs its population growth its per capita income will improve dramatically.



Sources: The Economist Intelligence Unit, *Country Profile: India, Nepal, 1992-93*, (London: The Economist Intelligence Unit, 1992), p. 7.

⁹ In 1970-71 prices average annual percentage increase in per capita income rose steadily from 1.7% in the first plan [1951-56] to 3% in the sixth plan 1980-1985. Ashok Dutt and A. Sen, "Provisional Census of India 1991," *The Geographical Review*, p. 207.

¹⁰ The Economist Intelligence Unit, *Country Profile: India*, p. 12.

¹¹ J. Bandyopadhyaya, *The Making of India's Foreign Policy*, p. 51 Harvey Leibenstein, *A Theory of Economic-Demographic Development*, (Princeton: 1954).

In the long term, declining rates of population growth will help the economy to increase per capita wealth. The period 1965-1980 witnessed population growth rates of 2.3 percent. This declined to 2.1% for the decade 1980-90. Per capita GNP for India stood at \$340 in 1990. Though there are some variances in the statistics as reported, Indian poverty seems to have been reduced from 50% to 37% of the population. Much of this reduction of poverty is the result of the green revolution.¹² The green revolution began in 1965 and marked a turning point for India's Five Year Plans. Prior to 1965 land reform had been the focus of rural economic development. These reforms sought unsuccessfully to breakup large land holdings and to do away with the zamindar system. With the green revolution came a shift in emphasis to increasing agricultural production through the use of high yield varieties of rice. When used in conjunction with increased irrigation and fertilizer the program did raise food production.

It is India's unique caste structure, with its conservatism, that prevents a revolutionary uprising in a country of such disparities of wealth and poverty. The Indian countryside is dominated by a rural elite peasantry. Their class and caste standing reinforces and legitimises their power over the rural poor. While controlling over half of the land, predominantly in 5 to 25 acre plots, they make up only 20% of the rural population. This leads to a situation where, as of 1971, 38% of the rural, as opposed to 50% of the urban population, were living on 1 to 1.5 rupees per day. Paul Brass has pointed out that of the four "revolutionary" uprisings since independence (Telangana, Naxalbari, Srikakulam and the Andhra Movement) all involved tribal peoples and localised affairs with little support from outside their linguistic group with the exception of a few communist cadres. In this way it appears that class based frustration is more readily mobilized when wedded to caste, tribal or ethnic identities.

Further, this scale of class struggle has not occurred since 1970. In the subcontinent, ethnic, religious, caste and linguistic divisions (as discussed in Chapter Three) are far more salient causes of conflict than issues of class

¹² Jytte Laursen, "Trade and Growth in India," unpublished paper, The Australian National University, 1992. The green revolution may also have led to higher than normal levels of labour unrest.

struggle. In this way India's economics are viewed as a necessary, though usually not sufficient, cause of instability amongst the lower socio-economic levels of society. They are viewed as having an effect on the desires and aspirations of the middle and upper classes.

India's economy has suffered for its emphasis on import substitution. India's world trade declined from the small figure of 2% of world trade in 1950 to 0.5% world-wide in 1980. India's share in world industrial output also declined from 1.2% to 0.7% globally and from 12% to 4.6% among developing states over the same period.¹³ In these ways India's economy has lost relative to the world.

One positive ramification of import substitution policies has been the relatively small debt that India has compared with some other third world countries. India's external public debt ratio, expressed as a percentage of GNP, was 18.7% in 1988. Its debt service ration as a percentage of GNP was 1.5% in 1988.¹⁴ It is necessary to more specifically discuss the economy as a basis for India's external position.

In keeping with its desire for autonomy and independence India has sought to produce its own product. Despite this effort it has been forced to import key goods such as oil and machinery. Its efforts at import substitution have succeeded, through artificial protection, in making Indian goods less competitive. India realises that past policies have worked to the detriment of the country. It is this realisation that has led to a move away from the economic policy direction outlined by Nehru.

Indian oil imports reached 50% of consumption during 1979. Such large imports strained existing levels of hard currency reserves and made India more reliant on the export of labour to the Persian Gulf as a means of gaining, through remittances, the foreign exchange to pay for the oil. This

¹³ Paul Brass, *The New Cambridge History of India*, p. 256.

¹⁴ A.N. Agrawal, R.C. Gupta and H.O. Varma, *India Economic Information Yearbook, 1990-91*, (New Delhi: National Publishing House, 1991), p. 323.

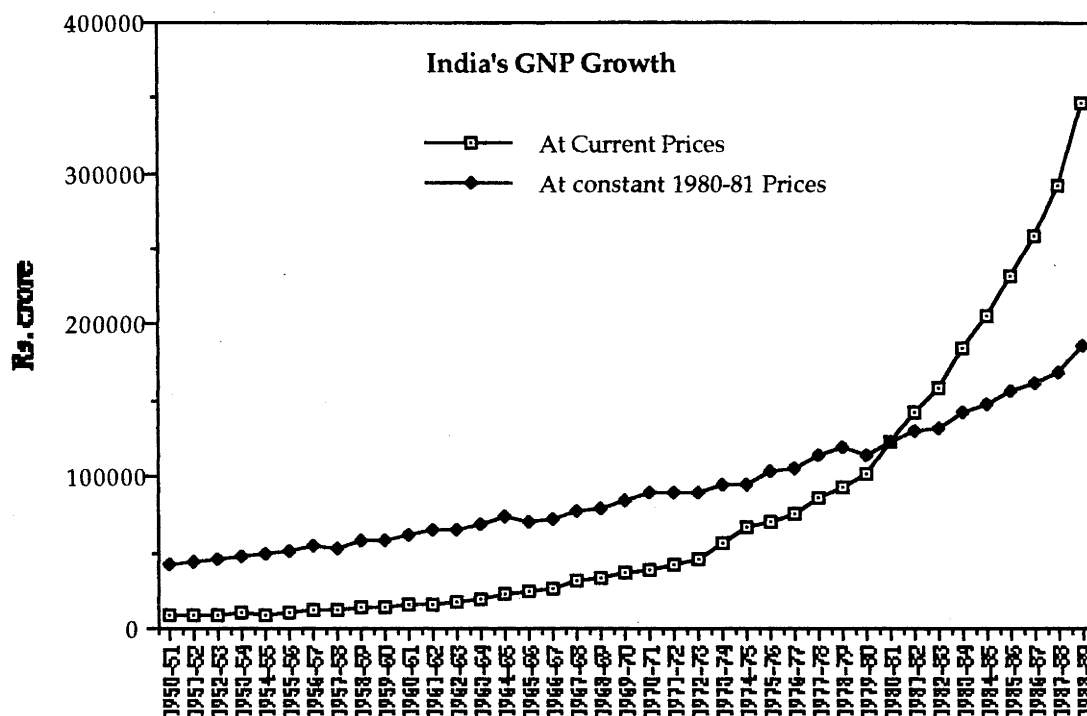
dependence exposes India to external influence over internal communalist issues.¹⁵

After two decades of economic planning "48% of India's rural and 41% of its urban population" were living in poverty. This indicates that it is "the middle class which has been reaping the benefits of India's economic and industrial development."¹⁶ Very little of the improvements in the Indian economy are being passed onto either the urban or rural poor. This concentration of benefits has allowed India's middle class to grow rapidly despite the conservative rates of annual growth for the country as a whole. Even the limited liberalization under Indira and Rajiv Gandhi in the 1980s achieved an increase to 5% GDP growth during The 1980s.¹⁷ As the middle class becomes empowered economically they will come to desire a national government that reflects their sense of strength. This may explain why the urban middle class has favored the BJP and could, as a result, lead to a more assertive foreign policy.

¹⁵ Pakistan tried to exploit this through the Islamic Gulf states in the aftermath of the Aligarh communalist riots of 1979. India was sympathetic to Iraq during the Gulf War of 1991. Such an issue highlights the interrelatedness of the domestic, economic and geopolitical parameters of foreign policy. See also S. Gordon in R. Babbage and S. Gordon, *India's Strategic Future*, p. 17.

¹⁶ These two quotes are drawn from Y. Malik, "Personality, Political Power and Party Politics," p. 4.

¹⁷ Jytte Laursen, "Trade and Growth in India," unpublished paper, The Australian National University, 1992.



Source: Ministry of Finance, *Economic Survey 1989-90*, (Delhi: Government of India Press, 1990).

50.1 Nehruvian socialist legacy: the centrally planned economy

Though India inherited a substantial infrastructure from the British there were enormous socio-economic problems to be overcome. The structure of civil administration, the railroad network and the irrigation canals assisted India in its attempts to attain higher levels of development. The partition of the subcontinent exacerbated India's existing problems. It was estimated in 1944 that in normal times 30% of Indians were underfed. By 1947, 89 crore Rs were being spent to import food. This led to the incongruence of being an agricultural country that could not feed itself. Though 80% of raw jute production was in Bangladesh only 14 of 394 jute mills fell on the Bangladesh side of the border after independence. Likewise with Pakistan, a majority of subcontinental milk production and irrigated farm land fell on the Pakistani side of the border.¹⁸ It was against such a

¹⁸ Percival Griffiths, *Modern India*, (London:), pp. 215, 223.

setting that independent India embarked on its post independence path of development.

Under the colonial administration, India had been artificially prevented from industrialising. The freedom struggle had come to view industrialisation as the key to development. This drive for development was itself divided into two schools of thought. The first were the Gandhian advocates of small scale cottage industries. The second school, the modernists, advocated large scale industry. It was this second view that was to become India's main path to development.

The Industrial policy resolution of 6 April 1948 recognised the need to expand India's industrial production through a mixed economy. Under this policy the state was to work with the private sector by focussing on new industrial sectors where existing private sector companies had not yet become established. In this way the government controlled areas such as arms production and the railroads. The policy also tried to encourage foreign investment while retaining majority Indian participation in joint ventures. To implement the policy, the government passed the Industries (development and regulation) Act of 1949 and established the Central Advisory Council. This act allowed the government to assume control of mismanaged industries and to establish its system of industrial licensing. In this initial phase the government focused on setting up, and regulating, new industry rather than on nationalising existing industry. After the 1952 election the left wing of the Congress party gained in strength. This shift in emphasis, towards the socialist aspect of the mixed economic approach, continued with the 1956 annual session of the Congress party. At the session the phrase "socialistic" was dropped in favour of "socialism" as the path of development that India should pursue.¹⁹

50.2 The contemporary structure of India's economy

India's continuing balance of payment situation, which was brought to a head by the decline of the Soviet Union and the Gulf War, eventually brought India to make the inevitable reconciliation with the world market

¹⁹ Percival Griffiths, *Modern India*, p. 230.

economy. Prior to its collapse the Soviet Union was one of India's largest trading partners. The internal turmoil in the Soviet Union in the early 1990s disrupted that trade relationship. Further, the Gulf War led to an increase in the price of oil, a reduction of foreign currency reserves and a continuing negative balance of trade. These factors, in combination with a change of government and the feeling in the days following the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi that drastic times required drastic measures, led Rao's government to introduce the reforms. In 1991 India's economic situation had deteriorated to the point that India almost defaulted on its loans. To avoid doing so it had to borrow \$2.2 billion from the IMF.

To reverse the situation it became apparent that India would need higher rates of economic growth. To achieve this India needs to attract investment capital from abroad. For this reason many of the reform proposals were intended to make India a more attractive investment. These reforms came with costs. In addition to making large numbers of people redundant the reduction of tariffs reduced government revenue. It was projected that a 10% reduction in tariffs would result in a \$1.55 billion loss of government revenue. This shortfall made India further reliant on bridge loans from the World Bank and the IMF during the transition phase. India in 1992 had some of the world's highest import duties with tariffs at up to 110%.

The success of the reforms is, in the short term, reliant on the government's ability to placate those groups within the society that stand to lose while demonstrating that all will benefit from expanded growth once the reforms take hold. To do this India is in the short run very dependent on loans to ease the transition. In the longer term it needs to satisfy the international economy that India will be a stable and lucrative area of investment. For this reason it is unlikely that India will pose a significant challenge to the dominant states of the world system in the near future. As it develops economically, so too, will it expand its external posture. This will be merged with the primary goal of attaining international independence.

Without investment the economy will not attain the high rates of economic growth that are necessary to raise India's wealth. Real growth for 1992/3 ending in March is projected to be 3.5% up from the 2% level of the

previous year.²⁰ Rao has also been able to cut inflation from 17% in August of 1991 to 9% in October of 1992.

The initial stages of reform did attract a significant increase in foreign investment. In the first eight months of 1992 foreign investment increased five fold to 28.6 billion Rs from the 1991 level of 5.2 billion Rs.²¹ This was a direct result of opening foreign ownership of joint ventures from 40% to 51%. The United States led international investment during this phase with 8.8 billion Rs as compared to Japan's 4.7 billion Rs during the same period. This increase seemed to justify Finance Minister Singh's policy of de-politicising and stabilising India's economy to attract investment.

So people don't have to worry from year to year about the rate of taxation, about a new trade policy, about what changes a new cabinet minister will bring. Depoliticising the economic processes is an irreversible fact of our economic life.²²

Though this commitment is not shared by all, it does seem as though it will proceed. The Parliamentary investigation into a \$1.2 billion securities scandal cast some uncertainty on banking reforms. The head of the Committee, Ram Niwas Mirdha, has called on the government to consider the conditions under which "foreign banks should be allowed to operate in India."²³ Such opposition to opening up India's economy is unlikely to reverse the process of economic reform though it could shift its emphasis somewhat. Jay Dubashi of the BJP national executive made the following statement.

I think its time to tell the IMF to mind its own business ... getting foreign competition is not the answer. In fact we have to stimulate domestic industry... If it means some reversal of this government's policy, we might have to do it.²⁴

²⁰ Jeremy Clift, "Indian Reform Process Enters Tricky Phase," *Reuters News Service*, 11/16/92.

²¹ "Liberalisation Weathers Storm," *Reuters News Service*, 11/2/92.

²² Bill Tarrant, "Indian Economy Set for 6-7% Growth," *Reuters News Service*, 11/4/92.

²³ "Foreign Banks Accused of Initiating Scandal," *Reuters News Service*, 11/6/92.

²⁴ Smil Jain, "BJP Alternative," *India Today*, 2/28/93, p. 108.

Rao's reforms quickly attracted investment and yielded higher rates of economic growth. Such growth is likely to lag behind the stronger economies of East and Southeast Asia for some time. Despite this, India is likely to realize the higher rates of Asia's economic tigers as the reforms take hold. Finance Minister Manmohan Singh has projected 6-7% growth for the mid 1990s stating that:

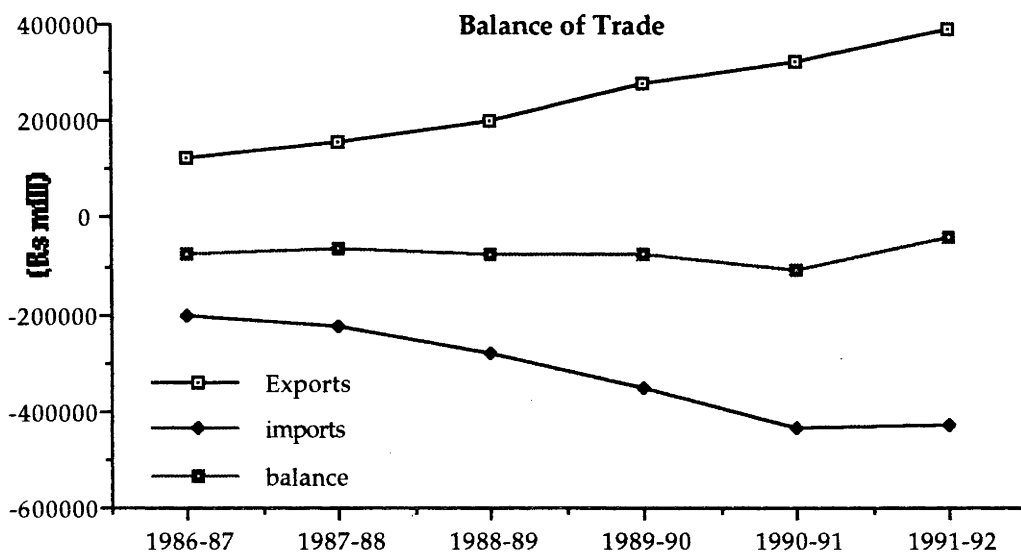
India can not be an island cut off from the rest of the world. If we have international ambitions, as a country of 850,000 million must have, then we must prepare ourselves.²⁵

It is more likely that India will attain five percent growth in the early reform period.

In a comparative analysis, India has been far behind other Asian states' rate of growth. In 1992 China's economy grew by 12.2%. One study projects an average rate of growth of 7.6% for all Asian Development Bank members in 1993.²⁶ This economic growth has allowed China to expand its military. If India wishes to challenge China's position in Asia it will have to achieve significant rates of growth.

²⁵ This once again begs the question as to what those ambitions are. Bill Tarrant, "Indian Economy Set for 6-7% Growth," *Reuters News Service*, 11/4/92.

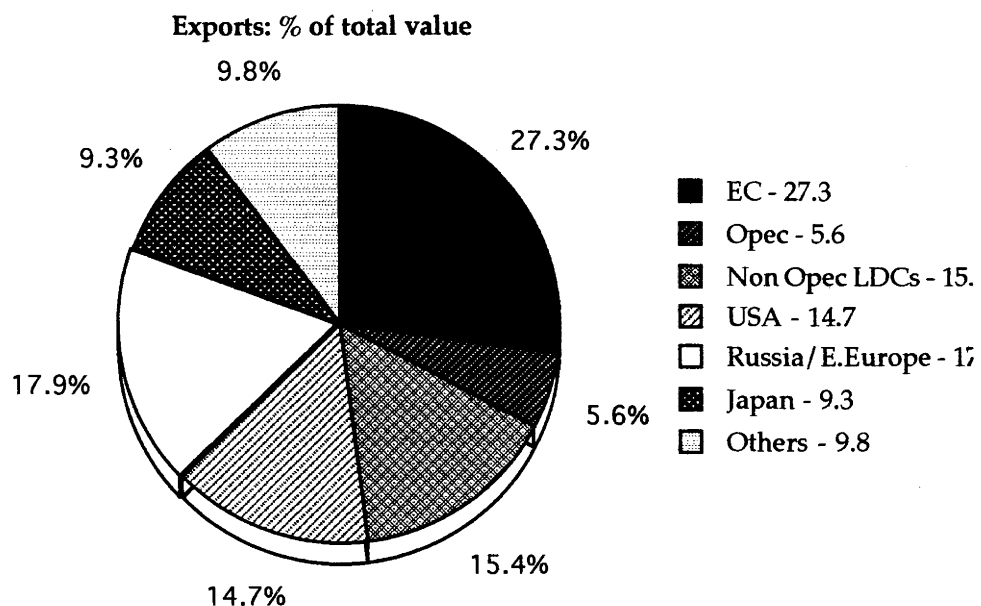
²⁶ "Asia's Economy to Grow by 7.6% in 93," *Jiji Press Newswire*, 11/6/92.



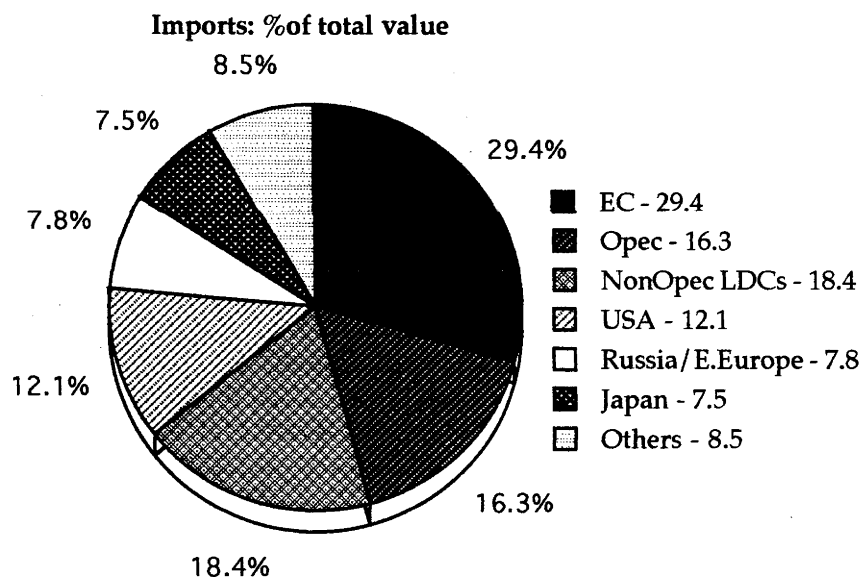
Sources: Ministry of Finance, *Economic Survey*, (New Delhi: Government of India Press) [various years], The Economist Intelligence Unit, *Country Profile: India, Nepal, 1992-93*, (London: The Economist Intelligence Unit, 1992), p.51.

The reforms have sought to increase India's exports to boost economic growth. In an attempt to do this, and to prepare the Rupee for convertibility, the Rao government devalued the currency by 22% during the 18 month period of the first phase of reforms. Based on the previous graph the devaluation does seem to have had a positive effect on India's balance of trade. Only four of India's key commodity exports in 1987 occupied more than five percent of the world market. These were, tea & mate- 14.4%, spices- 10%, iron ore and concentrates- 8.8%, and leather goods- 5.9%.²⁷

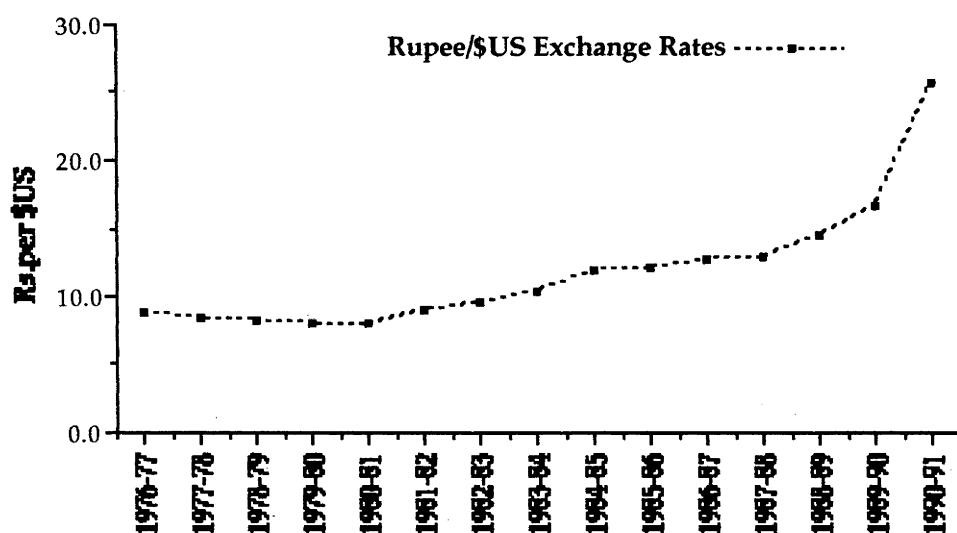
²⁷ A.N. Agrawal, H.O. Varma and R.C. Gupta, *India: Economic Information Yearbook*, p. 191.



Sources: Ministry of Finance, *Economic Survey*, (New Delhi: Government of India Press) [various years], The Economist Intelligence Unit, *Country Profile: India, Nepal, 1992-93*, (London: The Economist Intelligence Unit, 1992), p.51.



Sources: Ministry of Finance, *Economic Survey*, (New Delhi: Government of India Press) [various years], The Economist Intelligence Unit, *Country Profile: India, Nepal, 1992-93*, (London: The Economist Intelligence Unit, 1992), p. 52.



Source: *Report on Currency and Finance*, (Bombay: Reserve Bank of India, various years) and Ministry of Finance, *Economic Survey 1989-90*, (Delhi: Government of India Press, 1990)

Note: Figures are yearly averages with the exception of the 1990-91 figure which represents the post devaluation value.

The energy sector has played a key role in forcing India to embark on economic reform. The Indian industrial sector has produced a demand that exceeds India's energy production. If the Indian economy achieves higher rates of growth as projected it will have an increasing gap between production and consumption. This will necessitate increased imports and external reliance.

India's level of energy consumption is presently one of the world's lowest. Per capita energy consumption was 272 kgs equivalent of coal in 1986 as compared to a world level of 1,896 kgs for the same year. One off-setting factor underlying this statistic is that approximately 40% of Indian energy is consumed in non-registered burning of cow dung and firewood by the rural subsistence sector of the economy. Overall, India produces 85% of its energy needs. As the population and the industrial sector grows this percentage will decline. Oil, natural gas and coal remain in the public sector.²⁸

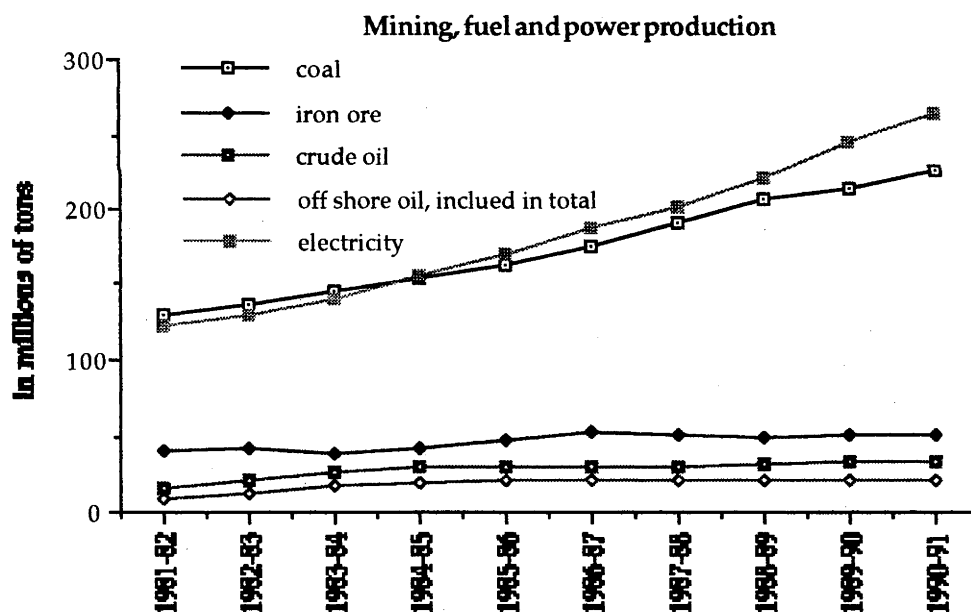
The increasing gap between oil production and consumption will have significant ramifications for India's international economic and

²⁸ The Economist Intelligence Unit, *Country Profile: India and Nepal*, (London: The Economist, 1988), p. 27.

political relations. Increasing oil imports will necessitate increasing reserves of foreign currency. The policy options that will yield such increased reserves involve increasing investment by NRIs in India and increasing Indian exports. The rouble/rupee exchange of the past with the Soviet Union is no longer a viable option. Russia's falling oil production may make it an oil importing nation unless it can raise investment to open up new wells. As such it does not seem to be in a position to provide oil to India.

A plausible longer term projection to the year 2004 sees production reaching a maximum plateau of 50 mn tons a year and yet demand, if unconstrained, would rise to 100-125 mn tons on some estimates. ²⁹

This situation necessitates that the government embark on an ambitious exploration and development programme if it is to avoid a large external dependency situation. Whether such an ambitious programme will be able to keep up with the rising rates of consumption is as of yet unclear.



Sources: Ministry of Finance, *Economic Survey*, (New Delhi: Government of India Press) [various years], The Economist Intelligence Unit, *Country Profile: India, Nepal, 1992-93*, (London: The Economist Intelligence Unit, 1992), p.31.

Note: The electricity production levels are in billions of kilowatt hours.

²⁹ The Economist Intelligence Unit, *Country Profile: India*, p. 29.

Despite India's past policy of encouraging import substitution, India still requires sizable amounts of foreign currency to finance imports. With "20-25% of national income saved and invested domestically [India is] close to the limit of possible domestic resource mobilization."³⁰ India derives much foreign currency from repatriation of wages by Indian guest workers abroad and by investment by NRIs. India has actively sought out NRI capital. In 1990 the Reserve bank of India raised the interest rates on foreign currency non-resident deposits. In November of 1990 foreign currency non-resident deposits rose to Rs 18,000 crore. This figure represented 10% of the annual plan. These funds were particularly needed in the wake of the Gulf War of 1990-1. The war led to a mass exodus of Indians who had been working in the Gulf. This resulted in a decline in foreign currency reserves. This was further exacerbated by the rising cost of oil as a result of the war. Indian foreign currency reserves were reduced to three weeks worth of imports at that time. Further, India's external debt equalled \$69.7 billion at the end of 1990. While this only represented a 2% increase over 1989 it resulted in a debt service ratio of 30% for 1990. The debt service ratio for 1980 was 9%. The NRI investable surplus of an estimated \$45 billion would make a significant contribution to the Indian economy. The NRIs will also become a more important source of investment as competition for funds by Eastern Europe and China mounts.³¹

Being in direct competition for international investment funds, India will need to provide incentives to investors that compensate for the continuing internal strife if they hope to attract investments. The pace with which India can shed its residual "licence Raj" structure will also have an impact on how much investment it can attain.

The positive effect of India's economy on India's foreign policy is to a large degree dependent on the rise of the middle class. As politics of scarcity lead to subnational group competition, economic growth placates frustration at the internal level and builds the strength of the emerging middle class. As the nation is increasingly empowered, the middle and upper classes will

³⁰ The Economist Intelligence Unit, *Country Profile: India*, p. 11.

³¹ Salil Tripathi, "NRIs Asking For More," *India Today*, 12/31/90, pp. 106-11.

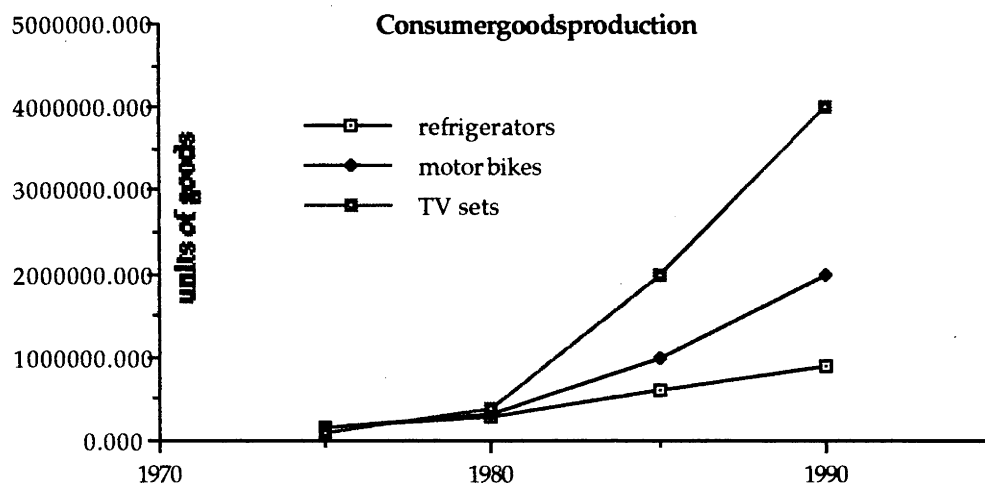
wish India to similarly reflect their new found sense of independence and strength. With increased numbers the middle class will be in a position to register their desires.

In recent years India's rising middle class has begun to be noticed in the West. It has been noticed because it challenges existing Western notions of India as a land of vast poverty. It has been estimated that India has a rising middle class of up to 200 million. When we discuss India's expanding middle class we should bear in mind that they are middle class in a different sense than is usually thought of in the West. A new middle class family in India will have an apartment in the city, a motor scooter or a Maruti car, a TV, and possibly a video player and will have money enough to lavish on weddings. Though their buying power has grown significantly they still do not have a standard of living comparable to average Western middle class families. That said, the expansion of the Indian middle class in recent years has been extraordinary. It has been extraordinary not only for the speed with which it has come into being but also for their potential impact on India's political culture.

The rising middle class is composed of entrepreneurs, elite labourers prosperous farmers and new professionals. During the 1980s the entrepreneurial class expanded three fold to some 1.2 million. With factory employment increasing by 40% over the same period there are increasing numbers of the labour elite who can attain middle class life styles. Earlier, the green revolution created a number of wealthy farmers. The last decade has also witnessed increasing numbers of professionals who have joined the ranks of the middle class. This has had a marked effect on the political culture.

Ten years ago, the political rhetoric centred on abolishing poverty; today it looks forward to the 21st Century ... now a government talks of the industrial modernisation and opening up the economy.³²

³² T.N. Ninan, "Rise of the Middle Class," in Robin Jeffrey ed. *India Rebellion to Republic*, p. 326.



Source: T.N. Ninan, "Rise of the Middle Class," in Robin Jeffrey ed. *India Rebellion to Republic*, p.332.

As increasing numbers of voters are members of the middle class their priorities will increasingly become part of the political agenda. Notions of development now include access to consumer goods such as refrigerators and motor scooters. The shop windows of the major cities and the advertisements on TV and in the weekly magazines also reflect the emerging middle class desires for material wealth.

50.3 India's evolving international economic position

In the Western mind India has in the past been equated with mass poverty and under development. The emergence of a sizable middle class in India is challenging these perceptions. By not conforming to existing international expectations, India's changed international image comes as a shock to some Western audiences.

Despite its poor economic standing in the first half of the twentieth century, India has begun to reverse its position. With sound management and planning India will return to a more privileged place among the community of nations. It has been estimated that in 1750³³ India was responsible for 24.5% of world manufacturing output. By 1913 India's share

³³ This was just seven years before the Clive's victory at Plassey.

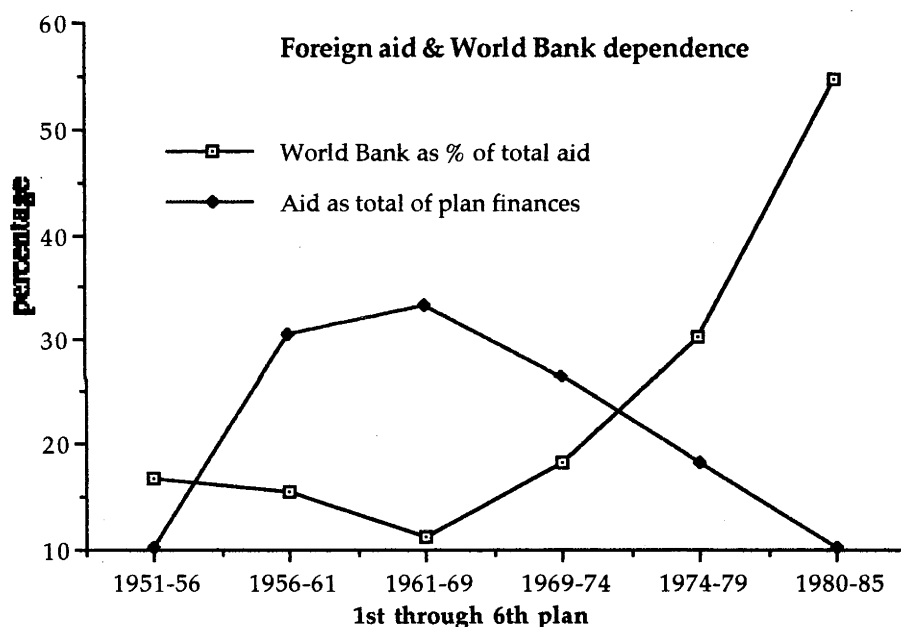
had been reduced to 1.4% while the developed nations had attained 92.5% of manufacturing output. This trend has once again begun to change. In 1980 India (without the production of Pakistan and Bangladesh) had increased its share of world manufacturing to 2.3% while the developed countries had slipped to 88%.³⁴

By taking a long term historical view, perceptions of India as a poor agricultural nation are put into perspective. India's social structure, though changing, continues to allow a modern urban middle class economy to expand without having to expend significant resources on the masses of poor. This should facilitate the growth of the economy in the short term, though the demands of the poor will have to be addressed in the mid term as the economy begins to expand. To affect this expansion of the economy foreign investment will be critical.

³⁴ Colin Simmons, "De-industrialization, Industrialization and the Indian Economy," in Robin Jeffrey ed. *India Rebellion to Republic*, p. 201.

50.31 The IMF, the World Bank and pressure to join the market economy

In November of 1992, World Bank President Bill Preston toured India to lend support to India's ambitious reform program. During the trip he pledged an additional one billion dollars in assistance for trade adjustment and the national renewal fund. In recent years the World Bank has been providing India approximately two billion dollars of assistance annually. This additional assistance came at a time when the economic reforms of Prime Minister Rao and Finance Minister Manmohan Singh seemed to be faltering. The World Bank sought to avert a "stop start" process of reform.



Sources: Ministry of Finance, *Economic Survey*, (New Delhi: Government of India Press) [various years], The Economist Intelligence Unit, *Country Profile: India, Nepal, 1992-93*, (London: The Economist Intelligence Unit, 1992), p. 56.

The National Renewal Fund was created by Rao to co-opt opposition to the economic reform process by providing assistance to those who find themselves disadvantaged or made redundant by the reforms. According to

an Indian Official the fund is to "help cushion the blow of closing unviable state industries."³⁵

India is also seeking an additional nine billion dollars in assistance from the IMF, World Bank and the Asian Development Bank over the next three years to add to the \$20 billion in unutilised assistance available in November of 1992. As a result of shortages of foreign capital to meet import costs, India was forced to go to the World Bank for substantial loans. It was estimated in mid 1992 that India owed a sum equal to one quarter of its total national income. As a result, the Indian government spent 50% of its revenue in 1992 to finance internal and external debt. As these burdens have mounted, the need for economic reform has increased.

Because India was forced to borrow to meet its imports it became more indebted to the World Bank and the IMF. This borrowing, and increased dependence on external loans, was brought on by the failure of a model of development that sought to avoid dependence. In this way the recent set backs to the Indian economy have eroded the gains that were made during the 1970s and 1980s. When the economy recovers India will again seek to minimise its reliance on external loans to regain its financial independence. In 1992 the IMF and the Aid to India Consortium called on India to reduce its defence expenditures and established the linkage between economic assistance and defence reductions.

50.32 Rao's reforms and the end of India's licence Raj

The bomb blast which assassinated Rajiv Gandhi brought an end not only to the Nehru-Gandhi dynasty but marked the beginning of the end of Nehruvian-socialism. With the assassination came a national realization that the country had entered dire times. Following on the Gulf War and continuing unresponsiveness in the economy, the loss of the national leader opened the way for change. That change came from the unlikely source of Narasimha Rao. Prime Minister Rao set in motion plans to revitalize the Indian economy, a decision his predecessors were not able or willing to fully

³⁵ Jeremy Cliff, "World Bank Chief Presses India to Keep Up Reforms," *Reuters News Service*, 11/14/92.

implement. The reforms proposed by Rao were aimed at integrating India into the world economy and thereby reversing the downward spiral which had engulfed its economy. Prime Minister Rao, along with his Finance Minister Manmohan Singh, who was the former governor of the central bank of India, began the arduous process of dismantling the layers of governmental red tape which have hampered Indian industrial growth for years under the licence-permit-Raj.

Conventional wisdom had thought that Narasimha Rao was an unlikely candidate to lead India out of its economic predicament. Rao, despite his past portfolios, had a reputation for being a quiet spoken indecisive intellectual. He speaks six languages, writes poetry and is a scholar in Sanskrit and Hindi. A further unlikely characteristic is that he is from the southern state of Andhra Pradesh rather than one of the kingmaker states of the northern Hindi belt. Rao, a Brahmin, surprised his critics by announcing this radical departure in economic policy in the July 1992 policy statement only days after his 21 June swearing in ceremony. By boldly asserting himself, Rao sought to debunk the perception that he was an unambitious man and that he would serve only as a transition Prime Minister.

Although former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi promised to take India into the twenty first century, he was unable to give the boost that India's half-developed industry badly needed. The poor performance of the Indian economy, the crisis mentality of the Gulf War and the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi made it possible for Rao and Finance Minister Manmohan Singh to embark on a radical departure from the Nehruvian-Socialist model. The old policies were perceived to be increasingly ineffective in addressing the ills of the Indian economy. The bloated public sector, a manufacturing sector only two thirds the size of Australia's and uncompetitive exports all were in need of reform.

Rajiv Gandhi witnessed both the growth of the Indian middle class to well over 100 million and the beginnings of the reorientation of the Indian economy. What he was unable to affect was the comprehensive reforms which became possible in the desperate times following his assassination. Attachments to the socialist conception of a centrally planned economy had

slowed the process of transition. Despite such attachments, India is shifting its economic ideological orientation.

Control of the commanding heights of the debate on political-economic policy has changed: now it is those who believe that the state is the vanguard institution for economic development ... and social change who are on the defensive.³⁶

In dismantling the licensing structure, India has moved toward a more liberalized economy in an effort to find solutions to its economic woes. This process of change will begin by circumventing the complex licence structure. Initially those employed in the structure were left in place despite being made redundant by the new legislation.³⁷ In such cases it is thought that by not putting bureaucrats out of work there will be less opposition to the proposed reform.

Under the licence Raj, new businesses and industrial expansion had been dependent upon the government in order to obtain the required permit to proceed. While established as a measure to prevent the domination of industry by a small industrial elite it has had the effect of slowing economic growth and encouraged corruption. It has been estimated that between 5% and 7.5% of project costs were skimmed off by corrupt bureaucrats.

The reforms to November 1992 had liberalised trade practices by reducing tariffs and increasing foreign ownership to 51% in joint ventures, opened the stock market to overseas investment, made the rupee partially convertible and reduced the controls on Industry that were the legacy of the licence Raj. The future of the reform program was placed in doubt by the weakening of the Rao government as a result of the destruction of the Mosque at Ayodhya.

Rao began his reforms by proposing that the Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices asset limit be totally removed while abolishing industrial licensing for all but 18 industries and allowing an expansion of

³⁶ Leonard Gordon and Philip Oldenburg, *India Briefing, 1992*, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1992), p. 10.

³⁷ This manner of introducing reforms was also used in the attempt to implement national security decision making reforms.

foreign equity holdings to a controlling interest of 51%. It was hoped that these measures would create a new and relatively unfettered economy where Indian industry could increase its performance. By raising the ceiling on foreign equity it was hoped that India could increase its share of foreign investment.³⁸ There was a realization that a global recession, European integration and the opening of Eastern Europe would all necessitate a significant readjustment of India's economy if it were to successfully engage the new environment. In 1989, foreign investment in India totalled a mere \$425 million as compared to investments in Mexico, Malaysia and Thailand equal to \$2,241, \$1,846, and \$1,650 million respectively. Reforms in the Foreign Exchange Regulation Act sought to change perceptions abroad and attract invest to India.

In addition to the new industrial policy, Manmohan Singh presented an innovative budget to Parliament in 1992. The budget had the political benefit of being perceived as a tax the rich budget. This was achieved through the increase of the cost of consumer goods such as VCR's, cars, petrol and air fares. To offset this it did not antagonise the rising middle class by raising wealth and personal income tax. Rao further stemmed opposition from the coterie of Rajiv Gandhi by allocating a substantial sum to the Rajiv Gandhi foundation.

The 1992 budget was allowed to cut deficits while raising expenditures. This was done through the devaluation of the rupee. The devaluation raised revenues which were generated by increased customs duties on imports whose cost in rupees terms have increased due to the 18% devaluation of the currency. The devaluation of the Rupee to Rs. 25.7 to the American dollar was the first step towards making the rupee a convertible currency.

A further source of creative financing of the 1992 budget was a plan to tap into "black money" which constitutes between 18 and 21% of GDP. The plan allowed Indians to deposit these funds into the National Housing Bank

³⁸ The wave of unrest during 1992-3 did much to counter these incentives for investment.

with no questions asked. In this way these funds can be reintroduced into the taxable economy.

Through their swift action Rao and Singh initially outmanoeuvred their opposition. It was thought by both the coterie of deceased Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and by the growing power of party boss Sharad Pawar of Maharashtra that Rao would be cautious, colourless and susceptible to manipulation.³⁹ Before these recent reforms Rao was chiefly known for his loyalty to the Gandhis. In 1992-3, Rao staked his political fortunes on the panacea of economic reform.

One decisive turning point in the long term prospects of the reforms came on 9 March 1992 when Rao was able to fend off Parliamentary opposition attacks on his 29 February budget. After winning by a margin of 38 votes, it was apparent that his government's economic policies had support from outside.⁴⁰ Support from the BJP was expected for two reasons. In the first place, to oppose the budget could have led the nation to another election which no party deemed necessary or desirable at that point. Secondly, and more fundamentally, the BJP was itself behind reforms of the economy in certain areas. Specifically the BJP supports deregulation and a dismantling of the licence Raj as well as opening a wider role for domestic private industry. What the BJP does oppose is the "wooing of multinationals."⁴¹ The BJP may seek concessions by Rao over domestic concerns for continued non-opposition of his economic reforms or they may go further and make an election issue out of the reform process.

The readjustment of the Indian economy in line with the United States and the West may then bring the reforms under scrutiny and criticism. This would primarily be done for political gain on the domestic stage. Only the left are fundamentally opposed to the reforms, and they are not in an electoral position to mount any substantive opposition to the

³⁹ The tactic of placing what was perceived to be a malleable candidate in the Congress leadership role was unsuccessfully tried previously in 1966 when after the death of Prime minister Shastri Indira Gandhi was installed. Indira Gandhi proved most definitely to be her own master. It would appear as though Prime Minister Rao will as well.

⁴⁰ "India: From Minority to Majority," *The Economist*, 3/14/92, p. 24.

⁴¹ *The Economist*, 3/14/92, p. 24.

reforms. While the BJP may differ with aspects of the reform package, they do not pose a real threat to the general direction of the reforms as Congress is unlikely to be influenced by their rhetoric as they have been with regard to communal issues. As such, the reforms are in all likelihood to go forward, though the transition from the centrally planned economy to a more market oriented one will be far from smooth.

As India emerges from its current transitional phase a number of realities are becoming self apparent to the elite. The most important new reality which India must reconcile is the evaporation of the bi-polar conflict and its implication for India's development. Without the centrally planned economy of the former Soviet Union to turn to, Indian elites are having to come to terms with the reality of a policy shift which will, of necessity, have to shed the Non-Aligned posture. The elites will have to adopt a policy which seeks to integrate India, in both strategic and economic terms, more closely within an American designed structure. "[T]here has been a major change in the elite's perceptions of its country's place in the world, determined partly by domestic considerations and partly by external factors."⁴²

This policy shift will be resisted by those who have come to perceive Non-Alignment in reified terms and who have forgotten that it was a policy tactic to maximise the strategic goals of India rather than an objective in and of itself. At the meeting of the NAM in September of 1992 India took a intermediary position between the pragmatists, represented by the Indonesians, and the more radical traditionalists of the movement. It was fitting that the movement should meet in Indonesia, the site of the Bandung Afro-Asian Conference of 1955, at a time when the movement had come full circle. The meeting took place when India was having some trouble coming to terms with the post Cold War world despite the ambitious economic reform programmes which it had undertaken. Fear of "what amounts to a revival of the old Western colonialism." were expressed by Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir. President Suharto of Indonesia called for "constructive

42 Praful Bidwal, "Non-Aligned No More? India's Passage To Washington," *The Nation*, 1/20/92, p. 50.

dialogue between developed and developing countries."⁴³ India's reticence to abandon the old radical NAM ideology and fully join Indonesia in attempting to redefine the NAM as a forum for North-South dialogue can be interpreted as a sign that India is unsure of its position in the post Cold War world despite reform measures. This tension between the economic imperative of striking a *modus vivendi* with the world economy and an ideological proclivity to oppose, or at least view with suspicion, the West is one aspect of the paradigm shifts that India was undergoing in the early 1990s.

National development and increasing material wealth are primary concerns for the Indian elite and middle classes. As such, India's best choice, given its present relative economic underdevelopment, is to "become America's junior partner" within the South Asian Region.⁴⁴

The urban middle class Indians, ... now believe that those who do not follow the standard definition of nationalism are doomed to be dominated and marginalised in international affairs.⁴⁵

Without the option of turning to the Soviet camp for alternative assistance, India has little choice but to seek accommodation with the West until such time as it is truly self sufficient. This trend can be detected in India's armaments procurement and production strategy to which the chapter now turns.

50.4 India's defence industry

During the 1980s Indian defence expenditure has been fairly constant at just over three percent of GNP.⁴⁶ The Indian government may again achieve increased defence budgets when its economy recovers. If we can assume continuing consensus on this level of expenditure, then, should the economy respond strongly to the reforms which are now being effected,

⁴³ Charles Smith and Suhaini Azam, "The NAM Summit: Reason and Rhetoric," *The Far Eastern Economic Review*, 9/17/92, pp. 10-11.

⁴⁴ Praful Bidwal, "Non-Aligned No More?" pp. 47 - 50.

⁴⁵ Ashis Nandy, "The Political Culture of the Indian State," p. 12.

⁴⁶ Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, *SIPRI Year-book 1990: World Armaments and Disarmament*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), pp. 196-7.

India could once again expand military capabilities in real as well as nominal terms. To project significant economic recovery and higher rates of economic growth for India in the five to ten year period is not an unrealistic projection. If India follows the economic course charted by the newly industrialized countries (NICs) India could obtain significantly better rates of growth than it has been. During the period 1961 through 1990, India realized annual rates of economic growth of roughly four percent while the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), China and the NICs realized annual growth figures closer to six, seven and eleven percent respectively.⁴⁷

India has developed its modern defence industry from its humble origins in 1801 when the British East India Company established a gun carriage production facility near Calcutta.⁴⁸ Since the 1960s India has realized that dependence on a single, externally sourced, arsenal provides the supplier, with a great degree of leverage.⁴⁹ India as such has sought both to diversify its sources for imported arms and to move from arms imports to production under licence. This has been done to achieve India's ultimate aim of arms self sufficiency in both design and production.

Weapons procurement decision making highlights the differing priorities of the actors who have an impact on Indian national security and defence policy.⁵⁰ The military, wishing to operate the best equipment as quickly as possible, has a natural tendency toward "off the shelf" purchases from abroad. The politicians, seeking to maximise Indian independence and self sufficiency, have advocated the development of indigenous production

⁴⁷ "Singh Steers a Brave Course," *The Economist*, 3/7/92, p. 27.

⁴⁸ It should be noted that despite its relatively underdeveloped armaments industry, even at this early stage, the subcontinent was not wholly without superior weapons technology. The British discovered during the Afghan wars the effectiveness of the longer range Afghan rifles. R.G. Mathews, "The Development of India's Industrial Base," *The Journal of Strategic Studies*, 12/89.

⁴⁹ Soviet hesitance to come to India's aid in 1962, the Soviet/ Egyptians arms relationship and the UK and US cut off of aid to India and Pakistan during the 1965 war served as examples of the problematic of external reliance for the recipient country.

⁵⁰ This theme has been developed by Raju Thomas in "Strategies of Recipient Autonomy: The Case of India," in Kwang-il Baek, R. D. McLaurin and Chung-in Moon, *The Dilemma of Third World Defence Industries: Supplier Control or Recipient Autonomy*, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1989).

capabilities to break the ties that bind India to greater powers. The economists, seeking the most efficient avenue to develop an industrial infrastructure and to stem the flow of hard currency out of the country, have supported the licenced production in India of weapons systems. As India increasingly acquires the necessary expertise, initially through its production under licence arrangements, it will improve the efficiency of its production. The history of defence production decision-making is one of the politicians taking the upper hand and forcing India's Defence and Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs) to operate beyond their actual level of competence and expertise. This has at times resulted in failure.

Efforts to more effectively coordinate indigenous defence production were initiated in the 1960s with the establishment of the Department of Defence Production in 1962 and the Department of Defence Supplies in 1965. These two organisations were integrated into the Department of Defence Production and Supplies (DDPS) in 1985. DDPS is headed by a secretary and has an additional secretary and five joint secretaries heading the five Directorates of Planning and Coordination, Quality Assurance, Standardization, Defence Exhibition and Technical Development and Production. The DDPS is responsible for the defence ordnance factories under the Ordnance Factories Board and the Defence Public Sector Undertakings. The ordnance factories gross production rose from Rs 1356 crore in 1985-6 to Rs 1598 crore in 1986-7 while the DPSUs production rose from Rs 1810 crore to Rs 1954 crore over the same period. Beyond these governmental bodies the DDPS also coordinates private sector procurement through the Supplies Wing of Defence Production and Supplies. To coordinate this a Central Technical Committee, under the Chairmanship of the Secretary of DDPS, has been established.⁵¹

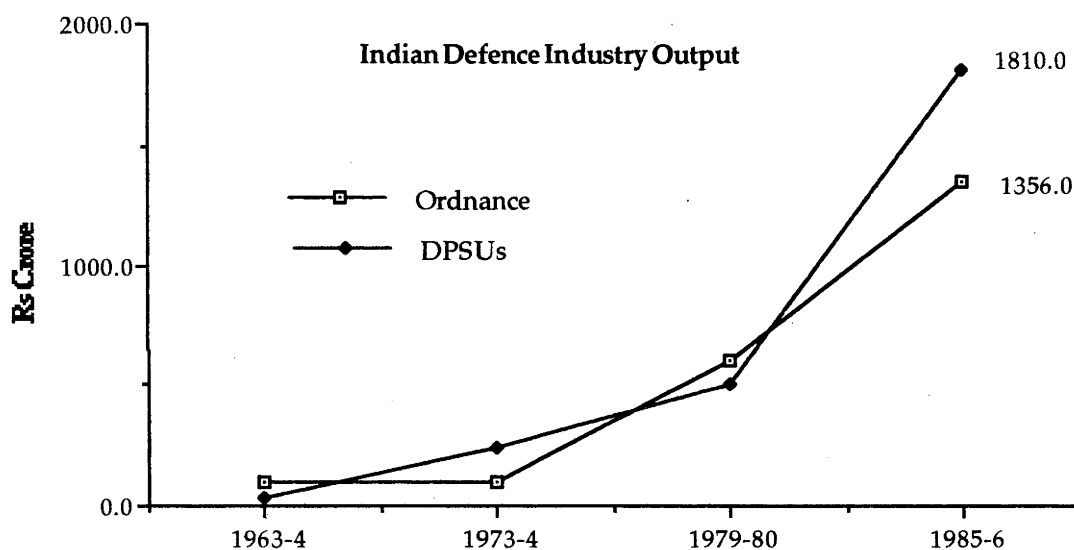
As of 1989 there were 36 ordnance factories, nine DPSUs and 40 defence research laboratories handling domestic and joint venture arms production. The following is a list of DPSUs as of 1987 and a chart of Indian defence industry output between 1963 and 1986.

51 S.P. Barnawal, *Military Year-book 1987-88*, pp. 206-8.

Defence and Public Sector Undertakings

1. Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd.
2. Bharat Electronics Ltd.
3. Bharat Earth Movers Ltd.
4. Mazagon Docks Ltd.
5. Goa Shipyard Ltd.
6. Garden Shipbuilders & Engineers Ltd.
7. Bharat Dynamics Ltd.
8. Mishra Dhatu Nigam Ltd.⁵²

The ordnance factories produce a variety of products such as tanks, field guns, trucks, small arms and ammunition. Administration of these factories is the purview of the Ordnance Factory Board in Calcutta.



Source: S.P. Baranwal, *Military Yearbook 1987-88*,

Some of the under licence, Indian produced, successes have been the British Chieftain (Vijayanta) and Soviet T-72 tanks, the British Gnat (Ajeet) and Jaguar, French Mirage 2000, Soviet MiG 21 and 23 fighters, the British Leander Class Frigates, Avro military transport, German SK-1500 Type 209

⁵² S.P. Baranwal, *Military Year-book 1987-88*, p. 214.

Submarines and Shaktiman trucks.⁵³ The DPSUs handle more technologically complex projects and larger scale projects, such as the production of the Jaguar aircraft by Hindustan Electronics, the Godavari Class Frigates by Mazagon Docks and the augmentation of warship building facilities by Goa Shipyard Ltd.

The decision to purchase the Jaguar aircraft is an example of the impact of politics on the weapons procurement and strategic decision making process. The timing becomes a decisive factor for understanding this decision. In 1978, the Janata government sought to put India back on the path of "true Non-Alignment." The supposition was that Indira Gandhi, through the 1971 Treaty of Peace and Friendship with the Soviet Union, had taken India too far into the Soviet camp. To maintain India's independent posture within the Non-Aligned nations, the Janata Government did not wish to become too reliant upon the Soviet Union. This led to a political decision by Morarji Desai to buy from the West, despite the attractive price of only \$4.1 million for the MiG-23, which was a rough equivalent in performance to the Jaguar. The economic justification of the MiG-23 is undeniable. The Soviets offered 2.5% financing over 17 years following a seven year grace period. This was further payable in Rupees which would have conserved valuable foreign exchange.⁵⁴ It was also found that it cost twice as much to produce the Jaguar in India as to buy it outright. The Soviets had attached a no export clause to the MiG 23 which the British did not. This would have been perceived as another undesirable constraint on India's independence. Reportedly the Saab-37 was the plane of choice of the Air Force but was similarly disqualified because it used an American made Pratt and Whitney engine which would have given the Americans similar influence.⁵⁵ Despite this emphasis on retaining the independence to re-export Indian arms, Indian arms exports remain at the almost negligible level of US \$10 million though there are signs that they may increase.⁵⁶ The choice of aircraft was based primarily on political considerations of non-

⁵³ Raju Thomas, "Strategies of Recipient Autonomy: The Case of India," pp. 193-4.

⁵⁴ R.G. Mathews, "The Development of India's Industrial Base," *The Journal of Strategic Studies*, 12/89, p. 411.

⁵⁵ Raju Thomas, "Strategies of Recipient Autonomy: The Case of India," p. 196.

⁵⁶ Amit Gupta, "India's Mixed Performance," *Defence and Diplomacy*, 5/89, p. 48.

alignment aimed at autonomy and independence with economic and military considerations being of secondary consideration.

India's efforts to develop a state of the art combat aircraft is indicative of the incongruence between its self perception and its existing capabilities. That said, India is quickly narrowing the gap between its objectives and capabilities. Years of production under licence programs have begun to establish in India the necessary technological and engineering base for successfully developing an indigenous high tech arms industry.

India has sought to move away from purchases to production under licence arrangements, and ultimately indigenously designed and produced systems. Despite this, India has yet to obtain independence in its armaments industry. This is due to continued reliance on foreign technology and design. The history of the Marut aircraft programme is illustrative of India's impatience in making this transition from dependence to self reliance. The HF 24 Marut was outdated by the time it got off the ground in 1961. In retrospect, Defence Minister Krishna Menon admitted that it had been over ambitious from the start. This was due to the lack of industrial infrastructure at Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd., which necessitated the reliance on imported parts and materials, and led to the plane being more costly to produce in India than it would have been to import.⁵⁷

The Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) has met with similar problems as the Marut. The LCA project began in 1980 when HAL did a feasibility study of the proposed requirement for an indigenously produced 200 km air superiority fighter with ground attack capabilities. In its feasibility study, HAL stipulated that key components such as "radar, fly by wire and fibre composite materials-would have to be imported."⁵⁸ Since the programs approval in August of 1983, further reliance on imported components, such as the General Electric F-404 power plant, as opposed to the HAL RB-199, have rendered the indigenous component increasingly insignificant. Progress on the LCA has been slow. From its approval in 1983, to September 1990, only \$176 million had been expended on the project. Despite following

57 Amit Gupta, "India's Mixed Performance," p. 44-5.

58 Amit Gupta, "India's Mixed Performance," p. 46.

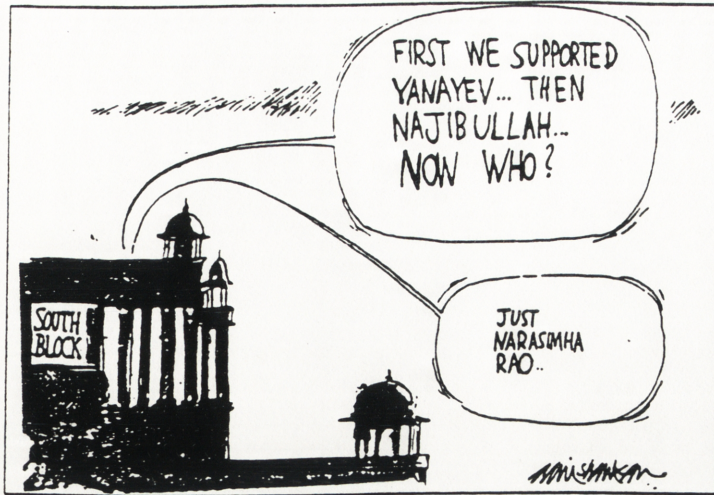
a similar path to that of the Marut, the LCA experience will, albeit inefficiently, help move the Indian air industry closer to its goal of true indigenous production. This will be so even if an interim fighter from abroad is purchased due to delays of the LCA. The more efficient, though longer term, approach for India to reach the level where it could be confident in its ability to produce a first rate combat aircraft is to first produce all of the components to the aircraft which it currently produces under licence. India still imports components to the MiG-27.⁵⁹

From the performance of the Marut and the LCA, as well as the main battle tank (MBT), advanced light helicopter (ALH) and the light attack helicopter (LAH), it is evident that India has out-stripped its present capabilities. By 1990, India had already begun production of the ALH at Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd. under licence from the West German Co. MBB. The Defence Ministry decided in September of 1990 to give HAL the go ahead for development of the LAH.⁶⁰

This chapter has viewed the economy as determining the resource pool upon which India's posture is built. In this way its slow to moderate rates of growth have acted as limiting factors to India's expanding posture. Though the transition will be difficult, India will continue with its programme of economic reforms. Over time this is likely to yield increased rates of growth of between 4% and 6%. If the previous trends are maintained, defence expenditure will remain at an average of 3.5 to 4% of GNP. Based on these two projections it is assumed that Indian defence expenditure will return to the levels of the late 1980s by the mid to late 1990s. The purposes to which the defence budget will be used will be determined by domestic and geopolitical considerations through the decision-making process. This study speculates that as the middle class grows it will come to exert an influence on India's external orientation. If this group is mobilised by the BJP it may lead to a more assertive India. The study now turns to examine the decision-making process.

⁵⁹ "India," *Asia-Pacific Defence Reporter*, Sept. 1990, p. 27.

⁶⁰ "India," *Asia-Pacific Defence Reporter*, Sept. 1990, p. 27.



CHAPTER SIX

With the body of ministers proved upright by means of secret tests, the King should appoint persons in secret service, the sharp pupil, the apostate monk, the seeming householder, the seeming trader and the secret agent, the bravo, the poison giver and the begging nun ...

-Kautilya's Arthashastra, Fourth Century BC¹

60. Decision-making as the process whereby India's external posture is articulated

The following chapter will focus on the decision making structure as circumscribed by the domestic, geopolitical and economic parameters as previously discussed. This inquiry will additionally seek to develop an understanding of the world view of the key members and groups within the decision making elite who are involved in the formulation and implementation of national security, defence, intelligence and foreign policy. In doing so, this chapter draws on the theoretical joint work of Snyder, Bruck and Sapin and the more recent extension, and application of decision-making theory to the Third World context, of Bahgat Korany.²

¹ The above quote is drawn from Kautilya's *Arthashastra*, a treatise on the art of government written circa fourth century B.C. chapter 11, section 7. This work represents the most comprehensive work on the ancient's theory of statecraft and is part of a tradition that goes back further, than as is popularly believed, the work of Tsun Tzu. R. P. Kangle, *The Kautilya Arthashastra Part II: An English Translation with Critical and Explanatory Notes*, (Bombay: University of Bombay publishers, 1963), p. 23.

² While the theoretical literature on decision making is not specifically dealt with, more notable works which have influenced the general perspective are: R. Snyder, H. W. Bruck and B. Sapin, *Foreign Policy and Decision Making: An Approach to the Study of International Politics*, (New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1962), G. Allison, *Essence of Decision*, (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1971) G. Paige, *The Korean Decision*, (New York: The Free Press, 1968), Joseph Frankel, *The Making of Foreign Policy: An Analysis of Decision Making*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), Richard Snyder, H. W. Bruck and Burton Sapin, *Decision Making as an Approach to International Politics*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1954), Morton Halperin, *Bureaucratic Politics and Foreign Policy*, (Washington: The Brookings Institute, 1974), David Kozak and James M. Keagle eds. *Bureaucratic Politics and National Security: Theory and Practice*, (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1988) and John Steinbruner, *The Cybernetic Theory of Decision Making: New Dimensions of Political Analysis*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974).

60.1 The structure of national security, defence and foreign policy decision-making in the Indian context

Before proceeding, a brief discussion of the existing literature is in order. In the literature of comparative defence policy, India is often perceived to be one of a number of emerging regional powers. As such India, and other states which have been identified as emerging regional actors, such as Nigeria, Argentina and Egypt, are often included in Western studies which either seek explicitly to identify emerging powers, or which have the alternative aim of comparative analysis of security doctrine.³ Many of these studies call for the construction of a common framework of analysis for assessments of the security positions of states. This inquiry proceeds from the assumption that such studies serve the heuristic purpose of defining the parameters for further research. While a number of studies have been conducted within the decision making framework they have tended to concentrate on a specific issue or event, such as Indian nuclear policy or the 1962 debacle.⁴

To dissect the causal factors behind India's strategic and international posture it is necessary, first to identify the locus of decision making within the government and then to assess those factors which exert an influence on the decision making process. Specific problems with the rational actor, organisational and governmental politics models as outlined by Allison, have been identified by the critical analysis of J. Bender and T.H. Hammond.⁵ While acknowledging the "enormous impact" of Allison's models on the study of bureaucracy and foreign policy making they call for a

³ Rodney Jones and S. Hildreth eds. *Emerging Powers: Defense and Security in the Third World*, (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1984), Stephanie Newman, *Defence Planning in Less-Developed States*, (Lexington: Lexington Books, 1984), D. Murray and P. Viotti, eds. *The Defence Policies of Nations: A Comparative Study*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), O. Marwah and J. Pollack, *Military Power and Policy in Asian States*, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1980) and E. Kolodziej and R. Harkavy eds. *Security Policies of Developing Countries*, (Lexington: Lexington Books, 1982).

⁴ Two excellent studies of this nature are; Ashok Kapur, *India's Nuclear Option: Atomic Diplomacy and Decision Making*, (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1976) and Neville Maxwell, *India's China War*, (Bombay: Jaico Publishing House, 1971).

⁵ J. Bender and T.H. Hammond, "Rethinking Allison's Models," *American Political Science Review*, June 1992, pp. 301-322.

reformulation of the models. This chapter will proceed in a general way from the decision-making literature to analyse India while acknowledging the need for more theoretical inquiries into decision-making theory.

Despite the presence of some interesting and informative works, which take into account the decision making perspective in a broader context, the existing literature provides an incomplete picture of a constantly evolving system.⁶ This inquiry will seek to explore the Indian national security policy process, with emphasis on the decision making structure and the potentiality that the national identity of the decision making elite, will evolve as India emerges from its current transitional state and that this will effect India's external posture. The decision making perspective here taken firstly stresses the structural organisational setting within which decisions are made and secondly the perceptive aspects of the decision makers. In this chapter the decision making process will be assessed, to the extent to which it is possible, from a perspective which seeks to expand understanding of the Indian decision making elites perceptions and their bureaucratic structures and behaviours.

The particular socio-historical experience of India warrants a country specific study approach. While the civil and military institutions of India are rooted deeply in the British imperial past these institutions have been changing and have adapted to the particular circumstances of Indian society and culture. There are a growing number of Indian, American, Canadian, British and Australian academics who have more recently been developing a wider understanding of India's geopolitical situation.⁷

⁶ Jeffrey Benner, *The India Foreign Policy Bureaucracy*, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1985) Raju Thomas, *The Defence of India: A Budgetary Perspective of Strategy and Politics*, (Meerut: Macmillan Company of India, 1978) Michael Brecher, *Succession in India: A Study in Decision Making*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1966) and Sankaran Krishna, *The State, Autonomy and Foreign Policy: An Analysis of India, 1947-87*, PhD dissertation, (Syracuse: Department of Political Science, Syracuse University, 1989) For a further review of the literature on national security policy in India see; K.M. Kamath, "Trends in the Study of National Security, Policy Making and Implementation," *Strategic Analysis*, July, 1991.

⁷ K. Subramanyam, *Security in a Changing World*, (Delhi: B.R. Publishing Co. 1990), Surjit Mansingh, *India's Search for Power: Indira Gandhi's Foreign Policy 1966-82*, (Delhi: Sage Publications, 1984), Raju Thomas, *Indian Security Policy*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), Stephen Cohen, *The Security of South Asia: American and Asian Perspectives*,

The Indian military build-up in the 1980s was the source of much concern and speculation by states of the region. If the critical junctures of the decision making process are identified an understanding of India's changing posture, and future direction within a geopolitical context, will be more apparent.

To limit the scope of inquiry to the official foreign policy, or existent force structures, would severely limit the attempt to gain a meaningful understanding of India as an actor in the international sphere. Other factors associated with India's place and role in world affairs which have an impact on the perceptions of India's decision making elite, such as the political parties and other socio-economic or sub-national groupings as previously discussed, can not be excluded if one is to attempt a holistic understanding of India's international posture.

The locus of Indian government policy decision making in strategic and international affairs is extremely centralised. Its centres can be located in a limited number of governmental ministries, departments and bureaus. The extent to which the driving forces behind the external outputs are centralised is dependent on the nature of the political and bureaucratic leadership who occupy the key positions within the structure and more specifically their relationship with the Prime Minister. The organisational structure of strategic and international affairs decision making generally involves the Ministry of External Affairs, The Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Finance, the Prime Minister and Cabinet, the Cabinet Committee of Political Affairs (CCPA), the National Security Council, and the intelligence organisations.⁸ Decision making is necessarily influenced by the structure within which it takes place as well as by the mind sets of the officials who comprise these bureaucratic organisations. There are obstacles to developing an impression of the values of large numbers of individuals,

(Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1987) and Ross Babbage and Sandy Gordon eds. *India's Strategic Future: Regional State or Global Power?* (London: Macmillan Publishers, 1992).

⁸ The exact status of the National Security Council introduced by the National Front Government of Prime Minister V.P. Singh was, under the Congress Government of Narasimha Rao, undetermined. It is likely that it will remain in disuse.

who also operate as groups with bureaucratic organisational interests, due to the difficulty of gathering more than anecdotal information. Despite this, such inquiry is necessary to attempt a meaningful explanation. The governmental role in determining how and why Indian policy emerges in the manner in which it does will be assessed first and then a discussion of the influence of outside groupings will follow.

60.11 The Prime Minister, the President, Cabinet and the role of Parliament

One of the more salient points to bear in mind when analysing the Indian decision making structure is the wide disparity between the formal and informal channels of power. The whole process, however, is much more informal than any flow chart would suggest. For the most important decisions, "formal institutions give way to personalism."⁹ All governmental systems have this distinction but within the Indian system they are more divergent than is typical of other democratic regimes. Moreover, to minimise opposition to new bureaucratic structures old bodies are allowed to remain despite their redundancy by new organisations and or policies.¹⁰

Excessive secrecy on the part of the Prime Minister, his closest advisers and the CCPA in national security matters is used by the Prime Minister to maintain the subordination of the Parliament and the bureaucratic organisations which play a role in the formulation of national security policy.¹¹ The absence of meaningful political opposition has led to the lack of substantive debate. When alternative viewpoints emerge a more informed and more meaningful debate of India's national security planning and posture will ensue. A lessening of the stature of the Congress party, internal strife, and a changed geopolitical environment may also contribute to a larger debate over external policy.

⁹ Robert Hardgrave, *India Under Pressure: Prospects for political Stability*, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1984), p.136.

¹⁰ As noted above the dismantling of the licence Raj, beginning in 1992, did not initially involve the laying off of any personnel involved in the administration of those regulations.

¹¹ This has been facilitated by the high degree of consensus within India of its perception of place in the international order. This consensus seeks increased independence and status. This consensus desires increased independence and status.

Though largely formal, the powers of the president are quite significant under the Indian Constitution. In exercising his executive, legislative and financial powers the President is to act in accordance with the Council of Ministers. The Council of Ministers includes Cabinet Ministers, Ministers of State and Deputy Ministers. The 42nd Amendment eliminated any ambiguity as to whether the President was bound to heed the advice of the Council of Ministers. In practice the President is subordinate to the Prime Minister and Cabinet, though there are a number of diplomatic, military and national security functions in which the President figures prominently. It is the President's duty to maintain positive relations with other states. In fulfilling this function the president receives diplomatic credentials and makes diplomatic appointments. With regard to the military, the President technically, as supreme commander, is responsible for the appointment of the Chiefs of Staff and the "movement of army both in the disturbed areas to crush anti social elements or to repulse those who have an eye on our national borders, takes place under his instructions."¹² In reality these formal powers fall to the Prime Minister and Cabinet. (see chart at end of chapter)

The president's most significant powers come under articles 352 and 356 of the Constitution. These two Articles pertain to Presidential declarations of emergency both in the country at large and in specific states. Originally under Article 352, the President could declare a national state of emergency for threats of "war, or external aggression or internal disturbance."¹³ In the 44th constitutional amendment the internal disturbances clause was changed to read "armed rebellion."¹⁴ This amendment was in reaction to the abuse of the internal disturbances clause by Indira Gandhi in the emergency declared while she was Prime Minister in 1975. General states of emergency have also been declared during the wars of 1962, 1965 and 1971.¹⁵ Similarly under Article 356 the President can, with the backing of the Council of Ministers, declare a state of emergency in particular

¹² Hans Raj, *The Indian Political System*, p. 130.

¹³ Article 352 of the *Constitution of India*, as unamended.

¹⁴ Article 352 of the *Constitution of India*, as amended by the forty fourth amendment.

¹⁵ Hans Raj, *The Indian Political System*, p. 133.

states. In such cases the governor, who is appointed by the President, rules on behalf of the President.

Theoretically the Parliament can exert control over the Council of Ministers through questions, blocking legislation, adjournment motions, and no confidence votes.¹⁶ Because of the traditional strength of the Congress Party in India, and the Parliamentary structure itself, this has in reality had little effect on the workings of the Council of Ministers or the Cabinet. Party control of Members of Parliament was greatly strengthened by the Anti-Defection Act "which entails disqualification from the membership of the House."¹⁷ The Parliament is further subordinate to the Prime Minister through his powers over the control of the Parliamentary agenda. "All resolutions and bills can be moved only with his approval."¹⁸

Parliamentary oversight is minimal at best and tends to focus on those defence issues, like the Bofors scandal, which can be of political value.¹⁹ The lack of meaningful scrutiny over the process is increasingly becoming a liability for India. Scrutiny, as it exists, emerges through Parliamentary debate, or, more significantly, through the media who are operating at the periphery of the decision making structure with little direct influence over policy. Though estimates of popular acceptance of high profile issues is taken into account, many defence and foreign policy decisions are not raised to the level of awareness in the public forum to exert an influence on the political decision makers. There has been little expansion of legislative oversight, in the areas of defence and foreign affairs. The Indian Parliamentary system lacks an effective committee system for articulating

¹⁶ Hans Raj, *The Indian Political System*, p. 167.

¹⁷ While prohibiting individuals from defecting it does not stop party splits. Hans Raj, *The Indian Political System*, p. 168.

¹⁸ Hans Raj, *The Indian Political System*, p. 185.

¹⁹ In 1988 only 36 of 516 members of the Lok Sabha were present at the opening of debate on the defence appropriation. In 1989 demands totaling 54,000 crore rupees that included defence appropriations, were passed in three minutes. Most MPs are reliant on the media for their information on defence issues. See K. Kunju, "Defence Spending: MPs Not Consulted Only Briefed," *Link*, 8/20/89.

views in the defence and foreign policy areas. The written submissions to Parliamentary inquiries are brief and the debate minimal.²⁰

Through the domestic constraint of public opinion the input of public perceptions of the national image joins elite perceptions of the states image in influencing the decision making process.²¹ The outrage and indignation mounting over cross border support for Indian insurgents continues to have an effect on the way both the elite and the masses perceive India's relations with its neighbours. As a siege mentality mounts, the impetus to lash out will increase. This is already manifesting itself internally as demonstrated by the lack of outrage over extreme and brutal measures being taken against Kashmiris. A closer look at the input of the MEA is in order.

60.12 The Ministry of External Affairs

The Indian foreign policy bureaucracy is largely organized to assist in the implementation of foreign policy as articulated by the Prime Minister and his or her personal advisory group through the Prime Ministers office. The intelligence and assessment input of the MEA to the process through the JIC has been described as insignificant.²² The extent to which there exists any input into the formulative stages of the process rests on the personal rapport of the political Ministers, or the relatively junior Foreign Secretary, with the Prime Minister. The Foreign Secretary, as administrative and

²⁰ Parliamentary debates on the defence budget are one of the most poorly attended legislative activities. J. Elkin and A. Ritzel, "India," p. 526.

²¹ As domestic pressure built over the nature of India's relationship with China in the lead up to the 1962 conflict, Nehru, to protect his political position from accusations that he had been soft on the Chinese, relinquished much of his control over the conduct of the mounting conflict to the Lok Sabha when he decided to make all communications between his government and the Chinese public. In this way domestic pressure asserted itself and began to more narrowly circumscribe the parameters of decision making as public concern mounted over the issue. This was more recently paralleled in the mounting tensions between India and Pakistan in the spring of 1990. Public frustrations over the reinfiltration of Indian Kashmiris, who had been across the border in Pakistani Kashmir for training and assistance, led to a position where Prime Minister V. P. Singh felt obliged to call for the country to be prepared for war based on the assumption that hostilities were imminent. These seemingly bellicose pronouncements are not consistent with V. P. Singh's avowed desire to establish India's relations with its South Asian neighbour on a more amicable basis. In this way he became a captive of the public eye.

²² Maj. Gen. M.L. Popli, "National Intelligence Assessments and Estimates: Whither our Joint Intelligence Committee?" *Indian Defence Review*, 1991, p. 27.

coordinative head of the Ministry, has, due to his career expertise, become increasingly relied upon by the Prime Minister for his opinions as to the feasibility of policy ideas.

The structure and functioning of the Indian foreign policy bureaucracy has been most articulately described by Jeffrey Benner in the following terms.

The Cabinet, which in the British system is a decision-making body, is used in India as a platform for the dissemination of policy decided by the Prime Minister and his or her inner circle of advisers. Therefore, when looking at the Ministerial contribution to foreign policy below the Prime Minister, we are looking at the implementative and interpretative side of policy rather than the stage of its initial formulation.²³

Benner has comprehensively applied the bureaucratic model to the Indian foreign policy process with emphasis on the Ministry of External Affairs. What emerges from this work is a useful schematic of the administrative structure of Indian foreign policy. Benner set out to try to answer the broader question of the nature of the causality of bureaucratic politics and foreign policy. This perspective, while informative on its own, tells only part of the picture. What is left out are the cognitive maps of the decision makers and the broader setting, which set the parameters within which foreign policy is created.²⁴

60.13 The Ministry of Defence, the armed services, and civil-military relations

It is inevitable that those responsible for a state's national security will at times observe the external security environment in such a manner as to ascribe intentions and desires to potential adversaries that are more a function of their insecurities than the intentions of the other. This is a result of the necessity of worst case scenario planning on the part of strategic planners.²⁵ The danger lies in the self-fulfilling tendencies of such plans.

²³ J. Benner, *The Indian Foreign Policy Bureaucracy*, p. 66.

²⁴ Bruce Vaughn, "National Security and Defence Policy Formation and Decision-Making," (Canberra: *Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, Working Paper No. 259, 1992*).

²⁵ By briefly discussing the evolution of the national security and defence decision making structure, this discussion will be set in its historical context. While recognising the

A United States Department of Defense document entitled *Defence Planning Guidance*, which was leaked in March of 1992, indicates that India has been identified as aspiring towards global power status and as having "hegemonic aspirations over the other states in South Asia and the Indian Ocean."²⁶ While it is unlikely that this view is shared by other policy making bodies of the American government it is unsettling. The end of the cold war has allowed the disengagement of the superpowers from the subcontinent. India, as the world's largest democracy, shares a democratic tradition with the West and is potentially in a position to foster regional stability, peace and democratic values in South Asia. Concomitantly beset by fissiparous tendencies, India is itself threatened and as such is suspicious of external influences. Given India's emerging position as a great power it is crucial that it not be unnecessarily alienated by alarmist analysis of its national security posture. India's lack of pronouncements as to its defence posture stems not necessarily from its desires to keep hidden a secret agenda of territorial expansionism but more importantly from a sense of insecurity as to its susceptibility to manipulation by external influences.²⁷

On 24 August 1990, the Cabinet Secretariat issued a resolution from Rashtrapati Bhavan calling for the establishment of a National Security Council. The intent to do so had been outlined in V.P. Singh's National Front election manifesto for the 1989 Lok Sabha elections. The manifesto called for the creation of a National Security Council (NSC) to address the "[t]otal absence of a national security doctrine, ad hoc decision making, and easy resort to importing arms ..." which had "adversely affected the nation's security." In asserting this V. P. Singh accused Rajiv Gandhi's government

difficulties of separating national security policy from foreign policy, the contribution to the formation of national security policy made by the Ministry of Defence, the armed services and intelligence organisations is here emphasised over other actors such as the Ministry of External Affairs and Finance.

²⁶ Susumu Awanohara, "Defence: The Lone Ranger," *The Far Eastern Economic Review*, 3/26/92, p. 11. This document was disclaimed as a product of middle level officers.

²⁷ During the Janata period Charan Singh accused Jagjivan Ram of being a CIA operative while Seymour Hersh has alleged that the CIA contact within the Janata Government was Morarji Desai himself. Tariq Ali, p. 208.

of making India "vulnerable to outside pressures."²⁸ This assessment of the present functioning of the formation of national security policy has been echoed by defence analysts. "We find the defence planning process has yet to get off the ground."²⁹ Working from this perspective, V. P. Singh first raised the issue of reform in the Parliamentary Consultative Committee and Cabinet.³⁰

As proposed in the August resolution, the National Security Council was to be comprised of the Prime Minister as Chairman and the Ministers of Defence, Finance, Home Affairs and External Affairs as members. It was to "serve as a perspective for the shaping of Government policy" in the geostrategic and internal security areas.³¹ The NSC, as proposed, was to be assisted by the establishment of a Strategic Core Group, to be chaired by the Cabinet Secretary and to include representatives of the relevant services and Ministries, who would oversee the "submission of appropriate studies, papers and reports to the National Security Council from the Ministries or other agencies of the government, or from Special Task Forces..." as the Chairman of the council deemed necessary. The special task forces would administratively be attached to the independent secretariat of the NSC and would not be restricted to governmental agencies or departments for

²⁸ This and the previous two quotes are drawn from the 1989 election manifesto. V. P. Singh convener, National Front, *Lok Sabha Elections 1989 Manifesto: Dignity to Nation Commitment to People*, (New Delhi: Poly Print, 1989), pp. 34-6.

²⁹ Manoj Joshi, in R. Babbage and S. Gordon, p. 77. See also K. Subramanyam, "Planning for Security: Blueprint for An Apex Body," *The Business and Political Observer*, 12/20/89 see also Interview with retired Lt. General S.K. Sinha, *Times of India*, "Sinha for Broad Based NSC," 1/6/90 and Manoj Joshi, "Framework for Security Planning," *The Hindu*, 1/29/90 among others.

³⁰ V. P. Singh's statement in the Lok Sabha unedited notes, p. 12054.

³¹ The Cabinet Secretariat Resolution outlined the subject areas to be considered by the Council as follows; (a) external threat scenario; (b) strategic defence policies; (c) other security threats, especially those involving atomic energy, space and high technology; (d) internal security covering aspects such as counter-insurgency, counter-terrorism and counter-intelligence; (e) patterns of alienation likely to emerge within the country, especially with a social, communal or regional dimension; (f) security implications of evolving trends in the world economy on India's economic and foreign policies; (g) external economic threats in areas such as energy, commerce, food and finance; (h) threats posed by transborder crimes such as smuggling and the traffic in arms, drugs and narcotics; (i) evolving a national consensus on strategic and security issues. V. C. Pande, Cabinet Secretary, Government of India (Bharat Sarkar) Cabinet Secretariat (Mantrimandal Sachivalaya) Rashtrapati Bhavan *Resolution No. 50/4/18/88-TS* (New Delhi: August 24th, 1990).

assistance. Furthermore, the head of the newly established NSC Secretariat would have the rank of Secretary to the Government of India.³²

An additional task of the proposed National Security Council was to "increase public awareness on important national security problems with a view to promoting the widest possible consensus within the country on issues affecting the nation's security."³³ To assist in this task the National Security Advisory board was to be established. It was to draw its membership from "among Chief Ministers, Members of Parliament, academics, scientists and persons having rich experience in the administration, armed forces, press and the media."³⁴ Singh's consultations with the Cabinet and the Cabinet Committee on Political Affairs prior to the establishment of the NSC would seem to indicate that he was aware of their possible sensitivity to the prospect of a new decision making structure being established which might undermine the Cabinet's influence in the security area. In a statement before the Lok Sabha Singh further explained that

In our system of the Cabinet way of functioning I want to make it clear that we do not want to make a body which militates against the Cabinet system ... So retaining the Cabinet system, retaining the position of the CCPA, we will want to build this NSC.³⁵

These proposals indicated a desire on the part of the National Front Coalition government of V. P. Singh to redress perceived inadequacies in the national security policy and decision making process without disturbing existing vested interests and thereby jeopardizing the proposal's success.³⁶ His reforms may even have been aimed at establishing a Cabinet decision making system that would have allowed for more than an implementative role for the various governmental organs involved in national security

³² The *Prime Minister's Statement on National Security Council* (New Delhi: Press and Information Bureau, Government of India, August 24th, 1990). This is virtually the same text as the Cabinet Resolution V. C. Pande, Cabinet Secretary.

³³ *Prime Minister's Statement on National Security Council*. 8/24/90.

³⁴ *Prime Minister's Statement on National Security Council*. 8/24/90.

³⁵ V. P. Singh's statement in the Lok Sabha unedited notes, p. 12054.

³⁶ National security policy is discussed as an area separate from defence policy as it takes a more macro level approach to analysis of the overall security of the state.

policy.³⁷ Singh had been closely involved in the national security decision making process. It was from this position within the decision making structure that he resigned from the Congress government of Rajiv Gandhi in order to form the Janata Dal to contest Congress' control of the centre. As such, he had been well placed to perceive its deficiencies and to subsequently make reforms after becoming Prime Minister on the second of December 1989.

The emphasis placed by the National Front on the establishment of the National Security Council in the 1989 election manifesto was dropped in the 1991 manifesto. While the 1991 document is an extension of policies outlined in 1989, it is noteworthy that the National Security Council is not listed as one of the achievements of the first 11 months of office.³⁸

The proposed NSC found support in the Bharatiya Janata Party. In their 1991 election manifesto, *Towards Ram Rajya*, the BJP stated that it sought to "[e]ncourage an educated debate on national strategy as a route to national security strategy" and that it would "[s]et up a National Security Council to institutionalise forward planning" in addition to establishing a "[p]olicy planning committee of experts to formulate long term foreign policy."³⁹ As the proposed NSC was deleted from the 1991 manifesto by the National Front, (the initial architects in 1989), and was proposed yet again in 1991 by the Bharatiya Janata Party the question of concurrence within the opposition on this matter is raised. An examination of the current deficiencies of the system becomes a prerequisite in order to gain an understanding of the fate of V. P. Singh's efforts to reform the national security policy process.⁴⁰

³⁷ V. P. Singh, having become a member of Parliament in July of 1983, took over as Union Finance Minister in December of 1984 leaving in February of 1986 to become Defence Minister.

³⁸ *Dignity to Nation, Commitment to People: National Front Manifesto, Lok Sabha Elections, 1989*, (Delhi: V.P. Singh Publisher, 1989), *An Agenda for the 90s: The National Front Manifesto, Lok Sabha Elections 1991*, (Delhi: V.P. Singh Publisher, 1991).

³⁹ *Towards Ram Rajya: Mid-Term Poll to Lok Sabha, May 1991: Our Commitments*, (New Delhi: Bharatiya Janata Party, 1991), pp. 36-7.

⁴⁰ For a discussion of the preindependence background to defence decision-making see Bruce Vaughn "National Security and Defence Policy Formation and Decision-Making,"

60.131 The post independence decision making structure

The locus of Indian national security policy formation, and indeed all governmental decision-making, is with the Prime Minister and Cabinet.⁴¹ The high degree of centralization in defence and foreign policy decision-making followed the general trend towards centralized government under Indira in the aftermath of the 1977 split between Indira and other Congress leaders. It was as a result of the emergency of 1975 that many leaders turned from Indira. This led her to rely more heavily on her son Sanjay and her personal control of both the party and the government. At this point the democratic organs of the Congress Party, such as the All-India Congress Committee and the Congress Working Committee, began to atrophy.⁴² In this way she imposed a centralized decision-making structure that was responsible to her person directly. This was similarly followed by her son Rajiv.⁴³

Following Indira Gandhi's core group an apex group, known as the Inter Discipline Group (IDG), was formed from the Cabinet. The group was established to deal with intelligence organisations and relevant Ministries as they acted on security issues and, as such, reflected her personalized manner of governance. Indira Gandhi presided over the government of India as though it were her darbar, or court. "This darbar had a stultifying effect on the institutions and administration of India. All power derived from the court in Delhi, but the courtiers often exercised their powers independently."⁴⁴ In an attempt at reorganisation in 1986, the IDG was superseded by the Policy Advisers Group (PAG) which Rajiv Gandhi

⁴¹ The role of the Cabinet has been in decline since June 26th, 1975 when under Article 352 of the Constitution the President declared a state of national emergency at the behest of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi without the advice of the Cabinet or the Council of Ministers for fear of opposition to the move.

⁴² Yogendra Malik, "Indira Gandhi: Personality, Political Power and Party Politics," in Y.K. Malik and D.K. Vajpeyi, *India the Years of Indira Gandhi*, (Leiden: E.J. Brill Publishers, 1988), p.15.

⁴³ At the time of writing not enough information had come to light as to whether or not PM Rao would similarly follow this style of decision-making. His many years of loyal service to the Gandhis may in itself be an indication of the style that he will pursue.

⁴⁴ Mark Tully, *Amritsar: Mrs. Gandhi's Last Battle*, (London: Jonathan Cape Publishers, 1985), p. 219.

subsequently dropped in preference of a more informal ad hoc approach to decision making.⁴⁵ Beyond these lapsed centres of decision making there are three key committees operating at three distinct levels, or tiers of decision making within the government where security concerns are addressed and responses conceptualised. The structure relies on the Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC) to identify possible threat scenarios. Beyond identifying the agenda, the JIC is intended to serve as a channel of communication between the Defence and Foreign Ministries and the intelligence organizations. The committees are, in ascending order, the uniformed-military level, the bureaucratic-secretarial and the politico-ministerial.⁴⁶ Following an overview of the three tier system as it operated during the Indira - Rajiv period will be a discussion of the evolutionary background of the decision-making structure and finally, an assessment of how the proposed NSC would fit within the existing structure.

The lowest, or third tier of Indian defence policy decision making is the uniformed-military level. The Chiefs of Staff Committee acts as the co-ordinating body for the three Chiefs of Staff. The Chiefs of Staff function in two separate roles. When presiding over their respective services they act as largely autonomous operational chiefs of staff. When attending the Chiefs of Staff Committee they act in a more integrated fashion, in an advisory capacity to the Minister of Defence. The Chiefs of Staff Committee is chaired by the most senior of the three Chiefs.

The next tier on the decision making ladder is the bureaucratic-secretarial level. The central committee at this level is the Committee of Defence Planning (CDP) which is chaired by the Cabinet Secretary. An additional six civilian secretaries and the three Chiefs of Staff attend the CDP. The following civilian secretaries attend: the Secretary of Defence, the

⁴⁵ Lt. Gen. E. A. Vas (reted.), "Why We need a Security Council," *Indian Express*, 3/9/90.

⁴⁶ These conceptualizations, and the basis of the diagram at the end of the chapter, are drawn from the three levels of analysis of the defence decision making structure outlined in Raju Thomas, "Defense Planning in India," pp. 248-52. See also Raju Thomas, *The Defence of India: A Budgetary Perspective of Strategy and Politics*, (Meerut: Macmillan Company of India, 1978), pp. 66-100 and Jerrold Elkin and Andrew Ritzel, "India," in D. Murray and P. Viotti, *The Defence Policies of Nations: A Comparative Study*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989) p. 534.

Secretary of Defence Production, the Secretary of External Affairs, the Secretary of the Planning Commission, the Secretary of Finance and the Secretary to the Prime Minister. The ratio between civilian secretaries and military chiefs places the latter at some disadvantage. This is accentuated by the fact that decisions made at the second level must be approved at the first tier where the attendance by the Chiefs is discretionary.

The highest tier is the politico-ministerial level. The Prime Minister chairs the Cabinet Committee on Political Affairs. At this highest level the attendance of the three service Chiefs is by the request of the Prime Minister. In regular attendance are the Ministers of Home, Finance, External Affairs and Defence. As currently operating the CCPA and the Prime Minister's personal advisers have the greatest influence on national security planning.

The decision making apparatus for the formation of national security policy has undergone a series of transformations which have sought to rearrange the organisational structure. These rearrangements have been initiated at times when perceptions indicated that the strategic environment was undergoing, or had undergone, change and that as a result the existing structure was no longer the optimal system.

The political Ministerial structure developed from the Defence Committee of Cabinet (DCC) to the Emergency Committee of Cabinet (ECC) and then on to Cabinet Committee on Political Affairs. The importance of position within the structure should not be underestimated. It is "[t]he organisational framework of the Indian defence decision-making system [that] tends to determine the importance and influence of the actors in the various policy outcomes."⁴⁷

The DCC had fallen into disuse by the 1950s, partly due to the perception that peaceful coexistence with India's neighbours was possible. This perception was shattered by the 1962 border war with China. In response, the Defence Committee of Cabinet was resuscitated and renamed the Emergency Committee of Cabinet (ECC), a morning meeting of the

⁴⁷ Raju Thomas, "Defense Planning in India," in S. G. Newman, *Defense Planning in Less Developed States*, (Lexington: Lexington Books, 1984), pp. 248-9.

Defence Minister, civil servants in the Ministry and the Service Chiefs was established by Defence Minister Krishna Menon's successor Y.B. Chavan, to provide for regular informal contact on defence issues. One of the substantive changes implemented at this time was more effective integration of the Chiefs of Staff who had previously "been given little role in the making of defence policy, [and] were now allowed greater participation."⁴⁸ The ECC was maintained through the 1965 war with Pakistan. By 1967, the 1962 and 1965 wars had begun to take their place in history and the Emergency Committee merged into the newly formed CCPA. This transpired out of a recognition of the interrelationship between internal and external threats to security as was evidenced by Pakistani moves in Kashmir and by Chinese connections to the Nagas, Mizos and Naxalites. It was also at this time that defence plans were integrated with economic plans in one comprehensive national plan.

Strategic issues continued to be dealt with on an ad hoc basis until the Committee of Defence Planning was established in 1979 under the Chairmanship of the Cabinet Secretary. In this way it was hoped that a more diverse range of views would be brought to bear in the formulation of policy while at the same time it would be kept closely under the political control of the Cabinet.

The emphasis placed on the subordination of the uniformed personnel in the formulation of security policy is further reinforced by a number of structural factors. The Ministry of Defence is manned by civil servants and not uniformed personnel and is separate from the three Service Chiefs. In the period after the DCC was renamed the Emergency Committee in 1962, the secretariat providing support was drawn from the civilian wing of the Cabinet Secretariat and not the military wing as previously.⁴⁹ Civilian control of the services is also symbolic. The warrant of precedence is such that ranking generals are below Cabinet officers.⁵⁰ The administrative channels place the Defence Secretary between the Defence

⁴⁸ Raju Thomas, "Defence Planning in India," p. 249.

⁴⁹ A. L. Venkateswaran, "Cabinet Must Have a Defence Panel," *Times of India*, 4/86.

⁵⁰ J. Elkin and A. Ritezal, "India," p. 535.

Minister and the Service Chiefs. In this way the control of the flow of information and decision making is channelled through the civilian Ministry on its way to the Minister and Cabinet. Chief of Staff papers are scrutinized by civilian Under Secretaries as they make their way to the Minister.

There exists some opposition to the near exclusion of the uniformed point of view at the higher levels of decision making amongst elements within the military.

It is undesirable in a modern defence organisation at the national level to divide policy making and policy implementation into separate watertight compartments. Political policy makers of Defence and the military establishment should have an integrated mechanism for decision making available to them.⁵¹

Lt. General Sinha goes on to describe the relationship as a "master - supplicant" one in which "military officers have become progressively more isolated from the process of decision making."

While the subordination of the military staff to the civilian ministries, when taken to the extreme of excluding or minimising their input, may be detrimental to the effective formulation of national security policy, it is understandable in the context of the fate of democracy in other South Asian states. That said, a distinction should be made between the bureaucratic and the political.

While the Indian military's reputation for not meddling in the realm of politics is laudable, there are some indications that this record is less than impeccable. It has been suggested in Pakistan, and by at least one significant Indian strategic analyst, that India was close to being involved in a war which its political leaders had no intention of initiating. This Ravi Rikhye has labelled the war that never was.⁵² Rikhye has proposed that General Sundarji, then Chief of Army Staff, staged the massive military exercise

⁵¹ Lt. Gen. S. K. Sinha, "Higher Defence Organisation in India," p. 29.

⁵² Ravi Rikhye, *The War That Never Was*. It should be noted that this theory is a contentious one.

Operation Brass Tacks in December of 1986 in such a way as to be indistinguishable from an actual mobilization for an attack on Pakistan⁵³ and that this was done without sanction from the political authorities in Delhi.

Whether out of a fear of the military or out of a desire to directly control the process, the trend in national security planning has been away from uniformed input into the decision making process and towards continued subordination of the overall process to the will of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. After independence, the service Chiefs were regularly involved in the DCC. After 1962 this began to decline. This trend has continued with the current incarnation of the Defence Committee/Emergency Committee as the CCPA. Proposals from the Defence Ministry thus do not have to originate or be channelled through the service staffs. Under this system, the committees set up at independence, which had service representation, have largely been cut out of the loop of decision making in strategic matters. At its conception the locus of defence decision making was in the Defence Committee of the Cabinet and the Defence Ministers Committee. Now defence decision making is primarily located with the Prime Minister's Office, the CCPA and within the civilian controlled Ministry of Defence.

At various times proposals have been mooted for reform at each of the three levels of defence decision making. At the third tier, the proposal that Chief of Defence Staff be established to provide increased input to the military perspective in the formulation of defence plans and also to more effectively co-ordinate operations and relations between the services, has not met with success. There is a lack of integrated force employment doctrine between the services with co-ordination often depending on the personal rapport between Chiefs. In the lead up to the 1965 war with Pakistan, the Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee had anticipated an attack but

⁵³This thesis is supported by Seymour Hersh "... there was evidence that General Sundarji, with the encouragement of some of the more hawkish elements in the Indian government, had toyed briefly with the possibility of simply moving his armies, which had gone into the field with extra fuel and ammunition, across the border and dismembering Pakistan." "On the Nuclear Edge," p. 59.

thought it unnecessary to inform the other services because he perceived it to be an army matter. Likewise, the airforce is more interested in counter air operations than in ground support sorties.⁵⁴ Each of the services is independently responsible for the development of its own doctrine. As a result, there is a problem of coordination.⁵⁵

To keep the military itself divided is to lessen the possibility of a military coup. This said, the tradition to uphold democratic values runs high in the Indian military. The military has generally only reluctantly become involved in domestic actions, such as *Operation Blue Star*,⁵⁶ preferring to let the increasing numbers of paramilitary forces deal with such domestic threats to security as arise. It has been recognised that the defence budget is structured to allow the Finance Ministry a measure of control over the Defence Ministry and the service chiefs. The Directorate of Defence Planning was originally established to reconcile the services wish list with the budget.⁵⁷

Despite the revisions of the national security policy structure, it is still felt by many that the planning process lacks expertise, long range vision and the ability to discuss India's security needs in a timely and meaningful manner. The proposal for a NSC was first unsuccessfully suggested to Indira Gandhi in 1980. Since, the National Security Council has increasingly been proposed as that body which can act as an integrative and centralized repository of strategic thinking for the country and thereby redress the ills of the present system. The reason why the National Front was unsuccessful in its attempt to reform national security policy formation stems from both bureaucratic and political opposition to the proposal.

⁵⁴ J. Elkin and A. Ritzel, "India," p. 534.

⁵⁵ J. Elkin and A. Ritzel, "India," p. 531.

⁵⁶ As a result of the storming of the golden Temple in Amritsar in 1984 five battalion sized units of Sikhs mutinied. This caused some to call for the disbanding of such regionally formed regiments. Ironically it was the Sikhs' loyalty to the British that had led to the large disproportionate numbers in the army after the mutiny of 1857.

⁵⁷ Former head of Defence Production and Head of the Institute for Defence Studies and Analysis, K. Subramanyam, as put forward in Raju Thomas, "Defense Planning in India," p. 251. See also Manoj Joshi, "Direction in India's Defence and Security Policies," in R. Babbage and S. Gordon, *India's Strategic Future*, p. 77.

What does seem to be agreed on by those within the security policy decision making elite is that, as currently constructed, the structure of decision making does not allow for integrated planning until issues are articulated at the highest decision making levels. The dynamics of Cabinet Committees reflect this. In the Cabinet Committee "officials speak only when spoken to."⁵⁸ The tradition of the Cabinet Committee on Defence issues has been to deal "with just one proposal and wait for its aye or nay."⁵⁹ In this way the expertise of subordinate planning secretariats, ministries and staffs are not utilised as effectively as they might otherwise be, with their role being increasingly relegated to post decision planning for implementation rather than pre-decision planning in the sense of identifying possible options.⁶⁰

60.132 National security policy and defence plans

There are those who challenge the very idea as to whether or not India does in fact have a macro level national security policy.⁶¹ The general dearth of debate or government pronouncements on the topic do little to dissuade analysts otherwise.⁶² Despite the lack of explicit policy or the

⁵⁸ K. Subramanyam, "Planning for Security."

⁵⁹ Inder Malhotra, "Policy Making on Defence," *Times of India*, 1/26/84.

⁶⁰ General Sundarji proposed a Cabinet Committee for National Security to address many of the same problems that the National Security Council was to rectify. The key difference with his proposal is that it does not appear to pose the same threat to the control of the process by the Cabinet while managing to bring uniformed and other expertise closer to the centre of decision making. In light of the existing intransigence to the currently conceived NSC, a proposal such as Sundarji's, which takes care not to offend existing political and bureaucratic interests, may succeed where the NSC proposal has failed.

⁶¹ "There has never been any such thing as a national security policy or a national security doctrine in India ... In the system prevailing there has been a tendency to avoid strategic planning." Manoj Joshi, "Framework for Security Planning," *The Hindu*, 1/29/90. Air Commodore Jasjit Singh has in a similar vein posed the question "... it does seem surprising that after more than four decades of independence we are faced with the question do we actually plan for our national security?" Air Commodore Jasjit Singh, "Holistic Approach to Security," *The Hindu*, 2/20/90. Further adding to the discussion is K. Subramanyam, "There has never been a white paper on defence issued in India in the last 37 years. The Cabinet is not known to have discussed a long term strategy at any time. The two groups set up to review defence requirements in 1972 and 1974 carried out mostly budgetary exercises." K. S. Subramanyam, "Commentary: Evolution of Defence Planning in India," in Stephanie Newman, *Defence Planning in Less Industrialised States*, (Lexington: Lexington Books, 1984), p. 273.

⁶² There are a few significant non-governmental publications in India that deal in a substantive manner with defence and security issues which, due to the high percentage of

presence of an efficiently operating decision making structure, a minimal apparatus for the articulation of national security policy does exist. What seems to be the case is that, with the exception of the Defence Ministers morning meeting, these minimal structures have been allowed to lapse to the extent where the above proposition, that India does not have a national security policy, is in actuality the case.⁶³ This is not to say that threat identification or defence planning is not conducted but that there is very little co-ordination or focussed thinking in the macro perspective of national security policy.

As mentioned above the instruments of Cabinet decision making on national security policy have become increasingly informal. This informal process has led, to a large extent, to the ad hoc approach operating within the CCPA.⁶⁴ The effective operation of an organ for national security policy planning such as the NSC, would threaten this existing arrangement by handling issues effectively. What exists beyond the CCPA and its handling of national security issues is defence planning, where the JIC identifies threats for which the service headquarters establish operational contingency plans. Even these defence planning structures are very small.

The formal operational channels hold the Joint Intelligence Committee responsible for identifying the national security policy agenda. The agenda, as presented to the CCPA, seems in actuality not to follow the formal lines but to be set in an ad hoc fashion by the directors of the Intelligence Bureau and the Research and Analysis Wing through their direct access to the Prime Minister. The Joint Secretary, who chairs the Joint Intelligence Committee, has not enjoyed similar access to the Prime Minister.⁶⁵

former defence personnel and/or sequestered active military personnel, can be seen as having insight into official thinking on the defence debate. These are the long established *Journal of the United Services Institute*, the journal of the Institute of Defence Studies and Analysis, *Strategic Analysis*, and the more recent *Indian Defence Review*.

⁶³ Air Commodore Jasjit Singh, "Holistic Approach to Security," *The Hindu*, 2/20/90.

⁶⁴ Lt. Gen. E. A. Vas (ret'd.), "Why We Need a Security Council," *Indian Express*, 9/3/90.

⁶⁵ Within this context of a seemingly reactive security policy, which one might arguably assert does not constitute a policy at all, the extent to which a forward thinking on national

National security policy planning within the Ministry of Defence is handled by the Strategic Planning Group which has been described as "another of the numerous high sounding mechanisms of little consequence."⁶⁶ Though commentators seem to be unified in their criticism of the ability of the Indian national security policy process to provide proactive thinking, the extent and depth to which the national security policy is articulated is unknown. This is due to the limited debate, the ad hoc personalized nature of the Prime Minister and national security policy, and the high levels of secrecy surrounding defence related issues. It is therefore difficult to guess whether the process produces national security thinking which is ineffectual or whether it simply is a reactive process responding to the national security problems of the day.

The extent to which the government does attempt to articulate a public national defence policy is presented periodically in its *Ministry of Defence Annual Reports*. This is of limited value as a means of gaining insight into the content of the larger national security policy. Indeed even at the level of defence planning, issues are discussed only in very general terms.

India's overall policy is of building friendly relations with all countries, and especially her neighbours, on a basis of mutual respect for territorial integrity, sovereignty, and non-interference in each others internal affairs. Our defence policy is aimed at protecting our borders from any external aggression or threat of aggression. We have no designs on the territory of any other country and have not ever in the past committed aggression against any country.⁶⁷

The utility of these general announced objectives for ascertaining the substance of Indian national security policy is marginal. Further inquiry into the nature of national security policy in India, beyond an analysis of the

security exists, to which the defence plans are designed, is uncertain, though one would assume that the service chiefs would be given some indication of national security perceptions by the political leadership. Further their plans would reflect a degree of their own perceptions.

⁶⁶ B. S. Raghavan, "Security Policy Planning."

⁶⁷ *Ministry of Defence Annual Report 1969-70*, (Delhi: Government of India Press, 1970), p. 1.

structure of decision making, must then stem from an analysis of India's evolving demonstrated posture which has undergone a number of transitions since independence that have adjusted to, or sought to adjust, to changes in its international position. At this second level of inquiry it is difficult to ascertain the extent to which the decision making structure, below the office of the Prime Minister, has had an impact on India's behaviour. The picture that does emerge is one dominated by the Prime Minister and his or her close advisers.

Former Defence Secretary Shri P.V.R. Rao, pointed out in a lecture at the United Services Institute

There has been a correspondingly increasing realization of the importance of a study in depth of defence policy proper, but the veil of secrecy, which surrounds defence preparations and the consequent dearth of data, has acted as a handicap.⁶⁸

While the strategic situation has additional layers of complexity since P.V.R. Rao's remarks in 1973 the same problems persist. Defence correspondent and strategic analyst Manoj Joshi has recently pointed out that "[t]raditionally the public and even the Parliament have tended to ignore issues relating to national security, content to allow the executive to take the lead."⁶⁹

It is possible that this lack of substantive debate over security and defence issues can be explained by a high degree of consensus on defence issues, though the departures of the Janata period and the more recent shifts in India's external orientation would indicate that it has been the Gandhi-Nehru dynasty's Congress party control of government which has led to the lack of meaningful discussion of strategic issues. During the Janata period India's strategic outlook was modified somewhat on at least three levels.⁷⁰

⁶⁸ P.V.R. Rao, *India's Defence Policy and Organisation Since Independence*, (New Delhi: The United Services Institution, 1977), p. 8.

⁶⁹ Manoj Joshi, "Framework for Security Planning," *The Hindu*, 1/29/90.

⁷⁰ A number of debates in the Lok Sabha highlight out the differences in the Janata governments approach to security issues in the international context. For an example see the comments of External Affairs Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee *Lok Sabha Debates*, 3/20/79 cols. 274-99.

These were the areas of the proper interpretation of non-alignment, and its implications for strategic planning, nuclear policy and arms procurement strategies.⁷¹ During the Janata period it was felt that India tilted too far to the Soviet camp for a policy of true non-alignment.

The defence plans and national security are discussed by the government only in the most general terms in the open literature in the *Ministry of Defence Annual Report* and the annual *Military Yearbook*, though further information can be obtained from the *Lok Sabha Debates* and the *Defence Service Estimates*. The Year-book describes the plans as "projecting future probable scenarios with a greater measure of reliability and seeks to harmonise and integrate the activities of the various units.." with emphasis being placed on "strategy, operational imperatives, intelligence appreciation, and political judgement."⁷² India has yet to issue a white paper on defence.⁷³ The operational plans take on two key tasks. The first is a determination of the national defence resources. The second task is the assessment of how those resources will be allocated. As stated in the *Ministry of Defence Annual Report: 1981-83* "[t]hese plans are drawn up on the basis of projected requirements of the services with reference to an overall assessment of the strategic environment, national policies and available resources."⁷⁴ Further detail is generally not forthcoming.⁷⁵

Systematic defence planning was initiated with a five year defence plan in 1964. This first five year plan effectively doubled the army and air force to 825,000 troops and 45 squadrons respectively. The construction of

⁷¹ Raju Thomas, "Indian Defence Policy: Continuity and Change Under the Janata Government," *Pacific Affairs*, summer 1980.

⁷² Sukhdeo Prasad Baranwal, ed. *Military Yearbook: Twenty-first Year of Issue*, (Delhi: Guide Publications, 1989), p. 197.

⁷³ As of mid 1992 the last security review reported took place in 1980 in reaction to the invasion of Afghanistan. Manoj Joshi, Seminar on Nuclear and Missile Capabilities given at the Australian National University, 12/92. Defence planning has been described as nothing more than "... a farce: ... Each defence plan is nothing but an aggregate of the maximum, and often deliberately inflated, demands of each of the three services." Inder Malhotra, "Policy Making on Defence," *Times of India*, 1/26/84.

⁷⁴ *Ministry of Defence Annual Report 1982-83*, (Delhi: Government of India Press, 1970), p. 4.

⁷⁵ S.P. Barnawal, p. 197 The information contained in the *Military Yearbook* can generally be obtained from a reading of the annual *Ministry of Defence Reports*..

border roads and efforts to improve the structure of defence organisation and the self sufficiency in arms production were also undertaken. It is estimated that the cost of this build-up totalled some \$US 10 billion.⁷⁶ This effort was directed by the DCC with responsibilities being

... shared functionally between the National Defence Council and the specialized Defence Research and Development Council. By 1965, a high level Defence Planning Cell was created to deal with all wider aspects of planning that have a bearing on defence in both the medium and long term aspects.⁷⁷

The 1964-69 plan was followed by the second five year plan to cover the period 1969-74 which was funded at the same rate of \$US 10 billion. Changes in defence planning caused this second five year plan to be revised in 1970 with a third five year plan to cover the period 1970-75. Further this was adapted after the 1971 war for the period 1974-79 ⁷⁸ This third defence plan of 1974-9 was also funded at the level of \$US10 billion.⁷⁹ The changed strategic situation after the 1971 war led to a revised plan for 1974-79. The 1974-79 plan was in turn replaced by the 1979-84 plan, itself reviewed in 1981-2. At this point it was thought a good idea to make the defence plans coterminous with the National Plan of 1980-85. This plan was superseded by the 1985-90 plan. ⁸⁰

The Defence Plan is presided over by the Defence Secretary through the Defence Plan Coordination and Implementation Committee. This committee also acts as the middle ground between the services and the departments in the Ministry itself. The plan is up-dated annually. The staff of the Defence Planning Committee is drawn from the three services, the Defence Research and Development Organisation and the Ministries of External Affairs and Finance. The degree of expertise in establishing realistic

⁷⁶ Onkar Marwah, "India's Military Power and Policy," in O. Marwah and J. Pollack eds. *Military Power and Policy in Asian States: China, India and Japan*, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1980), p.124.

⁷⁷ Marwah, "India's Military Power and Policy," p. 124.

⁷⁸ S.P. Baranwal, *Military Yearbook*, p. 197.

⁷⁹ Marwah, "India's Military Power and Policy," p. 125.

⁸⁰ S.P. Baranwal, *Military Yearbook*, p. 197.

expectations is put in doubt by reports emanating from within the armed forces. There are leaks that the Navy is, as of 1992, still trying to meet goals set forth in the first plan.⁸¹

60.133 Civil military relations

The interplay between the civil authorities and the military hierarchy is an important dynamic of the overall functioning of the decision making process as it establishes the country's national security posture. As India has in the last decade been beset by a multiplicity of fissiparous tendencies two particular dynamics have arisen with regard to the relationship between civil and military authority. The political leadership has, as a result of the increase of internal tensions, found itself more reliant on the military to maintain law and order within the country. As the civil authorities have developed this dependency they have sought to increase their political control out of a fear of losing that control. The following section will examine the dynamic of civil-military relations. The first, and most salient issue is an assessment of the relative degrees of influence between the civil and military authorities. An attempt to identify some of the various structural decision making factors that influence planning will also be undertaken.

India was fortunate at independence to have the stability provided by the Congress party, Nehru's individual stature and the Indian Civil Service. These three institutions created the crucial space for democratic traditions to establish themselves in India without falling prey to a military coup as they so often did in newly independent countries. Indeed "[a]lmost no government on the marrow of independence was institutionally as well prepared as India was for self government."⁸² An additional factor that served to minimise the Army's status at partition was their involvement, not as part of the freedom struggle, but as part of the state apparatus that was trying to maintain order under the old regime. The military's early participation in the actions in Junagadh, Hyderabad and Kashmir, and its

⁸¹ Manoj Joshi, in R. Babbage and S. Gordon, *India's Strategic Future*, p. 77.

⁸² Veena Kukreja, *Civil-Military Relations in South Asia*, (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1991), p. 186.

unquestioned support of independent India's objectives, did much to rehabilitate their image.⁸³ The Indian Navy had established its nationalist credentials on 19 February, 1946 when 20,000 sailors on 74 ships and 20 shore installations in Bombay mutinied.⁸⁴ As a result of these factors India has been a less militarized society than other developing nations. India's regular military participation percentage is .16% as opposed to Pakistan's .48%. India's defence expenditure has, at less than 4% of gross domestic product, been considerably lower than other states.⁸⁵

The particular martial values of Hinduism, which are to protect the existing order rather than to establish or to define what that order is to be, are not defined by the military. That function is left to other segments of society. Veena Kukreja has posited that "military interventions look as absurd against a Hindu background as they look natural in West Asia where ... the military coup becomes a holy mission"⁸⁶ acting as the guardian of the religion as well as the state. That said, Hindu fundamentalist groups may wish to bestow upon the military greater status. The BJP's pro nuclear stance and support for reform of the National Security Council initiative when coupled with their militant rhetoric could produce such a result.⁸⁷

The tension set between the political and military control of the armed forces of the modern Indian state has its origins in colonial India. The issue of civilian control over the armed forces was blurred by the private nature of the army of the East India company. As crown forces and presence increased the issue became more critical. This tension culminated with the

⁸³ Glynn L. Wood, "Civil Military Relations in Post Colonial India," in Edward Olsen and Stephen Jurika, Jr. *The Armed Forces in Contemporary Asian Societies*, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1986), p. 271.

⁸⁴ Tariq Ali, *An Indian Dynasty: The Story of the Nehru-Gandhi Family*, (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1985), pp. 71-2.

⁸⁵ V. Kukreja, *Civil-Military Relations in South Asia*, pp. 199-200. During the period 1962-1986 Indian defence spending averaged 3.256% of GDP.

⁸⁶ V. Kukreja, *Civil-Military Relations in South Asia*, pp. 206-7.

⁸⁷ While this seems to be the more likely policy direction it should be noted that Jan Sangh Foreign Minister A.B. Vajpayee did not introduce such a policy direction. See also Stephen Cohen, "Civilian Control of the Military in India," in Claude Welch, Jr. *Civilian Control of the Military: Theory and Cases from Developing Countries*, (Albany: State University of New York, 1976) p. 55.

establishment of political control over the military as a result of the Kitchner-Curzon dispute of 1905. In this dispute Kitchner displaced the civilian Curzon thereby triggering a reaction that ensured an ascendant position of the civilian over the military authorities.⁸⁸

Despite operational defence planning having been the domain of the Chiefs of staff (while the formation of national strategy has increasingly become the domain of the Prime Minister and Cabinet) "politicians and civilian bureaucrats have not hesitated to ignore military advice in specific instances."⁸⁹ Increasingly the military planning staff's are losing their planning role to the civilian Ministry of Defence and the politicians. Whereas the "operational directive is laid down by the political leadership the actual planning of operations [was] left to the chiefs of staff."⁹⁰ Apparently even this planning function has been somewhat eroded from the Chiefs of staff and taken over by the Ministry of Defence. This is one of the more recent manifestations of the political agenda which seeks to maintain absolute control over the armed forces. Since this incident the level of influence and prestige of the military in India's strategic and foreign policy has steadily declined with its role being most significantly reduced after independence.

This devaluing of the institutional position of the armed forces in India has been an on-going process since independence. While India has suffered on the battlefield from a lack of effective uniformed input into the national security and defence planning process it has managed to save its democratic institutions and the rule of law from the ravages of prolonged military rule, as has been the case with Pakistan, through its non-involvement in political matters.⁹¹

⁸⁸ S. Cohen, "Civilian Control of the Military in India," p. 45.

⁸⁹ S. Cohen, "Civilian Control of the Military in India," p. 55.

⁹⁰ P.R. Chari, "Civil-Military Relations of India," *Link*, 8/15/77 as quoted in V. Kukreja, "Civil Military Relations," p. 211.

⁹¹ During the Raj, the Commander in Chief ranked second behind the Viceroy in the order of precedence. The Constitution of 1950 formally made the President, and in actuality the PM, the supreme commander of the armed forces. By 1955 the office of Commander in Chief was eliminated and as a result the military lost its representation in Cabinet. The Chiefs of Air and Naval Staff were placed on an equal footing with the Army Chief of Staff as a further check on the power of any individual. Within this structure the role of the Ministry of

The process of centralization of policy formation in defence and national security areas is parallel to that with regard to foreign affairs and, as a result, is one of the most centralised national security decision making processes in a democratic country. The military does maintain a larger degree of autonomy than the MEA due to its size and the necessity of more specialised expertise to understand the realm of the operationally possible. The military has also used such rearguard tactics as leaks to opposition party members to air its views.⁹²

Another factor which minimises the military's input is the prominence which the Finance Adviser is given. Kukreja has observed that, in addition to expressing his/her opinion as to the overall amount of the budget which will be allocated to the military, the Finance Adviser is responsible for the preparation of the Defence Service Estimates. The institutional position of the Finance Adviser, who is a member of the Ministry of Finance, is to do this with "a single minded devotion to economy."⁹³

Despite the centre's efforts to keep the military out of the political process, mounting internal turmoil increasingly forces it to rely on the military to support its authority. It is this over reliance that may precipitate the politicisation of the military if it is allowed to continue unabated. During the period 1951 to 1970 the military was deployed in support of the political authority on 476 occasions for an annual average of 25 times. During the years 1982-3, 1983-4 and 1984-5 they were deployed 82, 96 and 175 times respectively.⁹⁴ These deployments further have a detrimental effect on morale and organisational integrity. Their increased use indicates that

Defence is dominant over the uniformed service Chiefs of Staff due to the Ministry's access to the relevant meetings of the CCPA and the increasing use of the Secretary in the defence planning area.

⁹² Krishna Menon's performance as Defence Minister was criticised in Parliament with information which was leaked from within the military bureaucracy. C.P. Bhambhri, *Bureaucracy and Politics in India*, (Delhi: Vikas Publications, 1971), p. 267.

⁹³ V. Kukreja, "Civil Military Relations," p. 212.

⁹⁴ Stephen Cohen, "The Military and Indian Democracy," in Atul Kohli, *India's Democracy: An Analysis of Changing State-Society Relations*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), p. 124 and V. Kukreja, "Civil Military Relations," p. 200.

the paramilitary forces are not able to deal with the mounting tensions alone.

One of the ironies is that while the military has exercised restraint and remained aloof from a desire to become embroiled in politics it has simultaneously been delegated a dramatically increased politico-administrative role by the political authorities in the disturbed areas such as Punjab, Assam and Kashmir. Military rule has been established in these areas under several pieces of legislation including the Armed Forces Special Powers Act of 1956, the National Security Act of 1980, the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act of 1967 and the Terrorists Affected Areas Act of 1984. While the existing subordinate relationship of the military to the civil authorities does not pose a direct threat to the civil liberties of India's citizens that would result from a military coup, it does threaten civil liberties in that the inability of the civil administration is increasingly leading to situations of de facto marshal law. Part of the professional duties of a District Commander are now to have a

complete knowledge of local politics ... to recite with precision the functions, interests, and objectives of each local political, religious, or other interest group. In this he is supported by the military's own intelligence services and close liaison with police and civilian bureaucracies.⁹⁵

Despite the evolved structure, which has effectively subordinated the military to political authority, a number of factors are raising discontent within the military. Decreases in status, pay, housing, post service employment and political interference in appointments, in addition to the increased use of the army in internal disturbances have all had a deleterious effect on morale and have adversely affected the military's perception of the politico-bureaucratic structure to which it is subordinate. Over 75% of the 60,000 servicemen that retire each year are unemployed.⁹⁶ Frustration continues within the military over the lack of interest among politicians over the proposal for the creation of the position of Chief of Defence Staff.

⁹⁵ S. Cohen, "The Military and Indian Democracy," p. 124.

⁹⁶ Amar Zutshi, "The Indian Military: Justice Denied," *India Today*, 6/29-7/5/91 p. 17.

This was exacerbated by the proposed NSC which equated the Service Chiefs with the Chief of the Intelligence Bureau. Much of the military's frustration stems not from being subordinate to political authority but to being subordinate to bureaucratic authority.

Wing Commander Amar Zutshi has expressed the view that "[t]he resentment which is gathering momentum and assuming serious proportions, could destroy the apolitical character of the military."⁹⁷ The politicisation of the military may also be effected by the differing recruitment base of the officer corp. In the early period following independence the existing status of the military attracted the sons of the elite into its ranks. With the decline of status and conditions the elite now seek to enter the private sector or the Indian Administrative Service which afford greater chances of material success and advancement than the military. Currently less than ten percent of commissioned officers sons follow them into the military. The largest source of recruits into the National Defence Academy and the Indian Military Academy are the sons of non-commissioned officers and junior commissioned officers. This has had the effect of broadening the socio-political background. While minimising the political implications of this shifting recruitment base Stephen Cohen has speculated that "... when the officer corp is both professional and drawn from the lower middle class, the military becomes increasingly sensitive to lateral pressures from a materialistic society and to pressures from above."⁹⁸ The one group which is resisting this trend, due to their tradition of martial values, is the Sikh community. Sikhs constitute 20% of the officers and roughly two percent of the total armed forces.⁹⁹ The disproportional recruitment of Sikhs into the military is being curtailed as a result of suspicions of their loyalty in the wake of *Operation Bluestar*.¹⁰⁰ Overall, the mediocritisation of the calibre of the officer corp will lead to an officer corp that will be less motivated by ideals of

⁹⁷ Amar Zutshi, "The Indian Military," p. 16.

⁹⁸ S. Cohen, "The Military and Indian Democracy," p. 107.

⁹⁹ See *The Economist*, 6/16/84 as referenced in S. Cohen, "The Military and Indian Democracy," p. 133.

¹⁰⁰ In that operation the primary Sikh holy temple, the Golden Temple, was stormed by the Indian Army to rout Sikh militants. In reaction about 2,000 Sikhs mutinied.

nation building which its predecessors had. This will make it more open to outside pressures.

A certain degree of debate about the position and future direction of the military in Indian society and politics remains. In contrast to Cohen and Kukreja, Wood perceives that "[p]oliticians and bureaucrats appreciate fully the utility of a strong military in maintaining India's position in foreign affairs." Wood continues by asserting that as a result "the military is treated rather well in perquisites, budgeting, and status."¹⁰¹ The notion that the military is appreciated and that they will remain content is discredited by Cohen and Wing Commander Zutshi, among others.

A further debate remains as to whether the issues of contention concerning the military's status and influence in the decision making structure will, when coupled with the dramatically increased use of the military in support of the civil authority, have the effect of politicizing the military to the degree that it degenerates to the point that it sees itself as a more viable alternative than corrupt and ineffectual governments. This is contingent on the amount of social dislocation and frustration that will develop as India undergoes economic reform, continued social change and secessionist and autonomous pressures. If these stresses have the effect of further weakening the centre, the opportunity for the politicisation of the military will rise dramatically. Given that the necessity of using the military to assist the paramilitary forces in support of the civilian authorities is not likely to diminish, addressing the other issues of political interference in command appointments, status, pay, pensions, housing, and influence in the formation and implementation of defence doctrine will serve to make the Indian military more robust in resisting mounting pressures to become involved in politics. In this way the policies of extreme subordination of the military to preserve democracy in India may be counter-productive if taken too far.

¹⁰¹ Wood, "Civil Military Relations in Post Colonial India," p. 276.

60.14 The Intelligence Community

The use of espionage was codified and accepted in ancient India. The word spy is itself a cognate of the Sanskrit word *spas* "one who beholds, a watcher, a spy."¹⁰² Espionage is discussed in the revered ancient texts including the Rgveda, Ramayana, Mahabharata, Puranas and Artha-vedas as being necessary to maintain the *rta* and *dharma* of Hindu society.

While Nandan loyalists and Macedonian sympathizers threatened Chandragupta Maurya's rule¹⁰³ a new set of internal and external threats faces India today. It is unfortunate that the modern Indian state seems to be returning to the Kautilyan monarch's position that suspicion of public servants and citizens necessitates their scrutiny by an intelligence apparatus which is increasingly focused on its own people.

Concern has been expressed over a range of issues that are threatening the contemporary Indian polity. Communalist violence, Hindu fundamentalism, centre-state tensions, inter-caste disharmony, economic reform, secessionist and autonomous movements and threats emanating from beyond India's borders are all undermining India's security by pulling apart India's social cohesion. Another equally disturbing threat to the security of Indian citizens is the way in which India's intelligence agencies are functioning. A survey of the development of India's intelligence agencies and a discussion of their operation within a broadened conceptualization of security, evaluating the intelligence agencies performance, not only from the perspective of their role in promoting India's legitimate national interests vis a vis other states, but also within the context of how they are increasingly utilized by the vested interests of the political authorities, will highlight the intelligence organs role in the decision making process. There are signs that through their operations and recommendations the intelligence agencies are seeking to set policy rather

¹⁰² S.D. Trivedi, *Secret Services in Ancient India: Techniques and Operation*, (Delhi: Allied Publishers, 1984), p. xi.

¹⁰³ Bhasker Anand Saletore, *Ancient Indian Thought and Institutions*, (London: Asia Publishing House, 1963).

than merely implement or provide policy alternatives. This represents a further substantial threat to Indian individual's civil liberties and the democratic process itself.

An appreciation of the need for an effective intelligence network did not emerge until after India had suffered for its ignorance at the hands of its rivals in both the 1962 conflict with China and the 1965 war with Pakistan. In both cases India had extremely poor intelligence on China's and Pakistan's designs and capabilities. While some reforms have been implemented in an effort to improve India's collection and analysis of strategic intelligence, intelligence efforts continue to be diverted from external threats to the domestic purposes of the politicians who control the intelligence apparatus.

Unfortunately the political masters have been happiest using or misusing the intelligence agencies against their political opponents in a manner that would be considered not just scandalous but treasonable in most democratic countries.¹⁰⁴

The legitimate functioning of the intelligence agencies has as a result suffered due to their redirection to illegitimate duties.

In recent years India has been expanding its intelligence organisation network. (see chart at end of chapter) In addition to the Joint Intelligence Committee, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), the Intelligence Bureau, and the Research and Analysis Wing there are now also the National Security Guard (NSG), the Special Protection Group (SPG), the Directorate of Enforcement (DE) and the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRE).¹⁰⁵ RAW was established in 1968 when it was decided to split the IB

¹⁰⁴ Manoj Joshi in R. Babbage and S. Gordon, *India's Strategic Future*, pp. 87-8.

¹⁰⁵ The precursor of the existing Indian intelligence organisations, the British Special Branch, was established in 1887 to deal with thugerees. The Thugs were a religious organisation of robbers and assassins. The NSG was established as a special anti-terrorist commando force which has subsequently been diverted to the protection of VVIPs. They have been deployed in such operations as Operation Black Thunder at the Golden Temple in Amritsar. See Mark Tully, *No Full Stops in India*, (New Delhi: Penguin Books, 1991), pp. 153 - 180. The SPG is delegated the responsibility of protecting the Prime Minister and was based on the American Secret Intelligence Service. The exact position of these more recent organisations within the overall structure is not clear.

into internal and external operational sections. RAW, which at its inception in 1968 had a budget of two crore,¹⁰⁶ has more recently been estimated to have a Rs 500 crore budget while the IB has been allocated Rs 20 crore.¹⁰⁷ RAW's external operational sphere seems to include areas such as Assam and Tamil Nadu as well as internal political intelligence support for the Prime Minister. The implications of the expanded profile of the intelligence organisations indicate more government intrusion into the affairs of its citizens and the increased use of the intelligence services for the purposes of their political overlords. RAW has been described as the "personal instrument of the Indian Prime Minister."¹⁰⁸ The use of intelligence agencies for domestic political purposes has detracted from their role in intelligence collection, analysis and counter espionage. This view is based on a relative assessment of RAW's operations in Bangladesh in 1971 in comparison with its subsequent performance in Sri Lanka and other operations in the 1980s.

The actual locus of Indian intelligence tasking is with the Prime Minister, the Intelligence Bureau and the Research and Analysis Wing. In 1982-3 a core group was established at the insistence of Indira Gandhi's security adviser and former Chief of RAW Ram Nath Kao¹⁰⁹ The core group was made up of the principle secretaries involved, the Directors of RAW and the IB, and the Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee. This apex body formed within the Cabinet to deal with the intelligence organisations and ministries acting on security issues later evolved into the IDG. As mentioned above, an attempt at reorganisation was made in 1986. The IDG was superseded by the Policy Advisers Group, which Rajiv Gandhi

¹⁰⁶ The funding for the Cabinet Secretariat, the IB and RAW, excluding the service intelligence agencies and overhead collection, was estimated at US\$270 million per year in 1990. See "Intelligence: The Making or Breaking of India's Singh Administration," *Defence and Foreign Affairs*, August, 1990, p. 25.

¹⁰⁷ Asoka Raina, *Inside Raw: The Story of India's Secret Service*, (Delhi: Vikas Publishing House, 1981), p. 12. See also Major General M.L. Popli, "What Ails Our Intelligence System?" *Indian Defence Review*, p. 65.

¹⁰⁸ Ken Aldred, "India-The RAW Truth About its Military Might," *The Herald*, Melbourne 8/10/89.

¹⁰⁹ In the assessment of Manoj Joshi, "The principal decision making and coordination functions have drifted into the hands of the prime minister's office (PMO), at the expense of the Cabinet." in Babbage and Gordon, p. 87.

subsequently dropped in preference for a more informal ad hoc approach to decision making.¹¹⁰ Beyond these lapsed centres of decision making there are the three main intelligence agencies, (RAW, IB and CBI) of which RAW is the most significant. The formal structure is such that the responsibility for the identification of threats rests with the Joint Intelligence Committee. In actuality the JIC is subordinate to the influence of the directors of RAW and the IB. This is due to the withholding of information by those very organisations upon which the JIC is dependent for its information. The information is instead passed directly to the PM rather than channelled through the JIC which is formally responsible for developing integrated assessments. The reality is that the JIC chairman has rarely engendered any confidence in the Ministries and departments dealing with national security matters.¹¹¹

The JIC has a small permanent secretariat under the Cabinet Secretariat. It is generally recognised that this body, like so many others in the formation of national security, is "a body with responsibility devoid of any power."¹¹² Membership of the JIC includes representatives from the Ministry of Defence, Ministry of External Affairs, the Home Ministry, RAW, the IB and the service intelligence agencies. It is headed by a secretary of Brigadier or equivalent rank. The JIC's ability to analyse and process intelligence is inadequate.

Prior to the JIC's assessments reaching the CCPA they are vetted by the Steering Committee which was similarly constituted in 1965.¹¹³ The Steering Committee is also situated in the Cabinet Secretariat. The composition of the Steering Committee includes the Cabinet Secretary as Chairman, the Foreign Secretary, the Defence Secretary, the Home Secretary,

¹¹⁰ Lt. Gen. E. A. Vas (retd.), "Why We need a Security Council," *Indian Express*, 3/9/90.

¹¹¹ Maj. Gen. M.L. Popli, "National Intelligence Assessments and Estimates: Whither our Joint Intelligence Committee?" p. 27.

¹¹² See the reference to articles in the Indian press by Rear Admiral Satyindra Singh. Singh was a member of the JIC for seven years. Major General M.L. Popli, p. 65.

¹¹³ Because decisions are "based on a perfunctory look at the issues involved [with] Ministers neglect[ing] to even read their agenda papers" actual decision making has been taken away from the CCPA "more often than not, approvals are given without discussion and in many cases." Manoj Joshi in R. Babbage and S. Gordon, *India's Strategic Future*, p. 86.

the Director of RAW, the Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee and the Chairman of the JIC. As with most of the intelligence hierarchy, it is not uncommon for the Cabinet Secretary to liaise directly with the Prime Minister, rather than to go through the formal structure of the CCPA. Personal relationships are important here, and elsewhere in hierarchies in the Indian Government, in determining the actual flow of information and decision making.

The collection of domestic intelligence is officially the purview of the IB, while RAW is responsible for external intelligence. These two organisations are highly influential as they are expected to brief the Prime Minister daily.¹¹⁴ The heads of these two organisations are expected to have unquestioned loyalty to the Prime Minister. As a result the positions have thus become politicized. Ostensibly it is the JIC, under the control of the Cabinet Secretariat, that is responsible for the assimilation of intelligence for the PM but in actuality the lesser influence of the JIC places it in subordinate position to the individual heads of the RAW and IB. (see chart at end of chapter) After Rajiv Gandhi lost the Prime Ministership in the 1989 elections, his director of the IB, M.K. Narayanan, was moved from the Directorship of IB to the "largely ceremonial post of the Joint Intelligence Committee."¹¹⁵ The IB has been used to undermine the positions of political opponents to the government. Former IB director Jayaran testified before the 1977 Shah commission hearings that information on opponents was included in the PM's morning briefings. Thus the IB seems to be an extension of coercive power of not only the state but more specifically of the leadership of the ruling party.¹¹⁶

This phenomenon is not confined to the national level of government or to the Congress party. Former Chief Minister of Karnataka,

¹¹⁴ Coomi Kapoor, "Our Intelligence Agencies," *Illustrated Weekly*, 10/14/90, p. 16.

¹¹⁵ Coomi Kapoor, "Our Intelligence Agencies," p. 13.

¹¹⁶ Other documented examples of IB intrusion include the ouster of Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. T. Rama Rao and circumvention of the farm leader Mahendra Tikait's mass rally at the boat club in Delhi in 1988 and Devi Lal's in 1990. IB also conducts surveys of political opposition groups strengths and does opinion polls in the lead up to elections. RAW has also been involved in undisclosed arms deals which have subsequently surfaced. See Coomi Kapoor, 10/14/90, p. 13.

R.K. Hedge, of the Janata Party, was forced to step down following allegations that the Karnataka intelligence apparatus had been engaged in widespread telephone tapping of Hedge's political opponents and businessmen.¹¹⁷ Denying knowledge of these activities Hedge made counter accusations that the ruling Congress party had tapped present and former Presidents R. Venkataraman and Zail Singh's telephones as well as members of Parliament and state legislatures, journalists and businessmen.¹¹⁸

The military and the intelligence services inherited much from the Raj. British intelligence in Simla kept files on the various Maharajas and Congress leaders as a means of maintaining law and order and gaining leverage. The other two key intelligence areas for the British were the earlier movements of the Russians and Chinese along the northern and northwestern frontiers¹¹⁹ and the later threat posed by the Japanese and the Indian National Army of Subash Chander Bose during World War II.

In one of the more recent influential cases, two Haryana intelligence officers were apprehended outside the residence of Rajiv Gandhi by Delhi police.¹²⁰ They may well have been despatched there to provide intelligence regarding Janata Dal (S) MPs suspected of contemplating defection from the party. This incident was used by the Congress party as the reason for withdrawing support from the minority government of Chandra Shekar in 1991.¹²¹ It is of note that the intelligence organs are neither accountable to Parliament, nor do they have a charter.

¹¹⁷ Salamat Ali, "Indian Chief Minister Quits Over Tapping," *The Far Eastern Economic Review*, 8/25/88.

¹¹⁸ Salamat Ali, "Bugging Ploy Backfires," *The Far Eastern Economic Review*, 1/9/88, p. 30.

¹¹⁹ For lively and intriguing accounts of the Czar's and the Raj's intelligence activities and geopolitical manoeuvring in Central Asia see Peter Hopkirk, *The Great Game: On Secret Service in High Asia*, (London: John Murray Publishers, 1990), D.S. Richards, *The Savage Frontier: A History of the Anglo-Afghan Wars*, (London: Macmillan, 1990) and C.P. Skrine and Pamela Nightingale, *Macartney at Kashgar: New Light on British, Chinese and Russian Activity in Sinkiang, 1890-1918*, (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1987).

¹²⁰ The former Deputy PM Devi Lal is from Haryana. He was intricately involved in the political machinations surrounding the shifting power base in 1990.

¹²¹ *The Business and Political Observer*, "Surveillance a Minor Issue: Intelligence Officials," 3/7/91. Both former Prime Minister Chandra Shekar of the Janata Dal, and Bharatiya Janata Party leader L.K. Advani have claimed that their telephones have been tapped.

Use of the IB and RAW for the Prime Minister's personnel political purposes is mirrored by the state Chief Ministers in their use of police and state intelligence organs.¹²² This corruption of authority at the state level has been most egregiously indulged in by Devi Lal in Haryana. Through investigation into surveillance of Rajiv Gandhi by the Haryana police, it came to light that such surveillance had been commonplace since the Congress rule of Bansi Lal in 1968.¹²³ Surveillance of political figures is part of an increasingly corrupt state that frequently resorts to the intimidation and beating of journalists and political opponents. Booth capturing also occurs at the local level during elections. The politicisation of the intelligence agencies at the national level has been paralleled by the state Chief Ministers use of police in political roles to counter the power of the centre to subvert their control of state government. What is emerging is a system of petty kingdoms, increasingly reliant on the coercive powers, at the state level, to resist the power of the state at the national level.

Indian intelligence organisation, both internal and external, was centralised in the Intelligence Bureau in 1947 under the directorship of Sanjivi Pillai. The directorship passed from Pillai to B.N. Malik in 1950 and then on to S.P. Verma and M.M.L. Hoja during the period 1965-68. Under these successive directors the depth and breadth of India's external intelligence collection gradually expanded within India's immediate region as well as Europe. In 1965 both the JIC and the Chiefs of Staff Committee lay within the administrative parameters of the Ministry of Defence while the IB was under the Home Ministry. Prior to the 1968 reorganisation, the IB was responsible for the collection of foreign intelligence. As a result, the tasking and collecting divisions were located in separate ministries. There was little coordination of effort as "the Joint Intelligence Committee, the

¹²² Politicians, when pressed, have been found to be far from hesitant to use all forces at their disposal, including the intelligence agencies, to remain in power. It is estimated that 70% of the IB's work is dedicated to gathering political intelligence as opposed to its more legitimate function of domestic counter espionage. It has not been a matter of great difficulty for politicians to associate their own political survival with the security of the nation and thereby rationalize this effort. Coomi Kapoor, "Our Intelligence Agencies," p. 17.

¹²³ Sukhmani Singh, "Big Brother is Watching," *The Illustrated Weekly of India*, 3/30-31/91, pp. 20-21.

Military Intelligence Directorate and the Intelligence Bureau functioned in watertight compartments."¹²⁴

In his discussion of the role of the military in political succession in Indian politics, Michael Brecher discusses the personal dynamics of the rivalry between the IB and the military.¹²⁵ General Chaudhuri, Chief of Army Staff, ordered 6,000 troops into the capital on 28 May 1964, the day of Nehru's funeral. This move, which was taken without consultation with the Minister of Defence or the Defence Secretary, both of whom were out of Delhi at the time, aroused the suspicions of sections of the government up to the Cabinet level. Certainly, there was a degree of concern. The loss of Nehru led to a sense of national insecurity. It is not difficult to visualise how those at the time could fear that Chaudhuri was about to take India down a similar course to that of General Ayub Khan of Pakistan who seized power from the political authorities on 5 October 1958.

In retrospect it appeared that concern for a military coup was centred in the IB. Malik, Director of the CBI, had personal reasons to spread the rumour that Chaudhuri was about to foment a coup. Chaudhuri had accused Malik "of serious errors in his assessment of Chinese strength and troop movements" previous to the 1962 border war.¹²⁶ Malik was therefore seeking to discredit both Chaudhuri and the military. In its inquiry into the failures which led up to the 1962 debacle, the Henderson-Brooks Commission reportedly did not address the role of the IB in the affair. In 1971, in his book *The Chinese Betrayal*, Malik claimed that Army headquarters had been warned of the Chinese situation.¹²⁷ By the 1965 War with Pakistan it had become apparent that the system was failing India. Although it is unclear whether the fault at that time lay in the interpretation of analysis or with its collection.

¹²⁴ Lt. General P.N. Kathpalia, "Intelligence: Problems and Possible Solutions," *Indian Defence Review*, January 1986, pp. 133-5.

¹²⁵ At this point the IB retained control over domestic and external intelligence.

¹²⁶ Michael Brecher, *Succession in India: A Study in Decision Making*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1966), pp. 85-7.

¹²⁷ This has been pointed out in Raju Thomas, *The Defence of India*, (Meerut: Macmillan Co., 1978), pp. 85-6, 97.

A two man inquiry was formed to retrospectively assess the causes behind the insufficient intelligence in the lead up to the 1965 war with Pakistan. P.V.R. Rao, a former Defence Secretary and L.P. Singh, the Home Secretary together concluded that it was not the lack of collected intelligence but that "intelligence was available but not interpreted properly."¹²⁸ Following these findings it was decided to establish a separate foreign intelligence section distinct from the IB which would retain the internal intelligence function. This led to increased rivalry between the Ministry of Defence and the Home Ministry for control of the new organisation.

The primary architects of the Research and Analysis Wing, were Indira Gandhi and her private secretary P.N. Haskar. On 21 September 1968, RAW was formed under the Cabinet Secretariat, thereby settling the dispute between the Ministry of Defence and the Home Ministry and ensuring the direct control of the PM and Cabinet.¹²⁹ P.N. Rao was to be its first head. Subsequent to RAW's creation, the rivalry established by the IB with the military and its intelligence organs and the MEA was to continue. Despite the on-going rivalry, RAW's influence is likely to continue due to its direct contact with the PM by the RAW director.

In an effort to facilitate coordination of tasking and collection, the JIC was also located within the Cabinet Secretariat. Limited resources continue to be wasted in duplicating effort, due to the inability of the JIC to effectively coordinate the intelligence organs. "Unlike the JIC in the UK which has a formal coordination character, the JIC in our set-up has no such role."¹³⁰

In terms of organisation, RAW's first level of division of labour places the Office of Special Operations, the Directorate General for Security and the Additional Director under the overall Director's immediate control. (see chart at end of chapter) The Office of Special Operations conducts covert operations. The Directorate General for Security oversees the Aviation Research Centre and the Special Services Bureau. The Aviation Research

¹²⁸ Asoka Raina, *Inside Raw: The Story of India's Secret Service*, (Delhi: Vikas Publishing House, 1981).

¹²⁹ Asoka Raina, *Inside Raw*, pp. 8-12.

¹³⁰ Lt. General P. N. Kathpalia, "Intelligence," p. 135.

Centre is tasked to conduct airborne reconnaissance. The Special Services Bureau trains border peoples in the art of clandestine operations in neighbouring countries. Beneath the Additional Director are five Joint Directors, four of which are area focussed. The regional desks are Pakistan, China and Southeast Asia, the Middle East and Africa, and other counties. The fifth Joint Director is responsible for administration, internal security and the electronic technical section. The latter responsibility involves the fifth Joint Director in the monitoring and decoding of foreign military broadcasts. Counter intelligence operations remain under the IB.

Glimpses of the attitudes and policy perspectives of the Indian intelligence organizations are, in light of the extreme preoccupation with secrecy, limited. In an interview, former Special Secretary of the RAW, R. Swaminathan, was of the opinion that RAW did not need a charter, which would be tantamount to increased oversight. Swaminathan argued that "[o]nly the Americans with their penchant for an ostentatiously open government have a charter."¹³¹ It is not surprising that a former member of the RAW would perceive a measure of democratic responsibility to be ostentatious. Swaminathan takes his views even further:

If the political leadership asks the bureaucracy to carry out orders which are clearly unlawful, as was the case in the Emergency, then the bureaucrat is not supposed to carry them out. But this is not a description which is applicable to intelligence agencies in relation to their coverage of activities considered to be of security interest to the government in power.¹³²

It is unfortunate that this perspective on the role of intelligence in support of the maintenance of law and order, engendered by the British, has been sustained. The net effect is to significantly augment the power of the incumbency, provided that control over the intelligence chiefs is retained. The intelligence agencies influence in internal matters is where they have the potential for considerable impact on the nature of the overall decision making process, albeit in an indirect sense. Increased multi-party politics

¹³¹ Coomi Kapoor, "Interview with R. Swaminathan," *Illustrated Weekly*, 10/14/90, pp.14-15.

¹³² Coomi Kapoor, "Interview with R. Swaminathan," p. 14.

may restrict the intelligence agencies intrusion into politics. During the Janata period, reform proposals at RAW which would have institutionalised an expanded staff, made up of seconded personnel with in-house staff, was suspended. Though these proposals were later implemented with the reversal of Janata rule, it is possible that reform may follow the demise of centralised Congress rule. Nevertheless the temptations to retain the instruments of power may prove to be too tempting for future governments.

Internal efforts to limit corruption were initially endorsed by PM Rao. The recent case of the DIG of the CBI, O.P. Sharma, led to the first senior bureaucrat to be suspended on charges of corruption under the Rao government. Sharma was laundering money seized in CBI raids which had connections with the JKLF.¹³³ Such cases hold out the possibility that at least a minimum degree of accountability will be maintained. In August of 1992 Rao's government seemed to be falling into the trap of corruption. An aide to PM Rao, Venkataraman Krishnamurthy, was arrested for his part in a billion dollar financial scandal on 22 August 1992. The controversy escalated as Central Bureau of Investigation Inspector Kollaikal Madhavan resigned in protest of governmental interference into his investigation of the case. In addition Commerce Minister Palaniappan resigned for his involvement in the investment scandal.¹³⁴

Despite the general lack of information concerning RAW's activities, its operations in Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and elsewhere provide us with an indication of RAW's effectiveness in promoting India's national interest. The value of the external intelligence which RAW provides has come under criticism since its involvement in the Sri Lankan expedition.¹³⁵ The role of RAW will be discussed in greater detail below.

¹³³ A. Mitra, "CBI Sleuth Slips," *India Today*, 7/31/91, p. 46. Based on the apparent success of Pakistan in fomenting insurrection in Kashmir it appears that India's counter intelligence operations have been unsuccessful. The IB told V.P. Singh in December of 1989 that they would shortly have the situation in Kashmir under control without crisis. By the spring of 1990 India and Pakistan were almost at war over the deteriorating situation in Kashmir. See *Defense and Foreign Affairs*, August, 1990, p. 24.

¹³⁴ Sanjoy Hazarika, "Aide to Premier Held in Financial Scandal," *The New York Times*, 8/23/92.

¹³⁵ The rivalry between RAW and the MEA over external relations is significant. The differing personnel backgrounds of the two organizations exacerbate this. *Indian Foreign*

60.141 Bangladesh

RAW was involved with the Mukti Bahini of Bangladesh at least a year before the 1971 war with Pakistan.¹³⁶ The then Joint Director, P.N. Banerjee, and the Pakistan desk officer, Sankaran Nair, had, during the late 1960s, established a network of contacts inside East Pakistan to facilitate liaison with the emerging resistance groups. Among these contacts was M.A.G. Osmani who eventually led the Mukti Bahini. The 7 December elections and the decision of General Yahya Khan not to open Parliament, led to the pro Mujib Awami rally on 3 March and shortly thereafter the civil and international war.

RAW was instrumental in getting Tajuddin Ahmed, later the Prime Minister of Bangladesh, and other Awami league elements out of the country before they were captured by the West Pakistani forces, as was the fate of Sheik Mujibur Rehman. This group formed the government in exile in Calcutta. After the initial routing of the Mukti Bahini, RAW established border guerilla training camps with volunteers numbering 50,000 by July and 100,000 by December of 1971. The presence of this force, of which 20,000 were used in the final operation, facilitated the Indian army's advance on Dacca in early January of 1972.

An assessment of the Bangladesh operation indicates that by 1971 RAW was capable of organising resistance under favourable circumstances as in East Pakistan in the lead up to 1971. This reflects favourably on this organisation's effectiveness given its formation only three years before. It has been argued, that as a result of RAW's favourable showing during the 1971 war, Indira gave its reports equal consideration to those of the MEA. Another possible explanation of the rising importance of RAW under Indira would be its importance in domestic politics. It is probably a combination of

Service officers resent the presence of RAW officers, often in the number two position, in the Indian Embassies abroad. Many RAW officers, having been drawn from police backgrounds, are perceived to be ill-suited for the art of diplomacy by their Indian Foreign Service counterparts in the missions. Jeffrey Benner, *The Indian Foreign Policy Bureaucracy*, pp. 150-1. ¹³⁶ The following information on the RAW involvement in Bangladesh in 1971 has been drawn from Asoka Raina, *Inside RAW*.

the two factors, and the proximity of the office to the PM, that led to its rapid rise to prominence in the Indian decision making structure. This was reversed under Janata rule as efforts were made to remove coercive cells of government.¹³⁷ During the Janata period, Sankaran Nair presided over RAW as it was deprived of its foreign responsibilities thereby gutting its reason for being. These were transferred to the MEA. RAW's external role returned with the Congress Party.

60.142 Sri Lanka

RAW involvement in the training of Tamil guerrillas was uncovered in March of 1984. RAW's relationship with Sri Lankan militants was initiated some time prior to 1983.¹³⁸ This included the training of Tamils at the Dehra Dun military academy.¹³⁹ By May of 1987 the government of Sri Lanka had accused "Indian intelligence agencies of advising two main terrorist groups, providing them arms, [and] ammunition and declared it was the greatest obstacle to the peace process."¹⁴⁰ Between 1984 and 1986 the central Indian government sought to distance itself from direct support to the Tamil insurgents training in Tamil Nadu. As central assistance, which had been provided by RAW, NIB and para-military forces was reduced, the Tamil Nadu State Government intervened by providing assistance. This was evidently done with consent from the centre. When the LTTE did not respond positively to the peace proposal offered by Sri Lankan President J.R. Jayawardene, the decision was taken in Delhi to disarm the insurgents. This was done on 8 November 1986. A partial estimate of the assistance being provided can be surmised from the take of weapons in this disarming.

Over 5,000 AK 47 (automatic self loading) rifles...surface to air missiles (SAM), uzi machine guns, rocket launchers, rocket propelled grenades, land mines, anti tank guns, RPG 7s, G3s

¹³⁷ Jeffrey Benner, *The Indian Foreign Policy Bureaucracy*, p. 148.

¹³⁸ Shelton Kodikara, "The Indo-Sri Lankan Agreement of July 1987: Retrospect," in Shelton Kodikara ed., *South Asian Strategic Issues: Sri Lankan Perspectives*, (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1990), p. 160.

¹³⁹ As reported in Kodikara, "The Indo-Sri Lankan Agreement of July 1987," p. 146.

¹⁴⁰ Government statement from *Sun*, May 6, 1987 as quoted in A. Sivarajah, "Indo-Sri Lankan Relations and Sri Lanka's Ethnic Crisis: The Tamil Nadu Factor," in Shelton Kodikara, *South Asian Strategic Issues: Sri Lankan Perspectives*, (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1990), p. 146.

etc., along with their ammunitions (their total worth, according to reliable militant sources, works out at over Rs 40 Crore) were seized.¹⁴¹

It should be noted that this was at the time when RAW, the NIB and the paramilitary forces were no longer directly involved.

Shelton Kodikara's discussion of the role of RAW in the Sri Lankan situation indicates a certain degree of autonomy from the other Indian actors in the overall Indo-Sri Lankan relationship. "Given the primacy of the strategic dimension in the Indian interest in Sri Lanka, it [RAW] can have its way with the government of India on matters which are disputed in the proposals for the resolution of the conflict." He goes on to describe RAW as "a third force on the Indian side, apart from the Government of India and the [Indian peace keeping force] IPKF."¹⁴² By being independent of constitutional, legislative and at times Prime Ministerial oversight and control, RAW represents a significant threat to the democratic process.

Criticisms of the intelligence provided to the IPKF, in Sri Lanka have been levelled by Former Foreign secretary S.K. Singh of the MEA as well as elements within the army. General Sundarji stated that "estimates of morale and staying power of the [Tamil] militants were not accurate enough."¹⁴³ The intelligence provided to the Army by RAW on the quality of arms and the numbers of forces was alleged to be poor. This would seem to be a significant failure given RAW's previous involvement in the training and supply of Sri Lankan militants. It also highlights the inadequacies of military intelligence.

¹⁴¹ *The Island*, 12/17/86 as quoted in A. Sivarajah, "Indo-Sri Lankan Relations and Sri Lanka's Ethnic Crisis: The Tamil Nadu Factor."

¹⁴² Shelton Kodikara, *Indo-Sri Lankan Agreement of July 1987*, (Colombo: University of Colombo, 1989) pp. 61-2 and Shelton Kodikara, "The Indo-Sri Lankan Agreement of July 1987: Retrospect," in Shelton Kodikara ed., *South Asian Strategic Issues: Sri Lankan Perspectives*, (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1990), pp. 166-7.

¹⁴³ Interview with General Sundarji, "I Had To Aim for the Moon," *India Today* 5/15/88, p. 83.

60.143 Pakistan

RAW has represented the most hawkish views within the Indian government toward relations with Pakistan.¹⁴⁴ These views stem from a frustration with India's inability to effectively counter Pakistani intervention in India's border regions. It is beyond doubt that insurgents in Kashmir and in Punjab are receiving weapons and training from Pakistani territory. This is at least supported by the Jamat-i-Islami and Inter Services Intelligence if not by a larger segment of the Pakistan government. As the level of fighting in Afghanistan has abated in the past few years the arms producers in Dara and elsewhere in Pakistan have been thankful for the on-going arms trade in support of the Kashmir insurgency. It is also reported that RAW holds Pakistan responsible for the assassination of Indira Gandhi and an attempt on Rajiv Gandhi's life on 2 October, 1986.¹⁴⁵

In an incident in Srinagar, Kashmir, six Israelis who were abducted in June of 1991 were accused of conspiring with India in a plot to destroy the Kahuta nuclear reactor, the central facility in Pakistan's nuclear programme. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif threatened to go to war if the facility was attacked stating that "[w]e will be at open war with any country whose soil is used ... for attempting to destroy our nuclear capability."¹⁴⁶ Such an attack would be in direct contravention of the agreement formulated by Rajiv Gandhi and Benazir Bhutto in 1988 which specifically ruled out attacks against each others' nuclear facilities. Four of the Israelis escaped, while one

¹⁴⁴ That said, there are exceptions such as M. Bhaskar. Bhaskar spent six years languishing as a captured spy in Pakistani prisons. Reflecting on the mercy shown him by a Pakistani interrogation officer Bhaskar stated that "I wished I could bring the Hindu fanatics to show them that even among the Muslims there are pious souls whom they do not know...Such souls are even nobler than angels...Nobody knows how long these walls of hatred will stand between the Hindus and the Muslims. It is the doing of the Pandits and the Mullahs who disgorge their venom through vicious propoganda. The leaders of the the RSS and the Muslim League inflame our passions in order to hold on to their seat of power." Mohanlal Bhaskar, *Under the Shadow of Bayonets and Bars: An Indian Spy in Pakistan*, (New Delhi: National Publishing House, 1990), p. 29.

¹⁴⁵ Ravi Rikhye, *The War That Never Was*, p. 21.

¹⁴⁶ Raja Asghar, "Pakistani Premier Threatens War if Nuclear Sites are Attacked," *Reuters News Service*, 7/11/91 Ravi Rikye has also alleged that there was a contingency plan in December of 1986 to strike the Kahuta Facility. *The War That Never Was*, p. 12.

was killed and the sixth was recaptured by another militant group. Pakistan has alleged that the Israelis were commandos training the Indian forces in counter insurgency tactics and for a strike against the Kahuta facility near Islamabad.¹⁴⁷ Despite the absence of diplomatic relations at the time, Mossad and RAW established a relationship based on their common concern over Pakistan's nuclear programme.¹⁴⁸ Given the unlikely probability of tourists disarming armed guards, and the previous history of Israeli involvement in South Asia, the Pakistani allegations may be at least partly true.

There have been numerous allegations in Pakistan that India has supported militant elements in Sindh to foment rebellion. Sindh Chief Minister Jam Sadiq Ali has alleged that there are 5,000 Indian trained saboteurs active in Sindh. Sindh holds 147 prisoners which it asserts were trained in India.¹⁴⁹ Minister of State for Science and Technology, Senator Javed Jabbar, has also accused India of extending a "foreign hand" into Sindh.¹⁵⁰ During the political turmoil in Sindh in 1983, Indira Gandhi is reported to have made a statement to the effect that Sindh would soon be free.¹⁵¹

The Jiye Sindh Movement, led by G.M. Sayed and based in the countryside, seeks autonomy and sovereignty for Sindh. The movement has fractured into a number of factions and is opposed by both the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and the Mohajir National Movement¹⁵² which together

¹⁴⁷ There have been previous incidents of Israeli intelligence efforts in South Asia. In May of 1984 the American Embassy in Colombo opened an Israeli interests section to accommodate a contingent from Israel's internal security service, Shin Beth. While India expressed its dissatisfaction to the Sri Lankan Government over the Israeli assistance with counter insurgency training, Sri Lanka pointed out that India itself had granted the Israelis a consulate in Bombay, ostensibly equating the two arrangements. Israel and India have a shared interest in preventing the proliferation of atomic weapons in the Muslim world. Shelton Kodikara ed. *South Asian Strategic Issues: Sri Lankan Perspectives*, (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1990), pp. 20, 153, 104.

¹⁴⁸ Jeffrey Richelson, "India's Intelligence and Security Services," unpublished paper, p. 23.

¹⁴⁹ *Reuters News Service*, "Indian Trained Saboteurs Active in Sindh," 8/9/91.

¹⁵⁰ N. D. Khan, "Foreign hand Involved in Sindh Crisis-Jabbar," *The Pakistan Times*, 2/9/90.

¹⁵¹ Ravi Rikhye, *The War That Never Was*, p.17.

¹⁵² Mohajirs are those Muslims who fled what is now Indian territory at the time of partition and are therefore of other than Sindhi ethnic identity.

control the important Sindhi cities of Karachi and Hyderabad.¹⁵³ The PPP has accused the Sindhi ethnic parties of collusion with RAW. The MQM has accused both the PPP and the Jiyeh Sindh of collaboration. Nawaz Sharif has also accused the PPP of collaboration with RAW through its terrorist arm the Al-Zulfiquar.¹⁵⁴ While these claims are often made out of an obvious effort by the various parties to discredit their opponents it is likely that RAW assistance is being provided. Further RAW would be motivated by a strong desire to counter the destabilisation Pakistan is fueling in Punjab and Kashmir. For these reasons it does appear that "the ubiquitous Indian hand in the fast deteriorating situation [in Sindh] is present. It cuts across party lines and becomes the least common denominator."¹⁵⁵

Allegations of RAW involvement in *Operation Trident*, which it is speculated was a plan to escalate *Operation Brass Tacks* to war between India and Pakistan in 1987,¹⁵⁶ when taken in conjunction with events in Kashmir in 1990, also suggests that the hawkish attitudes inside RAW are pushing for another war with Pakistan. In May of 1990, amidst mounting tensions in Kashmir, Pakistan suggested Foreign Secretary consultations to diffuse the crisis. RAW advised the Prime Minister that Pakistan had begun a major forward deployment of troops to the border and that India should begin a counter mobilisation and refuse the talks. The government agreed and began redeploying troops to the border. The reality, confirmed by both American and Soviet technical intelligence and passed on to India, was that Pakistan had not increased its deployments at the border. The deployment and stand down cost India US\$250 million.¹⁵⁷ When asked by General K.M. Arif in 1986 why India had mobilised under the guise of the military manoeuvre *Brass Tacks* General Sundarji responded that it was because Indian intelligence had reported that Pakistan had moved an armoured division up to the border. Arif responded that this was not the case.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵³ *Reuter News Service*, "Pakistani Separatist Politician Says Kidnappings Justified," 6/27/91.

¹⁵⁴ Abha Dixit, "The Backlash in Sindh," *The Telegraph*, 6/22/90.

¹⁵⁵ Abha Dixit, "The Backlash in Sindh,"

¹⁵⁶ Ravi Rikhye, *The War That Never Was*, p. 2.

¹⁵⁷ *Defense and Foreign Affairs*, August 1990, p. 24.

¹⁵⁸ "Where politicians fear to tread," *Asiaweek*, 6/19/92, p. 28.

These two incidents make for strong speculation about RAW's recommendations on how India should resolve its outstanding disputes with Pakistan, and that RAW believes in pushing this avenue of resolution irrespective of the political leadership of the country.¹⁵⁹

Whether the ultimate aim of RAW is a second bifurcation of Pakistan, as has been asserted by Ravi Rikhye, or whether it is motivated out of the more conservative objective of having a counter to the leverage which Pakistan has built up in Punjab and Kashmir is not clear. What is clear is that high degrees of cross border insurgency support make for a destabilised environment which is vulnerable to manipulation should the intelligence agencies seek to implement their own agenda. A situation where the affairs of state are being taken away from legitimate governmental control is a disturbing development of the 1980s in India.

60.144 Fiji

While RAW's activities have been most notable in India's border regions, there is evidence to suggest that India may be seeking to extend its reach to cover Indian interests farther afield. In identifying the objectives of RAW, Asoka Raina has highlighted the role of NRIs. "[T]he presence of a large ethnic Indian population in foreign countries, attracted RAW's attention, for in many countries they present a powerful lobby."¹⁶⁰ In 1988 RAW is believed to have played a role in at least two arms shipments to Fiji, one of which was interdicted in Sydney.¹⁶¹ The ethnic composition of Fiji is roughly half Indian. The attempt to arm NRIs would be in keeping with Raina's assertion that RAW has connections with these groups.¹⁶² RAW

¹⁵⁹ According to Seymour Hersh American intelligence reports showed that "in a crisis, both RAW and ISI were eager to provide incendiary intelligence without being sure of its reliability." "On the Nuclear Edge," p. 60.

¹⁶⁰ In addition, Raina has identified general intelligence activities in India's neighbourhood. Asoka Raina, *Inside Raw*, p. 16.

¹⁶¹ Ken Aldred, "India-The RAW Truth About its Military Might," *The Herald*, Melbourne, 8/10/89.

¹⁶² See Asoka Raina, *Inside Raw*, p. 16.

has reportedly conducted a feasibility study for the "overthrow of the Fijian government."¹⁶³

The discovery of a covert arms shipment bound for Fiji on 24 May 1988 at Sydney's Port Botany has led to speculation over the weapons origin and destination. India, the Australian Secret Intelligence Organisation (ASIO), the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), an unknown Middle East country and the ethnic Fijian community in Australia have all been identified as possible sources of financing and planning the operation.¹⁶⁴ Given the degree of tension over the possibility of the ethnic Indian population of Fiji gaining political clout as a result of the 1987 elections, and the subsequent racial discrimination which that community has been subject to, RAW would have the most plausible motive to intervene.

The arms shipment uncovered in Sydney, was found to have been loaded onto the container ship *Arno Australia*. The container made its way to Singapore aboard a ship which originated in Yemen and made a port call in Trincomalee. Both of these places are likely sources of arms. India was in control of Trincomalee as part of its operations in Sri Lanka at that time. If India was the source of the arms this would have facilitated their being loaded onto the ship.¹⁶⁵

Dr. Bavadra's Labour Coalition victory of 1987 was shortly overturned by the coup of 14 May which returned Ratu Mara to power. The second coup of Sept. 1987, which more firmly asserted Colonel Rabuka's position over that of Ratu Mara, reflected a readjustment of the power distribution among the ethnic Fijian elite.

¹⁶³ *Defense and Foreign Affairs*, Aug. 1990, p. 25.

¹⁶⁴ The arms shipment included 140 Czech assault rifles, mortars, mines and large quantities of ammunition. The first shipment reached Fiji in April of 1987. It was the second shipment made to Fiji by the arms dealer Mohammed Kahan which was discovered by the government and resulted in the arrest of the Latoaka 21. Many of those arrested were staunch Mara supporters. See Reporter, Tony Jones, Producer, Steve Warne, "The Smarmy Swami (Fiji Arms)," *Four Corners*, Australian Broadcast Corporation, 8/21/89.

¹⁶⁵ Peter Game, "New Delhi Connection Suspected in Fiji Arms Intelligence Probe," *The Herald*, 6/20/88.

The Fijian responsible for over-seeing the arms shipment, Mohammed Kahan, has made a number of statements concerning the origins of the \$US 28 million which he reportedly was given to procure arms. "Asian people living outside India and outside Fiji, felt for their brothers in Fiji, and so it wasn't much of a difficult ... [task] for us to raise funds." When asked about his backers Mohammed Kahan further stated that,

Well, not only to back me but back the Asian people in Fiji. I mean the real question is, how long are we going to be subjected to this kind of nonsense what you call it? Everywhere we are kicked out. There is 55% Asian people living in British Guiana and the power was taken away from them by Bona, and the people were kicked out er... and of course a lot of other things happened before that in Uganda, and South Africa, and it happened now in Fiji. Which country next we going to suffer?¹⁶⁶

The deposed Prime Minister, Dr. Bavadra, claims that Kahan approached him to initiate an armed struggle for Fiji, but that he refused. One issue which must be established before conclusions are drawn, is the reason for Kahan's desire to speak out. Despite the lack of an apparent motive for Kahan's openness on the matter his statements are in part supported by others.

After interviewing Mr. Saheed, who had been arrested in Fiji in connection with the government seizure of a reported ten tonnes of weapons, ostensibly sent by Kahan in the April Shipment, Chief Superintendent Allen Sing, of the Australian Federal Police, concluded that it was the Fijian community in Australia which were behind the arms shipments. "There is certainly a strong network here, part of which we suggest supported the arms shipment."¹⁶⁷ Kahan has claimed that a former Australian defence intelligence officer helped him leave the country when the customs department discovered the weapons.¹⁶⁸ If this is true it could

¹⁶⁶ "The Smarmy Swami," transcript, p. 16.

¹⁶⁷ "The Smarmy Swami," p. 11.

¹⁶⁸ This is supported by the fact that when Kahan was being held in custody in the United Kingdom, Australia did not seek to extradite him despite the recommendation from Scotland Yard to do so. "The Smarmy Swami," p. 13.

imply a possible Defence Intelligence and/or ASIO/Australian Secret Intelligence Service (ASIS) involvement.¹⁶⁹

Ratu Mara had associates within the Indian business community that may have been involved in efforts to support his faction against that of Rabuka, believing that their interests would fair better under Ratu Mara than Colonel Rabuka. A former Member of Parliament in Mara's Alliance Government, K.R. Latchin, has been implicated in the arms shipment by a former Taukei activist and Fijian businessman, Tony Stephens. Kahan has also indicted that the destination of the arms was to Ratu Mara's faction and that it was organised by the Indian community. "And Ratu Mara's position was threatened. These Indian people who were backing Ratu Mara, and these are business people, people with a lot of influence, people with a lot of money, they got afraid too. Ratu Mara was afraid as well."¹⁷⁰ Whether these businessmen would command the economic resources to provide \$US 28 million or would themselves be capable of coordinating the arms purchase without external support leads to speculation about who was assisting them.

The presence of a large ethnic Indian community, which has been systematically denied its political freedom on racial grounds, does provide a sufficient motive for Indian involvement. The former chairman of the opposition defence committee in Australia, Ken Aldred stated that India's "motive in interfering in Fijian affairs would be to justify intervention there if not by herself, then by a Pacific country such as Australia."¹⁷¹ The scale of the shipment would also be within India's capabilities. While other individuals or organisations could equally have been involved with the shipment their motives are not as clearly discernible as India's. It is unlikely that an alternative to the Rabuka regime would have been more favourable to American or Australian strategic interests.

¹⁶⁹ Knowledgeable sources in Australia have discredited the view that there was any official Australian involvement. This leads to further speculation over the identity of the individual that apparently helped Kahan leave Australia after the arms were discovered.

¹⁷⁰ "The Smarmy Swami," p. 29.

¹⁷¹ Peter Game, 6/20/88 A high degree of activity was also reported at the High Commission in Canberra on the day of the shipments discovery in Sydney.

60.145 Other Operations

Independence was equally unfavourable to Indian military intelligence as it was to political intelligence. The British Intelligence Corps (India) was increasingly "Indianised" previous to partition. As with political intelligence there was a disproportionate number of Muslims who subsequently opted for Pakistan, thereby denying India continuity from the British system. The Corps intelligence depot was located in Karachi and as a result India had little on which to build. At partition the Indian section of the intelligence Corps moved to Mhow and subsequently on to Pune in 1952 where it remained. In 1952 an attempt was made to establish the Defence Intelligence Organisation (DIO). Though the initial aims were high, the organisation remained little more than a feeble field security body with no external intelligence role. Further it was inadequate for analysing the information which it received from the external intelligence section of the IB.¹⁷² Military intelligence improved in the late 1970s as it began to meaningfully focus on the three core areas of intelligence, counter intelligence and field security. Despite these improvements "... no serious effort has been made to establish an integrated intelligence agency in the Defence services."¹⁷³

A number of military intelligence blunders have been reported. One of the more interesting examples occurred during *Operation Cactus*. In planning the relief of the Maldives in 1987 planners confused Mauritius for the Maldives and came to believe that it was Mauritius to which they were to be deployed. During the planning stage they thought that they would have to refuel in the Maldives. At this point the error was picked up. In Sri Lanka the army had to rely on antiquated maps and was not effective in utilizing Tamil speakers from within its ranks. In another incident an IAF plane which had crash landed in Pakistan on reconnaissance, was flown back across the border repeatedly by a Pakistani pilot who used the aircraft unmolested in a reconnaissance role. Ground observation posts on the

¹⁷² Major General M.L. Popli, "What Ails Our Intelligence System?" *Indian Defence Review*, pp. 57-66.

¹⁷³ Major General M.L. Popli, "What Ails Our Intelligence System?" p.58.

border did not report the plane due to its make and its markings despite its repeated border crossings.¹⁷⁴

RAW played an important role in the annexation of Sikkim. The action of 9 April 1975 was triggered by India's displeasure over the Chogyal's desire to revise the India-Sikkim Treaty of Peace which had been signed on 5 December 1950. The treaty had signed away Sikkim's control of its defence and foreign affairs. After going over the files pertaining to the absorption of Sikkim, Prime Minister Desai gave his opinion that while he supported the inclusion of Sikkim into India he did not approve the means which were employed.¹⁷⁵ The last Political Officer to Sikkim, Gorbachan Singh came from RAW.¹⁷⁶ It is reported that plans to take Sikkim were initially formulated in the aftermath of RAW's successful operations in Bangladesh. In preparation for the eventuality of the absorption of Sikkim, RAW had established a network of contacts and operatives in the districts of Ganagtok, Mangan, Namche and Gyalzing in Sikkim to gather operational data for RAW contingencies.¹⁷⁷

From reports of the sequence of events, it appears as though RAW had initiated the operation some 18 months prior to Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's knowledge. "The Prime Minister is reported to have asked when RAW would be in a position to go ahead and is said to have been surprised when told that the operation would commence within twenty-four hours."¹⁷⁸ From this it seems that Indira Gandhi was beginning to lose control of RAW within eight years of its creation.

After assessing the capabilities and uses of the JIC, the IB, RAW and military intelligence, it becomes apparent that their efforts in support of India's national security and foreign policy have yielded mixed results. The

¹⁷⁴ Lt. Col. Dalit Singh retd. "Military Intelligence Not Up to the Mark," *Illustrated Weekly of India*, 10/14/90, pp. 30-32.

¹⁷⁵ J. Bandyopadhyaya, *The Making of India's Foreign Policy*, (Calcutta: Allied Publishers, 1970), pp. 245, 339.

¹⁷⁶ Sunanda K. Datta-Ray, *Smash and Grab: Annexation of Sikkim*, (Delhi: Vikas Publishing House, Pvt Ltd, 1984), p. 78.

¹⁷⁷ Raina as cited in S. K. D.Datta-Ray, *Smash and Grab*, p. 171.

¹⁷⁸ Raina as cited in S. K. D.Datta-Ray, *Smash and Grab*, p. 185.

relegation of the intelligence agencies to a predominantly operational orientation, for the most part in domestic and border areas, would indicate a relatively minor analytical capacity compared with First World intelligence organisations. In his discussion of Indian national security policy planning, Major General Popli has stated that it "suffers from the total lack of long range intelligence perspective."¹⁷⁹ It appears that RAW has been deficient in this regard as much as by design as because of the relatively inferior capabilities of its staff compared with military or foreign affairs personnel. The diversion of intelligence assets to support domestic political concerns diverts resources away from operations in and assessments of India's strategic environment. In this way both civil liberties and India's national interest are subverted.

The use of RAW by the Prime Minister for the promotion of his or her political fortunes, presents the potential for subverting the Indian democratic process. RAW possesses a further threat through its desire to act independently and to influence policy by acting ahead of the decision making process in areas such as Sikkim, Sri Lanka and Kashmir. RAW is not balanced by a diffusion of intelligence agencies, as in the United States, or to a lesser extent as in the former Soviet system. If RAW initiated an operation aimed at absorbing Sikkim without the prior approval of the Prime Minister then there is at least room for speculation that RAW, wishing to implement its second bifurcation of Pakistan, had allied with sympathetic elements within the military in an effort to get the Pakistani's to present them with the opportunity to do what the Indian government would not. There appears to be no formalised procedure, such as the signing of findings in the United States for the approval of covert operations.

One measure which would improve India's strategic intelligence capabilities would be the establishment of a integrated military intelligence department. The separate military intelligence branches, and the ineffectual Defence Intelligence Organisation, are not currently integrated into an effective service-wide umbrella organisation. In addition, the relative degree of professionalism and a reluctance to enter into politics, in the armed forces

¹⁷⁹ Major General M.L. Popli, "What Ails Our Intelligence System?" p. 62.

would exert a positive influence on the conduct of intelligence operations. Such a military organisation could act as a potential counter to RAW's influence. The prospect for the creation of such a body is not likely as the political authorities are likely to be suspicious of establishing an organisation which could potentially be used to undermine its political use of the intelligence apparatus. India, with its lack of built in checks and balances, is vulnerable to excess by over zealous elements inside intelligence agencies. A summary assessment of Indian intelligence operations is outlined below.

INTELLIGENCE OPERATIONS

Internal

- Counter espionage
- Counter insurgency intelligence in support of military and paramilitary forces in Kashmir, Punjab, Assam, Tamil Nadu
- Domestic political intelligence in support of individual politicians

External

<u>Effective</u>	<u>Failed</u>	<u>Loss of control</u>
Bangladesh	Brass Tacks/Trident	Sikkim
Sikkim	Sri Lanka	Trident
Sindh	Fiji	Sri Lanka
	Kahuta	Kashmir

A more open national security debate could both improve the intelligence agencies performance and limit their abuses. In this way the media could play a special role in the process.

60.2 The media and public opinion

There are contending interpretations as to the extent to which public opinion plays a part in the formation of foreign policy in India. Ashok Kapur, writing in 1976, described the degree of influence of public opinion as marginal and opted for the view that external strategies of the state were instead, a product of "conflicting views among the policy elites and to ambiguous international developments rather than to electoral or party politics."¹⁸⁰ With the majority of the population living in dispersed rural

¹⁸⁰ Ashok Kapur, *India's Nuclear Option*, p. 12.

villages, with rates of illiteracy exceeding 50%, the extent to which the general public can participate in the foreign policy process is certainly suspect.

That said, public opinion should not be overly discounted either in assessments of its input in the past, or even more so in the present, or future. The decision to take Portuguese held Goa by force in 1961, in the lead up to the third general election, was urged by then Defence Minister Menon whose constituency in Bombay was located close enough for the action to play almost as decisive a role in his reelection to Parliament as India's defeat at the hands of the Chinese the next year did in his later demise.¹⁸¹ During the 1991 Gulf War, Rajiv Gandhi was vigorously trying to be perceived as more sympathetic to the cause of Saddam Hussein of Iraq, as a leader of a small developing state, in an effort to carve out solidly the Muslim vote bank for the upcoming elections that year.¹⁸² The growing ranks of the middle class, now estimated between 100 and 200 million,¹⁸³ will increasingly take an interest in the conduct of the nations external relations. Current domestic debate over the secular orientation of India can not help but have an influence in the way in which India engages her neighbourhood.

Because of its relative freedom from government control the printed media serves an essential role of providing a platform for alternative views to the government. English language daily newspapers in 1986 circulated 3,661,000 while non-English dailies totalled 18,680,000 copies.¹⁸⁴ The average growth rate of papers and periodicals for the period 1983 to 1987 was 5.2%. Only the main newspapers of the big cities have the resources to independently cover international events. During the lead up to the Gulf War of 1991, English language papers, who occupy 13% of total circulation, were slow to respond to the evolving conflict. Only *The Times of India*,

181 J. Bandyopadhyaya, *The Making of India's Foreign Policy*, (New Delhi: Allied Publishers, 1987), pp. 130-1.

182 Rajiv Gandhi, "The War in West Asia: A Statement issued by the Indian National Congress President," (Delhi: Congress Party Headquarters, 2/7/91).

183 For a definition of middle class in the Indian context see Chapter Five.

184 M.V. Desai, "The Indian Media," *India Briefing*, 1989, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1989) p. 110.

Indian Express, *The Statesman* and *The Hindu* were able to send correspondents to the Gulf prior to October of 1990.¹⁸⁵ One would have thought that with 170,000 non resident Indians in Kuwait and 10,000 in Iraq that it would have been a high enough priority to justify more intensive coverage. Given India's total population of 843,000,000, the reach of the papers is limited, but includes the more educated and influential segment of the society which is itself expanding.

Freedom of the press is under fire from both the government and the militants in strife ridden areas such as Punjab and Kashmir. In the Punjab, Sikh militants have demanded the closure of papers whose ideology was not consistent with their cause and also have called for boycotts of government news. It has also been announced that the insurgents dislike the label terrorist and that they prefer to be called militants. These decrees are enforced by killings of those who defy them; from publishers to news vendors. Editors, such as Barjinder Singh of *Ajit*, have attested to systematic vetting by police of newspapers in Punjab.¹⁸⁶ The government has also confiscated newspapers containing articles based on militant's press releases as was the case with the *Chandigarh Tribune*.¹⁸⁷ Officially the foreign press have at times not been allowed into Kashmir though access to the region has not been denied. It is also of interest that the situation in Kashmir is not covered more extensively.

The government has demonstrated its contempt for the freedom of the press through its liberal application of the Official Secrets Act. As a means of preventing journalist access to the site of the proposed Sardar Sarovar dam the government declared it a "work of public character" there by making it an offence to trespass under the Official Secrets Act. A further example of government interference is the attempt to prosecute Arun Shurie of the *Indian Express* newspaper. This was done because he published excerpts of the Thakhar Commission Inquiry into the

¹⁸⁵ Nihal Singh, "Misplaced Priorities," *India Today*, 10/15/90.

¹⁸⁶ Akhil Gautam, "Punjab Media Divided Over Militants Threat," *Business and Political Observer*, 3/8/91.

¹⁸⁷ "Codes of Conduct," *India Today*, 2/28/91 p.11.

assassination of Indira Gandhi.¹⁸⁸ The *Indian Express* has had a tradition of keeping the Congress party honest dating back to the emergency.

When trying to assess the potential impact of the general population on the political process, and by derivation the formation of foreign policy, it is necessary to discuss not only the degree of control which the government retains over the printed media, but more importantly over the non-print. Non print media is the primary source of information for a majority of the population. The two government media bodies are *All India Radio* (AIR) and the television network *Doordarshan* (DD). The existence of these two government monopolies is ensured by the Indian Telegraph Act. Considering the level of illiteracy, the importance of the estimated 13.3 million televisions, which reach an estimated 75% of the population and AIR's coverage of 90% of the population, is not to be underestimated. Indians spent \$US 261 million in 1988 on these two government organs.¹⁸⁹

In response to criticism of governmental control of DD and AIR the Prasar Bharati Bill passed Parliament in September of 1990 thereby lifting in part, government control. The areas affected were essentially confined to entertainment and so, in essence, the government achieved the perception that it was liberalizing its control over the process without actually having to relinquish control over the news and current affairs programmes. The officials working in the Indian Information Service and the Central Secretariat Service who, prior to April of 1991, were responsible for handling the political aspects of broadcasting will, under the new legislation, be

¹⁸⁸ M.V. Desai, "The Indian Media," *India Briefing*, 1989, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1989), p. 123.

¹⁸⁹ The importance of these two bodies in spreading the word on behalf of the ruling party was demonstrated in the lead up to the 1989 elections as the independent minded director of *Doordarshan*, Bhaskar Ghose, and the Delhi director, Jai Chandiram, were both displaced to facilitate increased centralised control from the Prime Minister's Office. In addition the Congress party purportedly dispersed 100,000 television sets previous to the election that year. James Clad, "Radio and Television Help the Ruling Party," *The Far Eastern Economic Review*, 11/9/89, p. 24.

handling their old jobs from the newly established Broadcast Corporation.¹⁹⁰ Despite this effort by the government, debate continues.¹⁹¹

Increasing interest of the public in political affairs and their discontent with the censored product of DD is demonstrated by the increased popularity of independent video news tapes. Three of the leading tapes on sale are *News Track*, *Business Plus* and *The Observer News Channel*. The leading monthly video *News Track* has an estimated viewership of 5.6 million.¹⁹² In its coverage of the Kar Sevak at the Ramjanmboomi-Babri Masjid in October of 1990 DD claimed that the government had been successful in preventing any damage to the mosque. Footage, discrediting DD, of Kar Sevaks chipping away at the dome of the mosque emerged on video a few weeks later. Under section 7 of the Cinematography Act, police raided those shops carrying the footage.¹⁹³ Further, representatives of the BJP were arrested at a public airing of the program at Connaught Place in Delhi. The videos have further been a thorn in the government's attempt to control reporting of the situation in Kashmir and the Gulf War.¹⁹⁴ The government has sought to minimise the visual reporting of the discontent in that region.

While these video programs presently have a limited viewership, they are indicative of a rising demand on the part of the upper and middle classes for expanded access to unedited or censored news. As of yet this interest has been largely limited to domestic affairs but given the newness of this phenomenon it promises to spread into the foreign policy area. Government sensitivity to the influence of the Cable News Network (CNN) on Indian perceptions of the external environment was highlighted by CNNs coverage of the Gulf war. An inter-departmental committee expressed its concern over the "adverse impact of foreign television

¹⁹⁰ Madhu Jain, "Prasar Bharati Bill: Ambiguous Autonomy," *India Today*, 9/30/90, pp.150-1.

¹⁹¹ P. N. Bhagwati, "A Case for Liberty," *Illustrated Weekly*, 1/12-13/91, pp. 6-7.

¹⁹² Edward Desmond, "India's News Revolution," *Time*, 12/10/90, p. 45.

¹⁹³ "Raids Continue on Video Shops," *Hindustan Times Evening News*, 12/7/90.

¹⁹⁴ Ritu Sarin, "Dishing Out the News: National Antennae Reach Out to CNN's Coverage of the War," *Sunday*, 2/17-23/91.

programmes" which expose the population to "foreign perceptions and alien social values."¹⁹⁵

In response to the partial subversion of the government's ability to regulate the intrusion of alternative broadcasting from abroad the government began a project in Jalna, Maharashtra to erect a 90 ton antenna to monitor and possibly screen out foreign broadcasting. The cost of the antenna is estimated at US\$ 6 million.¹⁹⁶

The level of government control of the media in part explains the low level of public input into the formation of foreign, and for that matter national security policy. Despite the extensive controls, the direction of change is towards increased liberalisation and a gradual loosening of the government's grasp. This will most probably be facilitated and accelerated by the increasing multi-party composition of the Indian Parliament. The rising strength of opposition parties will seek to diminish the power of the ruling party. The single party and dynastic style of democracy which has dominated modern Indian history allowed the earlier British tradition of the suppression of the press to continue. With the advent of true multi-party democracy there will increasingly be more meaningful input from the public. The role of academia is similar to that of the media, taking on a more important role in the decision-making process.

60.3 Think tanks , universities and intellectuals

Changes in Indian society at large are having an effect on, and being affected by, the nature of India's intellectuals in general. There are two key trends worth note. The first is the increased politicisation of academe¹⁹⁷ as intellectuals seek higher profiles and influence in government and journalistic circles rather than confining their efforts to the "ivory towers." The popular press is critical of these perceived "intellectual hustlers"¹⁹⁸ who

¹⁹⁵ R. Srinivasan, "Cable TV, CNN: Mandi House in a Spot," *Times of India*, 3/14/91.

¹⁹⁶ "Indian Government Building Earth Station 'to monitor foreign TV," *The Straits Times*, 6/12/91.

¹⁹⁷ K.P. Nair, "Rot in the System: Politicisation of Academic Institutions," *Frontline*, 1/19-2/1/91, p. 95.

¹⁹⁸ P.S. Sundaram, "Ph.Ds-At What Cost?" *The Hindu*, 12/24/91.

congregate at such places as the Indian International Centre near Lodhi Gardens in Delhi. The second key development is the shift away from the traditional leftist intellectual stance, or more recently of the government apologists, to that of the Indian right. The decline of the communist bloc, destabilisation within India and the rise of Hindu fundamentalism have caused this shift.

The intellectual perspective of Nehru was passed down to Indira, albeit in a diluted fashion, and so on to Rajiv. Though diminished, the appeal of the advice of the intellectual remained. In India "intellectuals have been a traditional institution-influencing policy, social movements, and political debate."¹⁹⁹ Reflecting a middle class bias thirty percent of government expenditure on education goes into tertiary institutions.²⁰⁰ As these students graduate they are having difficulty finding jobs. This leads to the problem of an increasing pool of educated unemployed who's expectations far exceed the reality that they find on graduation. As many Indian intellectuals mirror trends in the West and seek to maximise their input into the political process, rather than remaining aloof from it, they have, to a certain degree, lost their moral authority. Ashok Rudra has gone so far as to interpret the intelligentsia as having been co-opted by capitalists and landowners into the third pillar of the dominant classes.²⁰¹ As a result of these developments those espousing philosophies more firmly grounded in Hinduism have gained credibility. In the words of Girijal Jain "Instead of a healthy interaction we have a rootless intellectual class with borrowed values and organisations and an Indian past which emerges from the underground in distorted forms."²⁰² Madhu Jain sees this emerging Hindu right intelligentsia, as represented by K.R. Malkan, Jay Dubash, Arun Shourie, and Girijal Jain, as defining a new Indian identity out of a need to

¹⁹⁹ Madhu Jain, "Intellectuals: Neo, Pseudo, Natty," *India Today*, 12/31/90, p. 145.

²⁰⁰ Jytte Laursen, "Trade and Growth in India," unpublished paper, The Australian National University, 1992.

²⁰¹ Ashok Rudra, "Emergence of the Intelligentsia as a Ruling Class in India," *The Economic and Political Weekly*, 1/21/89, pp. 142-50. For a discussion of this proposition see Andre Breteille, "Are the Intelligentsia a Ruling Class?" and Pranab Bardhan, "The Third Dominant Class," from the same issue.

²⁰² Madhu Jain, "Intellectuals: Neo, Pseudo, Natty," p. 147.

assert itself on the international arena. This reorientation of the intelligentsia stems from the need for an identity based on national strength in the face of increased fragmentation. It is the new rightist intellectuals who are seeking to redress the breakdown of the Nehruvian consensus with a new sense of Indian nationalism which equates it with Hinduism.²⁰³ In this there exists an intellectual tradition on which current views may be drawn.

In a less general vein the specific centres of intellectual concern with strategic, defence and foreign policy issues are largely centred in Delhi. Among these are; the Institute for Defence Studies and Analysis, the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, the Society for Indian Ocean Studies, Teen Murti House at the Jawaharlal Nehru library, The Indian Council on World Affairs at Sapru House, the Centre for Policy Research, the National Archives, the historical section and library of External Affairs, the School of International Studies and its subdivisions at the Jawaharlal Nehru University and the United Services Institution. These centres all engage in, or provide the resources necessary for academic debate of national security issues.

A prime example of these is the Institute for Defence Studies and Analysis (IDSA). It is the most significant contributor to debate in the national security and defence areas. In addition, IDSA is one of the most valuable sources of information for those researching issues of Indian national security. It represents India's position at numerous international conferences. The institute, while self described as an "autonomous society to conduct study and research on problems of national security and the impact of defence measures on the economic, security and social life of the country," enjoys a close relationship with the government. IDSA was established in 1965 by Ministry of Defence funds.²⁰⁴ With its on-going publications and generally open debate, IDSA is one of the few conduits for debate of national security issues. The *Indian Defence Review*, and other publications put out

²⁰³ Madhu Jain, "Intellectuals: Neo, Pseudo, Natty," p. 147.

²⁰⁴ B.M. Gupta and V.K. Jain, *Handbook of Libraries, Archives & Information Centres in India, Volume 8 Social Sciences Information Systems and Centres*, (Delhi: Aditya Publications, 1990), pp. 118-23.

by Lancers Publications, add to the information made available for debate of national security issues.

While the institutionalisation in India of the think tank/pressure group is not developed to the extent as has become the norm in most Western societies, the trend is in that direction. Traditional affinity towards intellectuals will combine with increasing perceptions that expanded debate will facilitate the proper functioning of national security policy decision making. The coverage which V.P. Singh's NSC proposal received can be taken as an example. While the cult of secrecy and corrupt practices will act to keep the country's national security debate closed more and more actors will seek to influence policy and will, as a result, open debate to an extent. At this point the chapter shifts from its general discussion of the different decision-making structures and organisations to examine how these structures functioned in response to the Gulf War.

60.4 The Gulf War and India's foreign and national security policy decision-making

The evolution of the Indian reaction to the Gulf War illustrates the way which Indian strategic decision making transpires. The Indian response to the Gulf War indicates an uncoordinated and vacillating assessment of a situation of strategic importance for India. Further, this was compounded by ad hoc responses which were held hostage to domestic politics. In the initial stages of the Gulf conflict India focused on extracting its nationals from the area and mounting an Indian led NAM perspective as an alternative to the US led coalition.²⁰⁵ V.P. Singh's External Affairs Minister, Inder Kumar Gujral tried unsuccessfully to establish a unified position with Algeria and Yugoslavia in September of 1990. Further a Cabinet Coordination Committee on the Gulf Crisis was established.²⁰⁶

²⁰⁵ Express News Service, "Gujral initiative to Solve Gulf Crisis," *Indian Express*, 9/2/90.

²⁰⁶ This body was chaired by External Affairs Minister I. K. Gujral and had as its members Energy and Civil Aviation Minister, A. M. Khan, Surface Transport Minister, Unnikrishnan, Minister of State for External Affairs, H. K. Singh, and the Minister of State for Commerce, A. Sreedharan. This membership would seem to indicate that the body was established with the primary objective of the repatriation of the NRIs in the Gulf. Express News Service, "Steps to Evacuate Indians," *Indian Express*, 9/2/90.

Public sentiment in India was split during the Gulf War. While Prime Minister Shekhar was seeking to support the United States, many felt that, while Saddam Hussein had transgressed international propriety by annexing Kuwait, this transgression paled in comparison to the exercise of force demonstrated by the United States and the West in the Gulf Region.²⁰⁷ In this way, the issue was couched in terms of North vs South, rich vs poor and the strong vs the weak. This popular sentiment was echoed by the initial diplomatic embrace of the Iraqis.

Initially India was predisposed not to oppose Iraq. Former Foreign Minister I. K. Gujral stated the "[i]f Iraq ceases to matter in the region we will be left with fundamentalist regimes like Iran and Israel with the US ..."²⁰⁸ Iraq's secular Bathist regime had supported India against Pakistan on the issue of Kashmir at the Organisation of Islamic Conference and had sold oil to India at concessionary prices.²⁰⁹ Further, under Gujral, efforts were made to send food to Iraq and to moderate calls for harsh condemnations of the Kuwait invasion. This neutralist tilting towards Iraq changed with the evolution of the conflict, and the change of government to Chandra Shekhar and the Janata Dal, to a US tilting neutralist posture. Efforts to retain elements of a non-aligned posture were retained as demonstrated by the 22 February shipment of one crore rupees worth of medical supplies to Iraq and by an Indian vote of abstention at the UN.²¹⁰

As a result of the conflict, India's foreign currency reserves fell to 2,500 crore, a mere three weeks' imports. This was in addition to an external debt of Rs 1,300,000 crore and a budget deficit of Rs 14,000 crore and a substantial revenue shortfall.²¹¹ To obtain IMF loans to shore up its financial position, India had no choice but to moderate its stance. Chandra Shekhar refused to insist on the linkage of the PLO/Israel dispute and the Gulf conflict and did

²⁰⁷ An example of the idealist position is portrayed in V. Mehta, "Baghdad Today, Bombay Tomorrow," *Sunday*, 1/27-2/2/91, pp. 8-9.

²⁰⁸ Shahnaz A. Aiyar, "Walking a Tightrope: India's Gulf Policy," *India Today*, 2/15/91, p. 31.

²⁰⁹ Shahnaz A. Aiyar, "Walking a Tightrope: India's Gulf Policy," p. 31.

²¹⁰ According to a Ministry of External Affairs spokesman the supplies were transhipped via Iran. "India Sending Medical Supplies to Iraq," *The Hindu*, 2/22/91.

²¹¹ "Dangerous Liaisons," *The Illustrated Weekly of India*, 2/16-17/91, p. 21.

provide refueling and overflight services to the US, which the National Front Government had previously refused. In a volte face, Congress reversed its earlier policy of seeking improved relations with the US, and pressured Shekhar to withdraw the use of Indian airspace and facilities.

Under threat of withdrawal of Congress support for his government Chandra Shekhar agreed to withdraw American access to Indian facilities on 17 February 1991. In responding to criticism of his handling of the Gulf War and American requests for refueling by M. L. Fotedar of the Congress party in the Rajya Sabha on 4 March 1991, PM Chandra Shekhar responded that "[y]ou neither understand the nationally accepted policy, nor do you know what we should follow."²¹² From this statement Chandra Shekhar seems to have made a similar distinction to the one made by K. Subramanyam that "Non-alignment is an instrument of policy. Not an objective of policy."²¹³ With this perception, India moved further toward a new pragmatism of striking a modus vivendi with the US in the post Cold War world. These pragmatic policies continue to be pursued by Chandra Shekhar's successor Narasimha Rao. An example of such a policy reorientation is the 29 January 1992 recognition of the state of Israel by Narasimha Rao's government.²¹⁴

At some point prior to the outbreak of hostilities, India quietly granted the United States overflight and refuelling rights. This decision, it has been pointed out by K. Subramanyam, "by-passed all established decision making structures and processes."²¹⁵ The subsequent reversal of the decision to provide refueling attests to the dominance of domestic political considerations over the international realities, even in the midst of a war with significant consequences for India. This was further demonstrated by the continued absence of an effective Foreign Minister during most of the crisis.

²¹² Chandra Shekhar as quoted in K.T.R. Menon, "Govt Under Fire Over Refueling," *Times of India*, 3/4/91.

²¹³ K. Subramanyam as quoted in "Dangerous Liaisons," *The Illustrated Weekly of India*, 2/16-17/91, p. 22. Chandra Shekhar had been known as a leader of the "young Turks" that had favored collaboration with the CPI, CP(M) and the left of Indian politics.

²¹⁴ Edward Gargan, "India Announces Full Israeli Ties," *The New York Times*, 1/30/92.

²¹⁵ K. Subramanyam, "The Mistakes We Commit," *The Business and Political Observer*, 3/18/91.

K. Subramanyam, using the handling of the Gulf War as an example, has criticised the decision making process for its lack of institutional character. He alleges that the structure was circumvented, and that the decision was "not taken in accordance with normal procedures." His criticism of the system was echoed by General Sundarji. "If we had a national security strategy working, crises like the Gulf, might have been anticipated or at least its impact on Indian interests and possible policy options, would have been known from the outset."²¹⁶ Subramanyam has called for more attention to be paid to the "structures and processes of decision making."²¹⁷ Other defence commentators have similarly observed instances where the existing organizational structure for decision making has been circumvented.²¹⁸ Subramanyam's assertion, concerning the circumvention of the existing system, is supportable considering the extreme ambiguity as to whether it was an agreement struck by V.P. Singh, Chandra Shekhar or Rajiv Gandhi which had allowed the refuelling in and overflight of Indian territory.

The high degree of uncertainty over who was responsible indicates that it was a decision taken by a small and limited selection of the highest echelons of decision making and that it was probably made from the PM's office with limited outside consultation. The earliest reference to a possible agreement with the US for Overflight and refueling rights dates to 15 May 1973.²¹⁹

As the controversy mounted in the end of January 1991, accusations and counter accusations were rife as the politicians sought to disassociate themselves from a policy which had the political liability of alienating over 100 million Indian Muslims in an election year. Congress, who at the time were allowing the existence of the Janata Dal (S) Government through their support from outside, were critical of its refusal to consult Parliament.

²¹⁶ General Sundarji, "Myopic Strategy," *India Today*, 9/30/90.

²¹⁷ K. Subramanyam, "The Mistakes We Commit," *The Business and Political Observer*, 3/18/91.

²¹⁸ Vir Narain, "Security Council: Need for Caution," *Times of India*, 2/15/90.

²¹⁹ Anonymous source in the MEA cited in "Dangerous Liaisons," *The Illustrated Weekly of India*, 2/16-17/91, p. 18.

Congress issued a statement claiming that "the decision makers in South Block had no right to do what they had done."²²⁰ When issuing a statement that the refueling would continue Janata Dal (S) spokesman, and then General Secretary, S.P. Malviya indicated that the decision to allow the refueling was undertaken by the National Front Government.²²¹ Former External Affairs Minister I.K. Gujral denied a National Front involvement in the decision to allow refueling. In response to this denial, Congress spokesman M.J. Akbar stated

I do not believe his denial. But I can understand his compulsions. He does not have as close a relation with the US as Mr V.P. Singh had ... It is possible that Mr. Gujral did not fully know what was going on in his former Ministry. It is more likely that it was a V.P. Singh decision.²²²

In February of 1991, V.P. Singh admitted that the US government approached him concerning the use of Indian facilities in August of 1990. "I had turned down this offer when it came to me."²²³ National Front spokesman J. Reddy clarified the statement by stating that between the outbreak of tensions, on August second and the fall of the National Front Government on 9 November 1990 no US aircraft were allowed access to Indian facilities.²²⁴

Evidently, a visit to the US by Chandra Shekhar's Commerce Minister Subramaniam Swamy by-passed the Ministry of External Affairs again by persuading PM Chandra Shekhar to continue the existing agreement.²²⁵ Dr. Subramaniam Swamy was accused by MP S. Malik of secretly meeting with

²²⁰ South Block is the governmental office building that houses the Cabinet Secretariat, and the head offices of the Ministry of External Affairs and the Ministry of Defence. Inder Malhotra, "Political Commentary: Big Row Over Refueling," *Times of India*, 1/31/91.

²²¹ Times of India News Service, "USAF To Continue," *Times of India*, 2/1/91.

²²² Times of India News Service, "Records Point to V.P.'s Complicity," *Times of India*, 1/31/91.

²²³ V. P. Singh as quoted in, "Rajiv Had a Secret Deal with US: VP," *Hindustan Times*, 2/6/91.

²²⁴ Special Correspondent, "US Sounded VP for Refueling Help," *Delhi Mid Day*, 2/1/91 and also Times of India News Service, "NF Had Refused US Request: VP," *Times of India*, 2/1/91.

²²⁵ H. Shah and V. Makhjani, "Rajiv's Govt. Agreed to Refuel USAF Planes in India," *Times of India*, 2/3/91.

the US and Israel and of "serving up" India's independence, by agreeing to refueling and overflight concessions, in return for IMF loans.²²⁶ In response to allegations that India had sold out its NAM credentials to the US for IMF loans Deputy Minister for External Affairs, Digvijay Singh, stated that "you can abuse us a thousand times but you can't call us American agents. We have only continued the same policy that was being followed by the V. P. Singh Government. It is not as if we have taken a new stand."²²⁷

After a solid round of accusations and denials by all three parties, the issue was settled by R. Grant Smith Charge d'Affaires at the US Embassy in Delhi, on February first 1991. In his briefing to the Indian Association of Foreign Correspondents he indicated that Rajiv Gandhi made an agreement for refueling in 1987 as part of an overall improvement of relations that stemmed from Gandhi's two visits to the US in 1985 and 1987.²²⁸ Reportedly the agreement also covers ship visits.²²⁹ Under the agreement, only non-lethal cargoes were allowed. It is not clear as to whether this agreement had a provision for a case by case review of requests.²³⁰ The agreement most probably called for review on a case by case basis. This would explain the repeated approaches that the US made to the three governments concerned over the issue. The Congress pre-election strategy of trying to carve out the Muslim vote bank by being perceived as anti-US during the Gulf crisis is inconsistent with the quiet diplomacy that had been transpiring. This inconsistency is due to the lack of an alternative election strategy for Rajiv in the lead-up to the 1991 election.

²²⁶ "Swamy Met Israeli, US Officials," *Times of India*, 1/31/91. It is of interest to note the BJP's lack of comment on the issue.

²²⁷ Digvijay Singh as quoted in "Dangerous Liaisons," *The Illustrated Weekly of India*, p. 18. Singh reiterated these remarks at a seminar at the Jawaharlal Nehru University.

²²⁸ H. Shah and V. Makhjani, "Rajiv's Govt. Agreed to Refuel USAF Planes in India," *Times of India*, 2/3/91.

²²⁹ HT Correspondent, "Rajiv Okayed Refueling in 87," *Hindustan Times*, 2/5/91.

²³⁰ The improved tenor of Indo-US relations is being maintained by the Rao government. Defence Minister Sharad Pawar met with Defence Secretary Cheney, National Security Adviser Scowcroft and Vice President Quayle in April of 1992 where agreements were reached on joint naval exercises. He further stated that "there is better scope for drawing two nations closer." "Defence Ministers Visit to USA," *India News*, 4/16/92.

Despite the US Embassy's announcement, of 1 February, Natwar Singh, former Minister of State and a Senior Member of the Congress party, affirmed, on 5 February 1991, the statement of a Foreign Office spokesman of 4 February, that "no general agreement had been entered into in 1985 or 1987 -or at any other time- with regard to air-corridor overflights by American military planes."²³¹ Evidently Congress felt that it could continue its position on the Gulf War despite the US disclosure. To do this, it seems that the MEA, at least up to the Minister of State level, would have been kept outside the decision making loop on the agreement with the US, thereby limiting those who could point out the differences between past and current thinking on the Indo-US relationship. This is not surprising given the significant departure that such an agreement would have represented in the mid 1980s prior to the collapse of Soviet power. Even in 1991, as the realities of the post Cold War world were becoming evident, Congress, Janata Dal, CPI-M and the National Front were all careful to distance themselves, though to varying degrees, from the US action in the Gulf.²³²

Despite the general assessment that the existing national security and defence planning system is deficient, the NSC proposal has foundered, and, like so many previous efforts to improve India's process for national security policy formation, seems destined to lapse into disuse. The one truly innovative aspect of the NSC proposal, the independent secretariat, was initially obstructed by a rider to the cabinet proposal, attached by the backers of the Strategic Policy Group of the CCPA, which interposed the Joint Intelligence Committee as the body which would provide administrative support rather than the establishment of a separate independent secretariat. This effectively thwarted the NSC proposal by delaying its implementation long enough for the bureaucracy to mobilize elements against the idea. The plan to have the Joint Intelligence Committee function in the capacity of the NSC's secretariat further blurred the distinction between intelligence and policy making. The Finance Ministry subsequently denied the NSC's

²³¹ HT Correspondent, "Govt Must Stop Refueling," *Hindustan Times*, 2/6/91.

²³² HT Correspondent, "Sathe Derides JD-S on Refueling issue," *Hindustan Times*, 2/14/91.

secretariat funding.²³³ The Congress Party opposed the NSC fearing that it would establish institutional arrangements limiting the extent of direct political control over the formation of national security policy that would be tantamount to usurping the power of cabinet by a supra-cabinet body.²³⁴ It is this need on the part of politicians, which necessitates a reactive strategic policy, which is subordinate to the dominate political party and to the Prime Minister. Indeed, it appears that the extent that there was long range vision for India in a strategic context seems to have been the product of the ideas of the Prime Minister.

The announced National Security Council sparked only a limited debate in the press. Dilip Mukerjee of the Times of India speculated that the "NSC can perhaps provide a sharper focus for better coordination of political and security instruments."²³⁵ Conversely, some criticism was levelled at the proposal from those fearing its diminution of the already curtailed influence of the military.

This council would, in fact, duplicate decision making and further confuse the issues at hand ... In the Cabinet Secretariat itself, there is today a Military Wing ... fully geared to work on perspectives both military and for internal security threats. Unfortunately, this wing has never been allowed to grow and function.²³⁶

Other defence commentators were positively disposed toward the concept but not the particular manifestation.²³⁷ Lt. General Sinha has pointed out the deficiencies of the existing compartmentalized and inharmonious approach to national security policy formation. In putting his voice behind the proposal, Sinha saw the NSC as enabling "... the administration to take a multi-disciplinary and comprehensive view, anticipating events and being fully prepared for them rather than reacting to

233 T. R. Ramachandran, "NSC Likely to be Put in Cold Storage," *The Business and Political Observer*, 1/4/91.

234 Special Correspondent, "Cong(I) Opposes Proposed NSC," *The Hindu*, 5/17/90.

235 Dilip Mukerjee, "Not by Guns Alone," *The Times of India*, 9/18/90.

236 Lt. Gen. P. N. Hoon (retd.), "Who Formulates Defence Policy?" *The Hindustan Times*, Delhi, 11/12/90.

237 Interview with retired Lt. General S.K. Sinha, "Sinha for Broad Based NSC," *Times of India*, 1/6/90.

them in an ad hoc manner." When questioned on the reasons for the absence of a chief of defence staff, Sinha cited the resistance of the bureaucracy for fear of "loosening their grip over the services," as one of the key reasons, in addition to the politicians' fears of a "man on horseback."²³⁸

Much of the opposition to the NSC emanates, not from a lack of perception that the national security policy apparatus is deficient, or that it needs to be more effectively managed, but from fears that in the reorganisation process the vested interests of the existing bodies will be diminished or marginalised. K. Subramanyam identified the main obstacle of the NSC gaining acceptance as stemming from the separate secretariat which was to be created. There has been concern that the NSC could serve to justify centralised control by acting as a "super government inside the government."²³⁹ The extent to which this could operate beyond the present capacity of the CCPA would be determined by the size of the support secretariat and the Strategic Core Group as, without these, the NSC is in reality no more than a renamed CCPA. As currently organised the CCPA draws on the Cabinet Secretariat for its support. Resentment of the establishment of the NSC may also stem from the Cabinet Secretariat's fear of being eclipsed by the autonomous Secretariat of the proposed NSC. This explanation would account for some of the intransigence of the bureaucracy to the idea. Further, Ministerial anxiety, of those Ministers currently sitting on the CCPA, over the proposal, could stem from their fear that the NSC would eventually establish the position of a National Security Adviser similar to the position in the American model and as such, this individual would have the effect of diminishing the weight of the Ministerial input on national security policy.

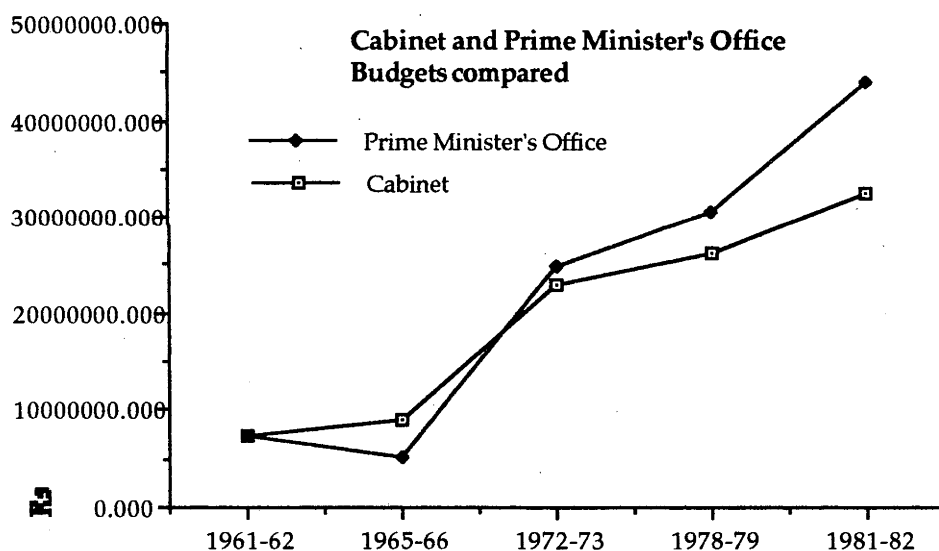
The substantive issues before defence planners in the coming years will increasingly involve India in the need for long term, integrated planning. Issues such as nuclear weapons and ballistic missile proliferation, continuing low intensity conflict, the need to integrate internal and external

²³⁸ Interview with retired Lt. General S.K. Sinha, 1/6/90.

²³⁹ K. Subramanyam, "Planning for Security: Blueprint for An Apex Body," *The Business and Political Observer*, 12/20/89.

intelligence in addressing the numerous insurgencies confronting India, as well as the need to restructure the armed forces to engage in an increasingly technological battle field on land, sea and in the air, will all be unmanageable without an effective decision making structure for strategic planning.

Despite the widespread agreement among strategic analysts that the structure of long term national security policy planning was woefully deficient bureaucratic opposition proved to be effective in obstructing the implementation of the NSC. This re-establishes the subordination of the military to the political process, the Congress party and ultimately the Prime Minister's office. With the budget of 1988-89 figures concerning the total strength of the Cabinet Secretariat and the Prime Minister's Office were omitted. In this way the "phenomenal increase in the staff strength of the Prime Minister's Office has been hidden from public view."²⁴⁰



Source: Madhu Limaye, *Cabinet Government in India*, (New Delhi: Radiant Publishers, 1989), pp. 313-17.

The continuation of the centralised and personalized approach to national security policy places continuing emphasis on the Prime Minister

²⁴⁰ Madhu Limaye, *Cabinet Government in India*, (New Delhi: Radiant Publishers, 1989), pp. 318.

and his trusted advisers and the subordination of those who had sought to establish a more institutionalised process for the formation of national security policy.

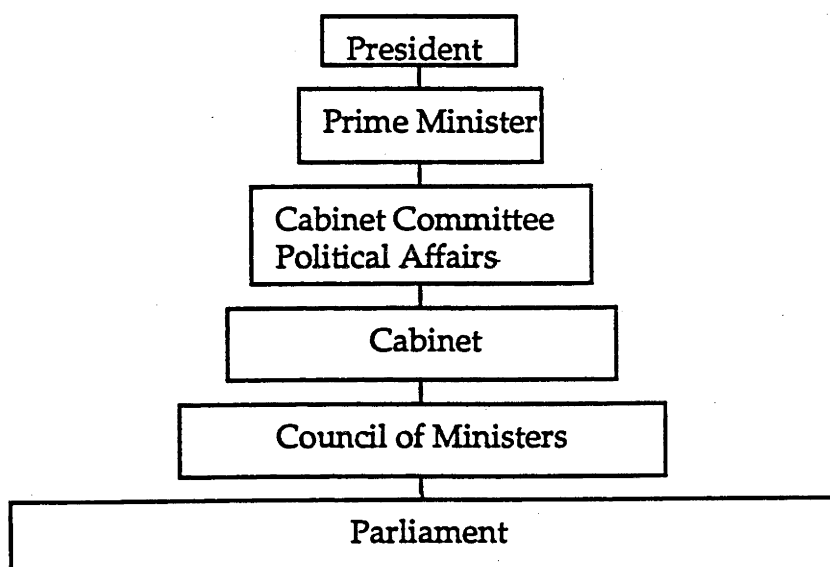
In this context those seeking deeper insight into the future progress of Indian security policy are forced to examine internal political developments. The lack of an institutionalised structure, the subordination of the military to the bureaucracy, and the continuing locus of control of the process in the hands of the Prime Minister, his personal office, the CCPA and Cabinet, establish an inextricable linkage between the domestic political milieu and the external strategic outlook and policy of India. These formal and informal parallel structures justify the use of both the bureaucratic and great leader approaches to decision-making.

The policy direction which India is charting for the post Cold War world demonstrates a desire for improved relations with the West and the states of the Indian Ocean Region. India has recently held joint naval manoeuvres with Australia, recognised Israel and held talks in January and April of 1992 with the United States under the auspices of the newly formed Indo-US Joint Steering Committee "for naval and military exchanges and co-operation between India and US forces."²⁴¹ Further Prime Minister Rao's ambitious program for transformation of its economy from the Nehruvian socialist model to a more market oriented approach has been reaffirmed through the endorsement received from the All India Congress Committee in April of 1992.²⁴² Given the signs that India is desirous of improved relations, based on increased economic and military exchanges and Western recognition of its heightened status, it would be a strategic blunder to alienate India through alarmist projections of India's future strategic position. India's current leadership is not demonstrating a proclivity for policy directions that will bring it in conflict with Western interests and as such increased exchanges and understanding should be encouraged to minimise the potential for damaging misperceptions.

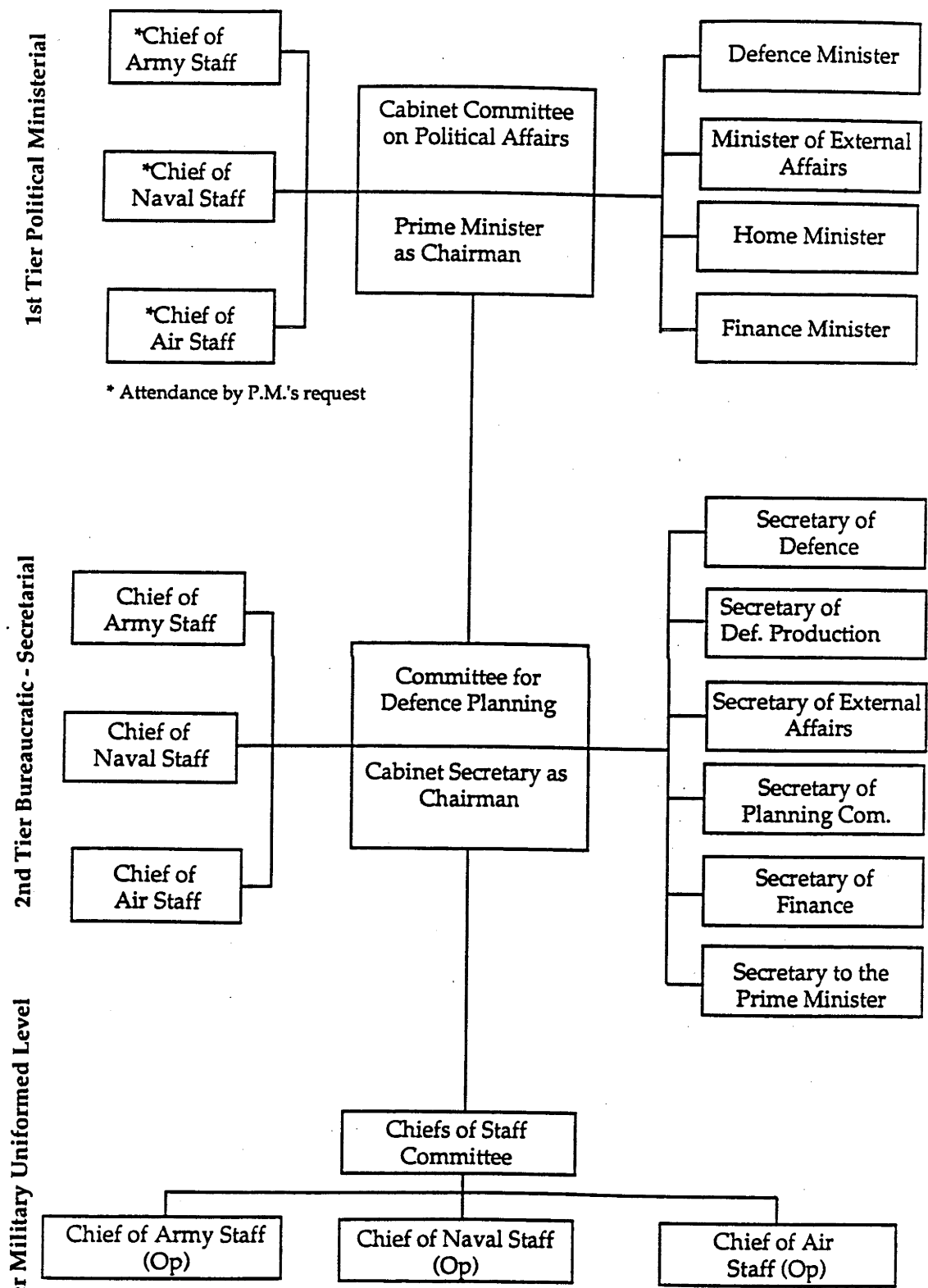
²⁴¹ "India: Still in the Race for Arms?" *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 2/4/92.

²⁴² David Housego, "Cautious Rao Silences Critics," *Financial Times*, 4/15/92.

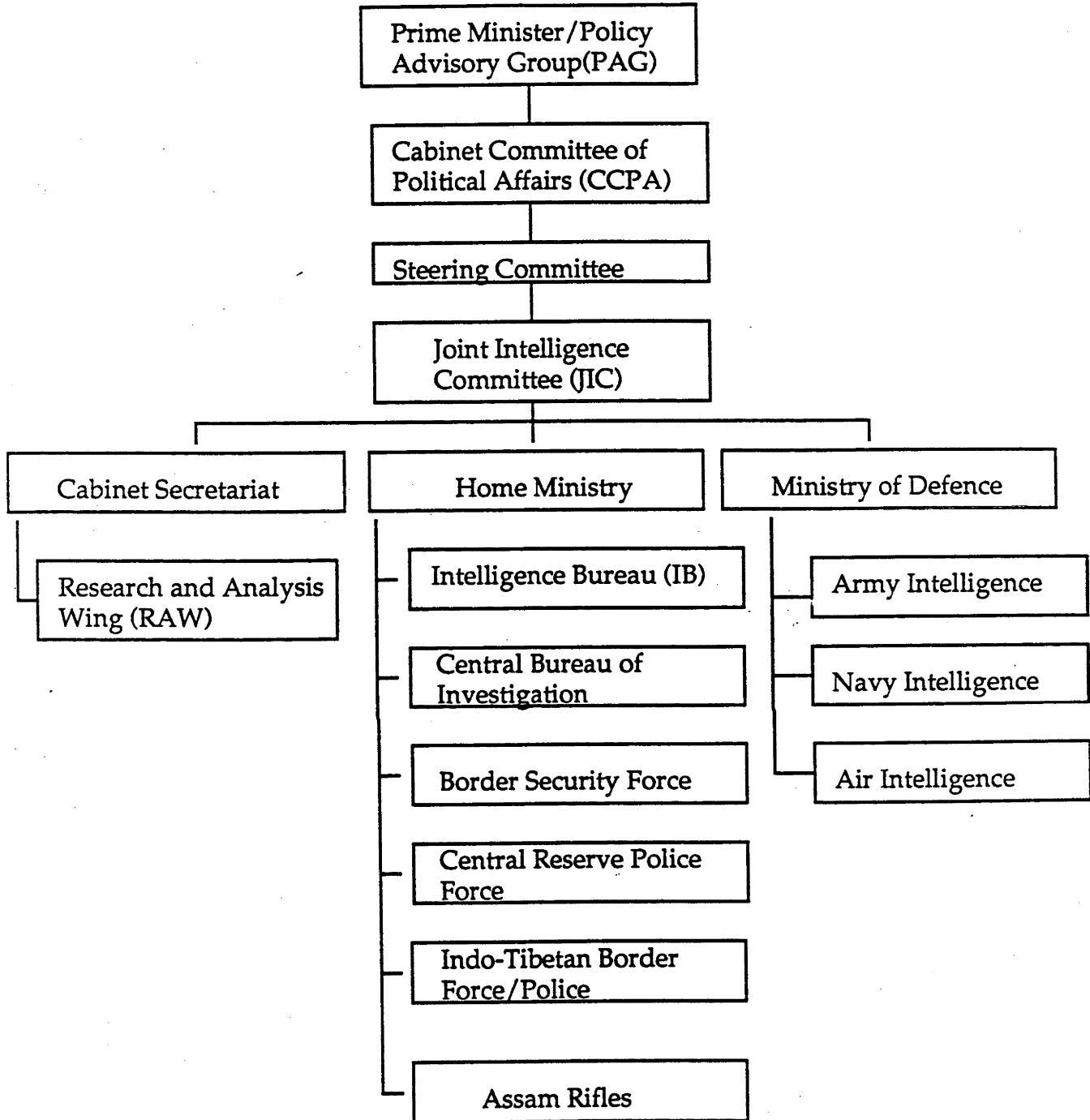
Formal Hierarchy of Power



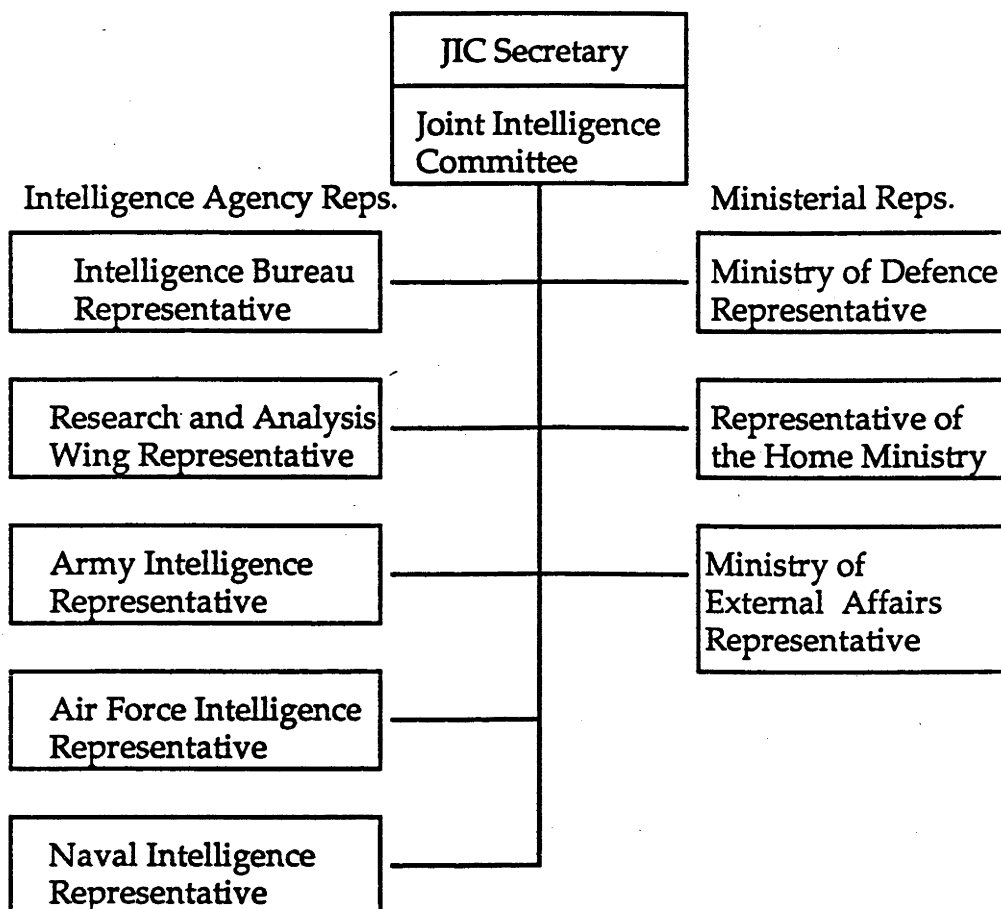
The Three Tiers of National Security Policy Decision Making



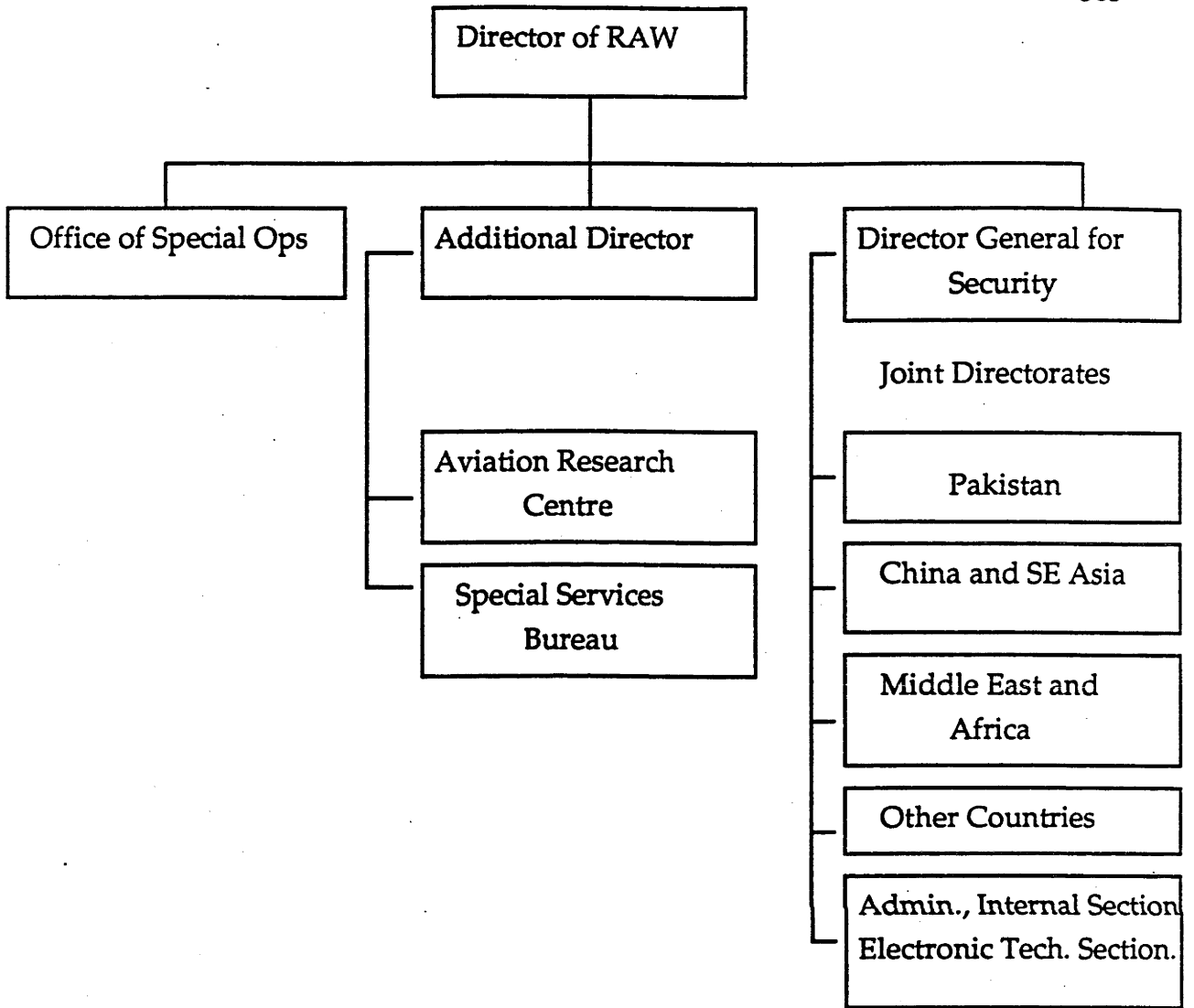
Intelligence Organisation



Joint Intelligence Committee Composition and Structure



J. Bandyopadhyaya, *The Making of India's Foreign Policy*, (New Delhi: Allied Publishers, 1979) pp. 246-7.



Edited and redrawn from, Asoka Raina, *Inside RAW: The Story Of India's Secret Service*, (Delhi: Vikas Publishers, 1981)

CHAPTER SEVEN

So that, of all people who were then slain, done to death, or carried away captive in Kalinga, if the hundredth or the thousandth part were now to suffer the same fate, it would be a matter of regret to His Sacred Majesty. For His Sacred Majesty desires that all animate beings should have security, self-control, peace of mind, and joyousness.¹

-Asoka's Rock Edict No. XIII, 261 BC

... the four castes, Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaisya, Sudra, are everywhere present at all times, in all civilised societies. By the mighty hand of time, their number and power also vary at different times, in regard to different countries. In some countries the numerical strength or influence of one of these castes may preponderate over another, at some period, one of the classes may be more powerful than the rest.

-Swami Vivekananda, "A Theory of Political Cycles," 1899.

A summation of observations and conclusions

This inquiry into India's aspirations to great power status has taken the position that India has been seeking a larger role in an expanding region and that this has been driven by a need for security, independence and status. While this course has been charted by the decision-making elite its parameters have been defined by domestic, geopolitical and economic considerations as discussed in Chapters Three, Four and Five. This national elite desires a greater role for India both within South Asia and the northern reaches of the Indian Ocean. Though India is likely to continue to seek to expand its external posture its ability to do so will be limited by the pace of economic reform and growth. Because of the relative aspect of power the impact of India's expanded posture may well be offset by the increasing position of China in the Asia Pacific region. While Pakistan remains India's most immediate threat India's desires for a larger international role will increasingly make it the rival of China.

¹ The idea to explore the relationship between the Kautilyan and Asokan traditions was prompted by George Tanham. See also J. Bandyopadhyaya, *The Making of India's Foreign Policy*, p. 69. and A. Appadorai, *The Domestic Roots of India's Foreign Policy, 1947-72*, Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1981.

If India's economic reforms do not bring fairly rapid returns the Congress Party will be further weakened. This, coupled with its lack of vision, may lead to further gains by the Hindu fundamentalist agenda. It is this agenda, with its challenge to the secular vision of India, that represents the largest threat to regional stability. If the Hindu fundamentalist agenda becomes merged with the national agenda India's desire for an expanded role could become destabilising. In the short term India's need for economic assistance will prevent it from substantially antagonising Western interests.

During this process of economic reform Indian society faces the problem of how to reconcile the objectives of modernisation while not becoming alienated from its socio-cultural traditions. Adherence to tradition is perpetuated through a complex interplay between the religious and social aspects of Hinduism.

Subservience to traditional authority and allurements with tradition, which have far from receded in post independence India, both among the dominant and the labouring strata, only defeat the most central processes of modernisation.²

In this way a conflict of idiom is being played out on the Indian political stage. To engage the process of reform is to court a reaction from the traditional element within society. To ignore modernity and the necessity for development is to allow the frustrations of despair to build. These frustrations, as observed in Chapter Three, are themselves threats to the centre when coupled with ethnic or religious identities.

The sustained allegiance to the socio-religious structure appears mystifying to the outside observer, given the profusion of deities and multiple centres of social authority. Nehru himself recognised India as a "palimpsest on which layers of thought and reveries had been inscribed, and yet no succeeding layer had completely hidden or erased what had been written previously."³

² Suren Navlakha, *Elite and Social Change: A Study of Elite Formation in India*, (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1989), p. 26.

³ Jawaharlal Nehru as quoted in Tariq Ali, *An Indian Dynasty*, p. 57.

When discussing rational actor models of decision making the context of what is indeed considered to be rational behaviour must be taken into consideration. What to some may be irrational may to others seem natural. As might be expected, President Ronald Reagan and his wife Nancy were not alone in the world of politics in turning to the stars to gain insight into the course of future events. In India such recourse is not the stuff of scandal but is, within its context, an understandable step. While by no means universal, such belief in Gurus, astrology, palmistry and soothsayers is accepted not only by the lower classes but by segments of the middle and upper classes as well. It can be seen how some of the more peculiar aspects of the traditional society remain close to the identity of the educated-professional strata who are the ones who implement and inform the policies of the modern state.

Retired Defence Ministry Official V.M. Sharma has become known in Delhi amongst the "high and mighty of India's governing elite" as a soothsayer of renown.⁴ Among those palms which Sharma has read are those of Jawaharlal Nehru, Lal Bahadur Shastri and Krishna Menon. In response to predictions of ill fortune prescriptions of gem stones, the chanting of mantras or the donation of a cow to a Brahmin are prescribed as measures to alter negative future events. Chandra Swami, who has been described as the "favourite high flying tantrik of Indian politicians, including Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao," performed a yagna next to the Ashram of Mauni Baba at Ujjain during the Kumbh Mela. Baba is the godman of Rao's political rival, Arun Singh. It is thought that black magic practiced here at this time is especially effective. Arun Singh also visited the Baba Ashram during the ceremony.⁵ At the same time Rao was undermining Singh's position within the Congress Party. Rao made Singh's seat on the Congress Central Working Committee a nominated one even though Singh had obtained his through election.⁶

⁴ Hamish McDonald, "Next Year's News," *The Far Eastern Economic Review*, 12/23/91, pp.23-4.

⁵ N.K. Singh, "Tantrik Tantrums: Swami Takes on Arjun Singh's Godman," *India Today*, 6/15/92, p. 22.

⁶ Z. Agha, "Authoritarian Streak: Rao Goes from Glasnost to Loyalty," *India Today*, 6/15/92, p. 22. This rivalry continued to mount in 1993.

Continuing notions of untouchability, the payment of dowry and Sati, while made illegal by the state continue to have a place in the Hindu social identity. Stories of local village head men executing inter caste couples continue to make headlines. Dowry, while outlawed in India since 1961, continues to be widely practiced.⁷ Just what the impact of modernisation will be on these attachments to India's socio-cultural traditions is uncertain. What does seem to be evident is that rapid change will produce a strong reaction. This will hurt progressive political agendas.

The hope of a better life, access to economic prosperity and the ability to attain a greater degree of self realization, which motivated the elite and masses alike to join in the freedom struggle have proven to be elusive goals to the lower ends of sociological spectrum. India is by no means alone, among post colonial societies, in this phenomena. During the freedom struggle those attempts to radically reorient the structure were subordinated and displaced by the more narrow agenda of removing the foreign class of overlords. They were replaced by a new indigenous ruling class, which, though modified by Western values and ideas, had not departed from the traditional, hierarchical organisation. For this reason independence did not significantly alter the traditional social-strata of Indian society.

The caste system acts to limit the social mobility of those castes at the lower end of the spectrum to a greater degree than those closer to the top of the social strata. In this way the elite were not against the adoption of certain aspects of Western ideology which were relevant to the Indian situation. Western influenced segments of the elite led movements for positive social

⁷ The number of females per 1,000 males has declined from the 1981 level of 934, to 929 in 1991. The extreme financial burden of dowry has contributed to a declining sex ratio of females to males and lead to the recorded suicide or murder of over 3,000 women annually. Sati glorification, though an offence, did not dissuade Sati supporters from celebrating the anniversary of the Sati of Roop Kanwar at Deorala in September of 1990. The gathering was loosely veiled as a Ramayana recital to avoid prosecution by the authorities. Hamish McDonald, "Population Surge Forces Rethinking in Official Strategy: Paying for the Past," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 12/26/91, pp.16-9. In 1988, 89 and 90, 11,259 dowry related deaths were registered. This would represent only a percentage of the overall numbers. These occur when the women's parents default on dowry obligations or when the groom or his family use the "accidental" death of the bride as a way to acquire wealth. Ruth Pitchford, "Brides' Fate Cash or Death," *The Canberra Times*, 8/9/91. "Sati Anniversary: Hundreds Flock to Deorala," *Indian Express*, 9/2/90.

reform in such areas as renunciation of colonial subjugation and later against untouchability. Despite the influence of secular ideas the elite, as a group, were not about to allow entry to the lower levels of society.

Thus, while colonial subjugation released powerful new forces of change as well as reactionary and conservative elements, it is the nature of the native social structure which determined that the elements providing leadership to both these arose from basically the same dominant groups and strata without causing a split in their ranks ...⁸

That the modern Indian state has not been fraught with more disruptive and destabilising demands from the marginalised elements, who have not shared in the fruits of the freedom struggle, is a testament to the staying power of the traditional structure and the basically conservative nature of Hindu society.

With this understanding of the basic traditional grounding of society we can better understand the basis upon which the BJP, VHP and RSS can build their support. This is demonstrated by their success in the more traditional northern areas of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, as opposed to the south, which had more wide spread non-Brahmin movements. Prime Minister Singh's lack of success in implementing the Mandal commission's recommendations to advance lower caste groups through quotas, while largely of symbolic significance, attests to the continuing strength of the existing social structure.

If the Hindu fundamentalist element is successful in occupying a more central role in redefining both the political agenda, and the identity of the ruling and educated-professional segments of the society, then there will be a significant transformation of the guiding vision behind India. The Hindu fundamentalists are simultaneously seeking to transform India from the top down, through political mobilisation, and from the bottom up, through a resurgence of a reworked Hindu identity. The relative degree of influence of the upper levels of Indian society is made clear by the secular nature of the Indian government. This is despite the overwhelming

⁸ S. Navlakha, *Elite and Social Change*, p. 24.

religious proclivities of the Indian people. This secular vision is being threatened by a new interpretation of national politics. One way in which the secular modernising agenda can be resuscitated is if it can be successfully wedded with a economic program of modernisation that improves the material well being of the Indian people.⁹ If there is continued economic and political stagnation Indians will react by seeking an alternative to secular Congress rule.

The educated/professional elite are a product of the upper strata of Indian society. There are differing perspectives within this group as to the proper direction which India should take in the nation building process. In the lead up to the struggle for independence from British rule two key divisions among Hindu nationalists developed. On the one hand there were the modernist, as typified by Nehru. These men were bringing to the struggle a set of Western values as well as their Indian traditions. In addition to the Modernists, were the revivalists.¹⁰ The revivalists drew on notions of Hindu antiquity. They were themselves further divided into those who sought to preserve Hindu traditions as they existed and those who sought to reform those traditions through re-interpretations of some of the sacred texts of Hinduism. The RSS, and its political affiliates, stem from this reformist strain of the revivalist tradition.

Many of the reformists repudiated the satyagraha movement of Mahatma Gandhi for its particular over-emphasis on ahimsa. As Hindu-Muslim riots spread in the pre-independence period the RSS came to view Hindu passivity with scorn. They believed that Hindus should draw on the Kshatriya model within Hinduism to regain strength to defend themselves and to assert their independence both from the British and the Muslims. "We can not afford to be so weak and imbecile as to encourage others to crush us, nor can we be so obsessed by the false ideals of ahimsa but at our

⁹ In 1992-3 PM Rao staked his political future on the success of the economic reforms rather than on a direct challenge of the rising BJP as was advocated by others in the Congress party. This indicates the strength of the Hindu fundamentalist appeal and Congress's lack of commitment to its foundation ideology.

¹⁰ This distinction has been developed in, Walter Andersen and Shridhar Damle, *The Brotherhood in Saffron: The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh and Hindu Revivalism*, (New Delhi: Vistaar Publications, 1987).

peril."¹¹ Mahatma Gandhi's emphasis on ahimsa was seen as including the Christian values of passivity into the movement which the reformists felt should draw its inspiration solely from within Hinduism. For their ideological inspiration and leadership, the reformists looked to Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Swami Vivekananda and Aurobindo Ghose rather than to Mahatma Gandhi. Influential leaders of the reformist movement, such as Vinayak Damodar Savarkar in his *Hinduvata*, sought to define India as a Hindu nation through a more militant form of Hinduism than had existed since the establishment of British control over India. Sarvarkar perceived the problem to be fundamentally "psychological and what was required was an inner transformation to rekindle a sense of national consciousness and social cohesion."¹² If the Hindu fundamentalists succeed, the ramifications for India's internal and external policies will be significant. With the secular basis of the Indian state removed, India will most likely become a more assertive state.

If the Hindu identity is elevated and expanded from a parochial, limiting ideology to a national and expanding one, then a basis for subordinating those alternative and damaging identities could be established. The Hindu agenda's ability to offer a basis for the resolution of, as opposed to the mere management of, the multiple secessionist and autonomous movements is unique in the current political arena. Congress and the Janata party failed to identify long term solutions to problems emanating from social division.¹³

The transformation of the Congress party from a grass roots organisation into the instrument of its leader and their coterie, the

11 Lajpat Rai as quoted in W. Andersen and S. Damle, *The Brotherhood in Saffron*, p. 29.

12 W. Andersen and S. Damle, *The Brotherhood in Saffron*, p. 34.

13 It is the thesis of Mohammed Ayoob that the current difficulties are the result of the distortion and subversion of those factors that made India function after independence. The four factors which have kept the country together were; 1. the liberal-democratic and mass appeal values of the Congress party, 2. the recognition by the founders of independent India of the need to reconcile subnational identities to the larger state, 3. the assimilative nature of the power structure to allow access to the underprivileged while not alienating the privileged 4. the government's commitment to secular ideas. Mohammed Ayoob, "Dateline India: The Deepening Crisis," *Foreign Policy*, winter 1991-2. This is disputed by S. Navlakha. The point stands in agreement that the current inaccessibility to the power structure by the lower strata has exacerbated intra societal strife.

hightened allegiance to sub-national identities, the resistance to demands for increased access to the corridors of power by the underprivileged and the wavering state support for secularism have all served to shake the very foundations of the modern Indian state. The strains of economic reform will serve to compound these fissures.

This dynamic, of the existing social structure loosing its ability to command the uncoerced allegiance of the people is not isolated to India. It is a phenomena which is pulling at the fabric of multi-ethnic societies around the world as they are increasingly incapable of accommodating various group's demands to place their sub-national identities and values above the national identity. "When values cease being allocated in an acceptable fashion by either one or another elite, loyalties fade, and the stage is set for their redistribution and a consequent shift in authority patterns."¹⁴ It is on the edge of this phase that India finds itself today.

The alienation and insecurity brought on by the breakdown of social, moral and political norms have become major political issues in the twentieth century, particularly in the developing countries where new economic and administrative systems have rapidly undermined institutions and moral certitudes which traditionally defined a person's social function and relationship to authority.¹⁵

If the existing pillars of Indian secular society, such as they are, can not reverse the process of malaise which has beset them then the people will look to alternative identities to find realization of their aspirations. In seeking to quell conflict in India the centre must address the underlying problems or else the insurgency will reemerge. Solutions relying on the force of arms alone will have transient success at best.

This turning away from the existing order will probably take two directions. On the one hand the desire to realise a hightened material standard of living will draw people away from the Nehruvian-socialist

14 Yale Ferguson and Richard Mansbach, "Between Celebration and Despair: Constructive Suggestions for Future International Theory," *International Studies Quarterly*, Dec. 1991, p. 377.

15 W. Andersen and S. Damle, *The Brotherhood in Saffron*, p. 1.

model and toward a more Western oriented market economy. This, if attainable in the short to mid term, may serve as the catalyst to bring the people once again behind the secular state. At the same time there is the danger that it will provoke further reactionary tendencies. If the Congress party can deliver a level of economic prosperity, it may stem the defection of allegiances. If it can not, then the implications will not be limited to economic ideology but will span the spectrum and may lead to further defections to the Hindu fundamentalist cause. Hindu fundamentalism, through its reinterpretation of traditional Hinduism, is at the same time appealing for its familiarity as for its representing change. With change can come the hope that the needs of the people for a sense of community and security can be realized even in a world which has come to be perceived as one of degeneration.

The three dominant identities, cultures or idioms which were predominate in the political milieu at independence continue today. These concepts have not remained static nor have they been insulated from change. The relationships between, and definitions of, these concepts have evolved over time. One was the Western idiom whose influence is most significantly portrayed in the adoption of the Westminster style of government. The primary repository of the Westernized idiom is the national elite at the centre. The second and competitive idiom is the traditional idiom which is "rooted in the kin, caste and communal relations of village, locality and province."¹⁶ We can think of the traditional idiom as having tendencies towards pragmatism or realism. A third, and uniquely Indian idiom, is the saintly idiom. This idiom is that which derives its inspiration from the Mahatma and the idealistic conceptions of selflessness and devotion which are "immune to the mimicking of foreign models or from contamination by the archaic superstitions and feudal practices of Indian society." most usually perpetuated and utilized by the traditionalists.¹⁷ The conflict between these idioms continues today. The Congress Party's emphasis on economic reform and the BJP's emphasis on

¹⁶ Paul Brass, *The New Cambridge History of India: The Politics of India Since Independence*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p.14.

¹⁷ P. Brass, *The New Cambridge History of India*, p.14.

Hindutva are examples of this. As a result of the conflict between these idioms a reinterpreted national culture will emerge which may alter India's external paradigm.¹⁸

Contemporary strategic thinking will evolve within the context of a politicized Hindu majority which will continue to see itself, and its values, as besieged by subcontinental minorities who, through their destabilising influence, open India to external threat. The lack of strategic culture was a corollary of the strength of society over the state. As the state begins to consolidate its position over society a strategic culture will emerge to defend and justify it.

The earliest notions of the "security state" in India are rooted in the dawn of the Aryan civilization. The lives of the Vedic Aryans were centred on their societal notions of the cosmic order of things. In this way they became primarily concerned with the preservation of Rta, or the moral order. The concept of Dharma replaced Rta as the dominant conception of the cosmic order that led to an understanding of the privileges, obligations and duties of man in Vedic society. As threats to the society grew it codified and supplemented its laws with political means of social control and defence.

¹⁸ George Tanham has identified four key factors of Indian strategic culture: geography, culture, discovery of India's history and the legacy from the British Raj. In his discussion he correctly identifies the core perceptions of India's strategy of seeking to deny regional states the ability to act against Indian interests or of external states from using regional states as platforms to gain influence within India's sphere. Tanham bases his explanation of the dearth of Indian strategist on the Hindu conception of time and the nature of man's existence when he posits the question: "if in their minds the future is unknown and unknowable, why plan? In its early stages Hinduism did plan for its defence. One of the worlds most ancient texts on statecraft, Kautilya's Arthashastra, delt extensively with Hindu society's defence by the state. The explanation for the lack of subsequent strategists of note is to be found in the difference between threats to the state and to Hindu society itself. Conflict between Hindu rulers did not necessarily pose a threat to social values. The initial conquests of India by Southwest and Central Asian peoples, or the subsequent British invasion, primarily threatened political India rather than Hindu society, due to the minority status of the conquerors. George Tanham, "Indian Strategic Culture," *The Washington Quarterly*, winter 1992, p. 134.

A recourse had to be taken to the physical manifestation of the Divine Power in the form of danda which was carried out by the king with the help of a security organisation.¹⁹

In this way the king and his security organisation were entrusted with both the defence of Vedic society, from internal and external threats, and punitive responsibilities against those who transgressed the moral law.

Prior to independence the dominant conceptualisation of the state was post facto in that it "retrospectively coped with the heterogeneity and contradictions inherent in Indian politics."²⁰ The Westernised political elite of the freedom struggle changed this through their preconceived utopian ideas of a desired society for India. This imported conceptualisation of politics was accepted based on the expectations that the new ideological orientation of politics would allow modernisation and integration for India as a whole. For failing to meet these expectations, secularism is being abandoned as India is increasingly seeking answers through reinterpretations of Hinduism. Further, the hegemonic designs of the Indian state will further alienate a people who have a strong and vibrant society operating largely independent of the state structure per se. It is the excesses and corruption of the modern secular state that are to blame for the atavistic response embodied in the Hindu chauvinist movement. The best hope for the benevolent secular state of Nehru's vision rests with widespread and rapid economic development that could placate a disgruntled populace. Secularism is unlikely to survive unscathed the two fold attack from the cynical manipulation of politics, by an elite who's fortunes are wedded to the centre, or from the Hindu backlash which seeks to redefine a pan Indian consciousness. Secularism's best hope, that of the opiate of economic prosperity, will itself serve to expand the middle class which have proven themselves to be a stronghold of BJP support. In this way the objective of Nehru and Mahatma Gandhi of developing an integrative, homogenised nationalism that would engender tolerance, is

¹⁹ S.D. Trivedi, *Secret Services in Ancient India*, p. 5. The codes of Manu and the Arthashastra being two key examples of the codification of societal values and their defence. see also R.K. Gupta, *Political Thought in Smrti Literature*, (Allahabad: Allahabad University, 1969).

²⁰ Ashis Nandy, "The Political Culture of the Indian State," *Daedalus*, fall 1989, p.3.

surely under threat of being hijacked by the orthodoxy of Hindu chauvinist ideology.

But inquiry into India's aspirations to great power status must ask more specifically what are the implications of these largely domestic changes for India's regional security posture. As discussed in previous chapters there exists a large degree of consensus in the threat perception and formation of national security policy at the centre.²¹ This was noted by Prime Minister Singh before the Lok Sabha

At least on Defence, it has been our strength that we are all united. And distinctions of party or other distinctions do not hold. That has been our strength. And we have always adhered to it.²²

It is of added interest to note I.K. Gujral, the Janata Government's Ambassador to Moscow, was retained in that position by Indira and that he was subsequently made Foreign Minister in November of 1989 by the National Front Government of V.P. Singh.²³

General K. Sundarji (retd.) has articulated India's national security strategy as being a component of the overall national strategy.²⁴ He highlights the interconnectivity between the internal and external elements of national security. General Sundarji describes the development of national strategy as proceeding along the following lines:

21 There have been departures from mainstream political thought on how India should engage her strategic environment. An example of this would be the Jan Sangh's reservations over the Sino-Indian Treaty of 1954 on Tibet. The Jan Sangh disapproved of the Panchsheel agreement and characterized it as a grave blunder. There are further examples of slight divergences in strategic orientation in the brief Janata period. These involved modifying the Non-Aligned position of India to more fully reflect its original intent. One of the causal factors for the large degree of unity in India's national security policy may be the domination of the structure by a Congress dominated system which was further increasingly centrally controlled and dominated over time. See also Raju Thomas, *The Defence of India: A Budgetary Perspective of Strategy and Politics*, (Meerut: Macmillan Company of India, 1978), p.71.

22 V. P. Singh, *Lok Sabha Debates*, 4/10/90, p.12035.

23 R. Bradnock, *India's Foreign Policy*, p. 90.

24 The Five Year Defence Plan and the overall national plan are now coterminous.

National Strategy

- National aims and objectives
- National vital interests
- Threats to vital national interests
- Overall national strategy to neutralize threats and maximise chances of achieving national aims²⁵

General Sundarji does not limit the national security strategy to a reactive role. He has speculated that it could include "our own force projection capability in areas of our interest, either in response to requests from friendly countries, or to back up coercive diplomacy."²⁶ The relevance of the current challenge to the secular vision is that the national vision determines the "national aims and objectives ... and interests." The military seeks to achieve the objectives but it is the strategic culture of the elite, as modified by the larger socio-political milieu, that determines national values.

The strategic vision being outlined by BJP President, M.M. Joshi, Admiral Nayyar (retd.), K. Subramanyam, General Sundarji, Jasjit Singh or A. K. Banerjee of the Institute of Defence Studies and Analysis, among others reflects the present debate in India.²⁷ A common theme running through contemporary Indian strategic thinking is that India should be more fully engaged within its immediate and extended region. Just how and why this process of engagement should be undertaken is a matter of debate.

A past example of how politics comes to influence strategic thought is demonstrated by the East/West split in the navy. There has been a split in the Navy in the late 1980s reflecting the division over the extent to which India should tilt to the West or whether it should maintain its close relationship with the Soviet Union. To an extent this debate within the Navy over the proper interpretation of non-alignment and its implications

²⁵ General K. Sundarji, "Change and National Security" *Indian Defence Review*, July, 1990 p.144.

²⁶ General K. Sundarji, "Change and National Security" p.144.

²⁷ These views are formed on the basis of interviews.

for the orientation of the services echoes the political divisions of the Janata period.²⁸

As previously discussed threat perception in India is dominated by Pakistan and China.²⁹ These are the only two states with contiguous borders who can directly threaten India's territorial integrity. India will continue to have unresolved border disputes with both countries for some time to come. Border tensions were very high in the Sumdorong Chu area in 1986 and in Kashmir in the Spring of 1990. The instability posed by the numerous secessionist and autonomous groups that oppose the legitimacy of the state is the single most serious threat and is intertwined with India's external relations. In Chapter Three, the domestic and international aspects of security were discussed. While domestic security threats have not been the primary responsibility of the military, the inability of the civil authorities and the paramilitary forces to deal with these threats has increasingly involved the military in domestic law and order situations.

The problem of extra-regional power involvement in the region is a further aspect of the Indian threat perception map which is being redefined. The often cited reaction to the USS Enterprise carrier battle group's presence in the Indian Ocean region in 1971 served to rekindle Indian fears of dominance from across the seas. India was susceptible to the dominance of

²⁸ The policy of diversification of arms procurement between the East and the West was emphasised by the Janata government. The Indian Navy is a mix of both Soviet designed ships, primarily based out of Vishakhapatnam in the East, and Western designed ships operating out of western Indian ports. Officers routinely travel to Western and Soviet Naval schools for the appropriate training. As a result, they have tended to develop corresponding affinities. Rear Admiral Vishnu Bhagwat, who had trained on Soviet ships, alleged that his promotion to the post of Commander of the Western Fleet had been scuttled by a clique of pro Western Officers lead by then Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Nadkarni who had undergone training at the United States Naval War College. Nadkarni has since retired and has been replaced by Admiral Ramdas of the Eastern Fleet. Ramdas reviewed Bhagwat's case which then opened the way for Bhagwat's appointment to the Command of the Eastern Fleet. Hamish McDonald, "Scuttling Rivals: Promotion Controversy Indicates Division in Navy," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 10/10/91, p. 24.

²⁹ China does not easily fit into either the category of a regional or a extra-regional state. China proper is an East Asian state though it is connected to South Asia through Tibet. The history of Tibet places it between the influence of India and China and not entirely in either. In this regard Tibet falls into the category of trans-regional area along with Burma and Afghanistan who are both closely associated with, though not part of South Asia.

extra-regional power projection across the seas in the past and, as such, she is concerned to let neither that avenue of attack, nor the traditional overland invasion route from the northwest of the subcontinent, to be used against it in the future. The relative ease with which the Portuguese, French, Dutch, and British gained footholds in the subcontinent from their position of maritime superiority has not been forgotten in India.

In the Cold War, India hoped to minimise superpower influence in the Indian Ocean region by manoeuvring in the gap created by bipolarity. India will find it difficult to come to terms with its increasing economic dependence on the West. Development considerations will force India to moderate its independent stance in the short term though it will maintain its independence on such issues as missile technology and nuclear proliferation. The realization that a *modus vivendi* must be reached with the West has been identified by the foreign policy and strategic policy elite for some time. The delay comes from the politicians who are not eager to depart from the old rhetoric of independence within the NAM.

In identifying what is new in the new world order, writers of the Euro-American centre³⁰ are presenting an agenda which does not reflect the priorities of what is being defined as the new periphery.³¹ Bipolarity allowed some states to gain a certain degree of leverage. As a multi-centred economic world emerges priorities and structures will be redefined which may or may not be an improvement from the perspective of those states occupying a

³⁰ There are an increasing number of articles addressing the issue of the NWO. See Fred Halliday, "International Relations: Is there a New Agenda?" *Millenium*, spring 1991, pp.57-72, Charles Krauthammer, "The Unipolar Movement," *Foreign Affairs*, v. 70 (1), pp. 23-33 and John Lewis Gaddis, "Toward the Post-Cold War World," *Foreign Affairs*, v. 70 (2), pp. 102-22.

³¹ Buzan argues that in the NWO the centre has subordinated the former third world, now better described as the periphery, as well as the ideology of communism. Buzan also speculates about the possible increased North-South conflict and the rising prominence of Islam in the South. Barry Buzan, "New Patterns of Global Security in the Twenty-first Century," *International Affairs*, v. 67 1991, pp. 431-51, John Chipman, "Third World Politics and Security in the 1990s: The World Forgetting, By the World Forgot?" *The Washington Quarterly*, winter 1991, pp. 151 - and Kurt Cambell and Thomas Weiss, "The Third World in the Wake of Eastern Europe," *The Washington Quarterly*, spring 1991, pp. 91 - 108.

more peripheral position.³² This may also be true in geostrategic terms as the United States remains the world's single remaining superpower.

India's external posture is ultimately dependent on the degree to which it is internally cohesive. If India is further divided by its multiplicity of fissiparous tendencies it will expend its energies inwardly. If it is successful in thwarting subnational agendas, either through the use of force or through the panacea of economic development, it will expand and project itself outwardly. How it projects itself will be determined by India's sense of vision. India in this way continues to move through its historical cycles of unity and disintegration and of tolerance and assertiveness.

Secularism and Hindu fundamentalism are competing for the right to redefine India's vision and as a result its external orientation. Both idioms seek to colonise the mind sets of both the people at large and the decision making elite in particular. Just where this struggle will lead India will be the result of the complex interplay of India's domestic, geopolitical and economic circumstances as they are handled by the decision-making structure. The national elite will continue to be in competition with sub-national elites in this attempt to reshape Indians identities. If the centre can continue to manage the core issue areas it may successfully avert a reorientation of the national idiom. If it is unsuccessful, the Hindu fundamentalist agenda may increasingly become a part of India's vision as India strives to deal with multiple stresses on its society and external relations.

In addition to, and connected with, this idiomatic question, India's military capabilities will continue to influence other states actions by forcing them to consider the consequences of decisions that may be counter to India's interests. In this way India's capabilities may not be used in a direct

³² For South Asia the emergence of trade blocs could present a significant problem as other regions may prove to be more attractive destinations for investment. Japan will continue to focus in East and Southeast Asian while Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union will absorb European assistance and investment.

coercive sense but in a much more subtle way. The essence of the value of status is the ability to influence outcomes without overtly seeking to do so.

With status derived from other states perception of India as a capable and powerful actor, India will be allowed a greater regional and global role. Incidents such as the 1971 war with Pakistan, the Maldives and Sri Lankan interventions and India's nuclear and missile programmes have done a lot to alter external perceptions of India's "status." If India's aspirations are not in part acquiesced to, further demonstrations of power will be used to affect India's position. It is important to draw a distinction between acknowledging the legitimate position of the worlds largest democracy with appeasement. While India is not about to embark on a campaign of territorial expansion it does seek to have a preponderant influence within South Asia and the northern reaches of the Indian Ocean. There are socio-cultural and historical factors which legitimise a benevolent, dominant Indian influence within its South Asian sphere. What could be destabilising is if India comes to redefine its sphere in an expansionistic manner. This may come about as a result of a change in the national idiom. It is for this reason that an understanding of India's external posture is so reliant on a firm understanding of India's internal developments.

APPENDIX I

Indian identity nodes

This appendix presents a more detailed overview of the nine key identity nodes that are viewed as the sources of allegiance and conflict in India and South Asia.

Religion

The pervasiveness of religion in the subcontinent is such that the secular world is encompassed by the religious.

The brave brothers are staunch lovers of their country, but they are Mussulmans first and everything else afterwards. It must be so with every religiously-minded man.¹

This is different from the dichotomised paradigm of the Western mind, where religion and the secular are distinct. Nehru, when asked in 1958 what had been his greatest difficulty since independence responded that it was "creating a secular state in a religious country."² The religious composition of India, according to the 1981 census, subdivides the Indian population by its denomination into the following percentages; Hindu 82.6%, Muslims 11.4%, Christians 2.4%, Sikhs 2%, Buddhist and Jains 1.2% with Zoroastrians and others making the balance.³ The demographic distribution of believers has been an additional source of conflict on the subcontinent for much of its history. Of the religious groups, the interrelationship between the Hindu, Muslim and Sikh communities are the most politically contentious.

Hinduism's differing levels of worship vary from devotional theism to the many popular deities, (Hanuman, Ganesha, Kali et al.), to a more ascetic mysticism which seeks the renunciation of the individual and a merging with the Brahman world spirit. These different aspects

¹ Mahatma Gandhi, Septemeber 1921 as quoted in Gyanendra Pandey, *The Construction of Communalism*, p. 233.

² T.N. Madan, "Religion in India," *Daedalus*, Fall 1989, p. 139.

³ From the 1981 census as compiled in table 2.3 of Myron Weiner, *The Indian Paradox: Essays in Indian Politics*, (Delhi: Sage Publications, 1989), p. 46.

reflect the polytheism of the Vedic, the metaphysics of Karma of Upanishadic philosophy and the legitimation of both ritual and knowledge through the latter Bhagavad Gita. The result is that within Hinduism action (karma) intelligence (jnana) and devotion (bhakti) are acceptable paths to enlightenment (moksha). Hinduism conceives of four stages of the cycle of man. The first is that of the student. This is followed by the life of the householder, the retiree and the sanyasan. Following the retirement of the householder there is the prospect of renunciation of worldly life through the path of the sanyasan who seeks to break the cycle of reincarnation through transcendence. Dharma is a multifaceted concept that represents the "cosmological, ethical, social and legal principles that provide the basis for the notion of an ordered universe."⁴ In this way dharma is the design of Hindu life as moksha is of transcendence.

To the Western mind there are some perplexing dichotomies in Hinduism. Hindu individuals seek at the same time liberation and community.⁵ The focus on the next world seems to de-emphasise life in this world though it is each individual's conduct in this world that shapes his, or her, destiny in the next. Hinduism is rigidly hierarchical through its pervasive and conservative caste structure though it is counterintuitively not a centralised religion. Hinduism's decentralised chaotic nature has been a source of Hindu society's resilience. It has also been the source of subcontinental political organisation's weakness. This is made evident when comparing the relatively inconsequential impact that successive waves of invasion over the centuries have had on India as opposed to, for example, the extensive impact which the United States had on Japan in a limited period after World War Two.⁶

Caste remains as a core identity of the people although Mahatma Gandhi and B.R. Ambedkar spoke out against the notion of untouchability. In 1991 V.P. Singh's secular government sought to extend the quota system of government employment to include backward

⁴ T.N. Madan, "Religion in India," p. 118.

⁵ Rajni Kothari, "The Indian Enterprise Today," *Daedalus*, Fall 1989, p. 56.

⁶ Charles Correa, "The Public, the Private and the Sacred," *Daedalus*, Fall 1989, p. 110.

castes, as well as scheduled castes and tribes. These moves provoked a backlash from those caste groups excluded from the quotas. The Hindu majority is increasingly resentful of Islamic or other minority groups. While Muslims constitute 25% of the subcontinent as a whole they are only 11.5% of the population of India. Though the Muslim minority is presently on the defensive, their history is one of conquest.

Islam first came to the subcontinent in 711 AD with the Arab navies of Muhammad bin Quasim who established the first Arab enclave in the subcontinent in the Indus river delta. Islamic influence grew under the Delhi Sultanate of 1206 - 1526 which was founded by Central Asian Turkic peoples. Due to the lack of significant numbers of conversions before the Mughal period Islam was largely restricted to the ruling class of Persians, Arabs and Turks of predominantly Sunni and Sufi belief. With the reign of the Mughals, 1526-1858, widespread conversion began to expand the ranks of Islam in the subcontinent. During this period Islamic rule varied in its treatment of the Hindu majority. This ranged from the syncretic beliefs of Akbar to the religious intolerance of Aurangzeb.⁷

The frustration of Kashmiri Muslims in the state of Jammu and Kashmir has led to increasing levels of tension and violence between the Muslim inhabitants of the state and the centre. The 64.2%⁸ figure for Muslim representation in the population of Jammu and Kashmir has been dramatically increased by the exodus of Hindus from Kashmir in the wake of the turmoil of 1989-92.⁹ If Kashmir is considered independent of

⁷ Richard Eaton, "Islam," in Francis Robinson ed. *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 339-43.

⁸ Myron Weiner, *The Indian Paradox*, p. 54.

⁹ It has been alleged that the government did little to stem the emigration of Hindus from Kashmir to facilitate military operations against the Muslim insurgents. The argument that the removal of the Hindu minority from the area was done to prevent their being caught between the armed forces and the growing opposition. Without Hindus in the valley, the armed forces can assume that all who remain are part of the problem. Implicit in this, is an attitude which, through its callousness in not making a distinction amongst the moderate and more extreme elements of the remaining Muslim populace, has polarised elements which would have otherwise been more moderate. Had the government acted to keep the Hindu minority in the valley then the conduct of the security forces would

Jammu, and the security forces are not counted, the Muslim percentage of the population would be closer to 98 or 99 percent.

The on-going destabilised situation in Punjab stems from Sikhs, (meaning "disciple" in Punjabi), alternative identity to Hindu India. Sikhism is based on the teachings of ten venerated gurus. The first, Guru Nanak (1469-1539), and the last, Guru Gobind Singh (1666-1708), are by far the most important for their impact on the faith. Guru Nanak developed Sikhism as a response to the degenerated position of those living in the northwest of India. The subsequent waves of Afghan and Turkic invasions coupled with a rigid caste social structure had reduced the quality of spiritual and temporal life. Nanak described his age as "...like a knife. Kings are butchers. Religion has taken wings and flown. In the dark night of falsehood, I can not see where the moon of truth is rising."¹⁰ In 1499 Nanak was to begin his teachings that integrated elements of Sufism, Buddhism and Hinduism into a self empowering religion for the people of his community. Despite its roots, Sikhism is more than an amalgam of concepts derived from these earlier religions. Nanak's teachings were adopted by a people seeking to improve their existence through a redefinition of their community as different from the larger Islamic and Hindu communities around them. This struggle for an independent identity, and an improved quality of life, amid a hostile environment has led the Sikhs to develop a martial and somewhat militant world view. The basic tenets of contemporary Sikhism were drawn together and stabilized with the tenth Guru Gobind Singh. Gobind Singh formed the Khalsa to protect the faith and established the outwardly distinctive aspects of Sikh appearance, the comb, dagger, steel bracelet, uncut hair and breeches, which the vast majority of Sikhs wear.¹¹

The perception of the Hindu majority, that too much has been done by secularist governments to accommodate India's religious and

possibly have been more restrained for fear that in their excesses they would injure Hindus or Hindu interests.

¹⁰ Ram Narayan Kumar and George Sieberer, *The Sikh Struggle*, (Delhi: Chanakya Publications, 1991), p. 1.

¹¹ John Noss, *Man's Religions*, (New York: Macmillan Press, 1980), pp. 220-229.

subnational groups, has led to expanded interest in resurgent Hindu groups within India. Such Hindu fundamentalist movements have been mobilised on the political arena to further their demands for a uncontested central position for Hinduism in India. The role of Hinduism and the emerging national identity will be explored at greater length below.

Territory

The notion of India as a unified territorial entity is an historically changing concept. While large parts of India had been brought under common titular rule under the Mauryan, 313 - 226 BC, Vijayanagar, 1343 - 1565, and Mughal, 1556 - 1707, empires, this was done through a diffused network of alliances with more localised centres of power. Centralised control did not begin to extend over the totality of the territory now known as India until the latter stages of British colonial rule. This was conducted through an indirect style of colonialism that relied on local princes and caste and communal divisions to facilitate its rule. The modern Indian state continues to attempt to extend its authority and legitimacy throughout the land.

A centralised state could emerge only when governmental institutions were established whose authoritative basis was normatively independent of Brahminical legitimation, and whose regulatory and coercive capabilities penetrated down to the localities.¹²

The growth of ethno-nationalist demands to establish independent control over their traditional lands threatens India with breakup at the very juncture in its history when it is poised to take on a regionally preponderant position.

If the fragmentation of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia are an indication of the direction in which multi-ethnic states will move, then India and Pakistan may find their territorial configurations will be altered in the years ahead. Subnational insurgent movements are already firmly

¹² Francine Frankel and M.S.A. Rao, *Dominance and State Power in Modern India: Decline of a Social Order*, (Bombay: Oxford university Press, 1989), p. 7.

entrenched in Punjab, Kashmir and the Northeast. There exists a further rift between North and South India which is reinforced by linguistic, racial and cultural factors.

An interesting discussion of man's regulation of access to territory and the relationship of individual allegiance to territory is explored in Jean Gottmann's *The Significance of Territory*.¹³ At different junctures and in different places in history access to territory has been granted for some, and not others, depending on differing notions of allegiance. By the close of the first century AD, access to territory between the Caliphates and Christendom was restricted by the criterion of religion. Due to the political sensitivity of India's Northeast, access to foreigners traveling in the country is restricted. In the case of Kashmir, non-Kashmiris are not allowed to own property. This policy is opposed by the BJP. Within these states the indigenous inhabitants are seeking to restrict access to territory on the basis of tribal allegiance and religious identity.

Conflict arises when the organisation exerting political control over a given territory establishes rules of access based on differing notions of allegiance and identity from those who inhabit the territory. In the Northeast, the Indian state's priority is to establish more firmly the centre's control over its distant periphery. The centre demands that the people of the region more closely identify with India. Set against the backdrop of the 1962 border war with China, the centre's desire to control access to the region reflects the paramountcy of national perspective over the more localised tribal allegiances of the peoples who inhabit the region.

This concept of a zero sum game, with either loyalty to the centre or to the tribal identity, has led to centrist policies which suppress and subordinate alternative allegiances to the centre. It is the elite's perception of threats to the existing order, and their attendant anxiety, which poses a threat to pluralist democracy.

¹³ Jean Gottmann, *The Significance of Territory*, (Charlottesville: The University Press of Virginia, 1973), pp. 27 - 33.

... grounded in deep anxieties over recent violence which have created an appetite for statist solutions. It is argued that these anxieties, which have contributed to the growth of abrasive conflict and violence, pose a greater threat to open, representative politics and to accommodative social relations than does the violence itself.¹⁴

A policy dedicated to changing the perceptions of dissident elements, so that they perceive the centre as supporting their efforts of self realisation, would lessen conflict and enhance security. Such a policy would necessitate a fundamental redirection of the perceptions of the centre which is unlikely to occur in the current political climate. Policies that allow for some degree of local control which protect minority rights, such as article 370 in Kashmir, could be extended to change the periphery's perception of the centre. The centre would gain through reduced levels of conflict.

The security of the Indian state continues to be undermined by perceptions that exacerbate conflict which then loosens the centre's control of the periphery. This presents security problems for the state vis a vi its neighbours. If the competing allegiances of the periphery, whether religious, tribal, ethnic, etc., are allowed freedom to express themselves within the state structure then the various sub-national groups would come to meld their primary identities to that of India. India would in this way be perceived as protecting, rather than threatening, the subnational unit. Central attempts to rectify these situations through economic incentives may have the effect of increasing the resentment of the Hindu majority of autonomous groups.

The weak linkages between higher orders of central control with the society at large have, over the course of Indian history led to the increased importance of local control rather than the regional or subcontinental authority. Consequentially the local principalities became the "basic building blocks of the political order."¹⁵ It has been the strength of multiple small actors that has kept Indian empires from

¹⁴ James Manor, *Conflict Studies* 212.

¹⁵ Ravinder Kumar, "The Past and Present and Indian Dialogue," *Daedalus*, Fall, 1989, p. 38.

consolidating their control of the subcontinent for long. This has led to a history of shifting regional and subcontinental empires while at the local level Indian civilisation has been upheld by society and petty kingdoms. The current peripheral turmoil may be the precursor to yet another devolution of power from the centre to the periphery. This tendency is already shifting in terms of the background and power base of the MPs.

Caste

The concept of caste is closely related to the Hindu concept of dharma and to Hindu society itself. Caste continues to play a pervasive role in establishing allegiances and legitimacy of governments in India. A partial explanation of the high degree of deference which has been traditionally allocated to political leadership in India stems from the sociological implications of Hinduism.¹⁶ "Religious symbolism became attached to the notion of 'hierarchical collectivity' in which the use of concentrated politico-economic force was circumscribed by moral obligation."¹⁷ This sentiment appears to have contributed to the freedom struggles ability to mobilize the people. Hinduism's primary basis has traditionally been in the locality or region. This is established through the profusion of jati and the localised source of legitimacy to the Kshatriya upholders of Hindu society by local communities of Brahmins. Ex-untouchables, Harijans or scheduled castes, constitute 14.6% of India's population.¹⁸ The caste identity of the untouchable is not primarily linked to territory as are many of the alternative identity nodes within India. The improvement of their status as a consequence of the ideology of secularism which became part of the freedom struggle, potentially leads them to a more nationally based allegiance in the ideology of independence. The conservative aspects of Hindu society exert a conservative pull on Indian society.

¹⁶ The caste background of India's Prime Ministers is as follows: Jawaharlal Nehru Pandit Brahmin, Lal Bahadur Shastri Kayastha, Indira Gandhi Pandit Brahmin, Morarji Desai Brahmin, Charan Singh Jat, Rajiv Gandhi Parsi-Brahmin, V.P. Singh Kashatriya, Chandra Shekhar, Narasimha Rao, Brahmin.

¹⁷ Francine Frankel and M.S.A. Rao, *Dominance and State Power in Modern India*, pp. 1-2.

¹⁸ M. Weiner, *The Indian Paradox*, p. 55.

The continuing relevance of caste in India was demonstrated by the prolonged and bloody riots over the decision by the Singh government, in 1990, to implement the Mandal Commission Report's recommendations for increased quotas for backward castes. The Brahmin reaction to the Mandal Commission riots was negative from two perspectives. The upper castes, by occupying a majority of position in the secular governments bureaucracy, have a vested interest in that structure. Though only 5.5% of the overall population Brahmins have dominated government. Their response attempted to thwart the challenge to their legitimacy to occupy a dominant position in society. The extensive coverage devoted to the self immolation protests by disillusioned youths of the Mandal commission report's recommendations by the Brahmin dominated media was an attempt to shift public sentiment away from the other backward castes (OBCs). The 1980 report recommended that 27% of government jobs be reserved for OBCs. OBCs, while 52% of the population, have only "12.5% of government jobs and only 4.7% of jobs at officer level."¹⁹ This reservation, when added to the existing 22.5% of government jobs that are reserved for untouchables would reserve just under half of federal jobs.

Politics

The Indian government has adapted its adopted Western parliamentary system to fit its particular political modus operandi. The dominant feature of government is the pragmatic approach to power. Individual political allegiances, party coalitions, constitutional amendments, declarations of state and national emergency are all effected under the dictates of the need to capture and retain power. This cynical manipulation of the process for the benefit of those who are part of the system has begun to evoke a response from the electorate. The last two national elections witnessed voter defections from traditional voting patterns.

The extension of politics beyond the ballot box to extra party political organisations, mass rallies, fasts, dharnas, self immolations and

¹⁹ "Caste Adrift," *The Economist*, 11/21/92, p.28.

rioting all expand the spectrum of political action and invoke repressive measures by the state. Given the volatile nature of Indian politics the state has extraordinary powers at its disposal for the maintenance of law and order. The trend has been for expanded resources to meet increasing disturbances among the people. The police force has grown from 468,000 in 1951 to 904,000 in 1981.²⁰

The subordination of the lower castes by the dominant caste groups and the easy manipulation of vote bank politics is slowly changing.²¹ The death of the Nehru/Gandhi dynasty and the rise of at least broad regional, if not truly national, political parties other than the Congress party will serve to bring more alternative voices into the political process. This will open the possibility for Indian democracy to become less manipulable, and as a consequence, more stable. This may be possible as a result of the diffusion of power through a multi-party political configuration. It may on the other hand throw the country deeper into division if party politics follow and accentuate the social cleavages of the society.²² The former will allow increased open discussion of politics and may reinvigorate the system with a degree of idealism while the latter may throw the country into bloody and divisive conflict.

Class

Despite the presence of various Western political ideologies which have a strong basis in class politics, and issues concerning the ownership of the means of production, class continues to be less prominent than other identity nodes. It figures in the identity of the elites more than the masses and dispossessed. A class basis has to an extent been a

²⁰ Paul Brass, "Politics in India," in *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of India*, p. 181.

²¹ One of the earlier analysts to pick up this theme was Francine Frankle, "India's Democracy in Transition," *World Policy Journal*, summer 1990, p. 553.

²² India has been an interesting anomaly to the index of cleavage alignment and ethnic fractionalisation in that the Congress party has subsumed many diverse perspectives within its fold. This is not likely to continue due to the passing of the generation that went through the freedom struggle and the increasingly corrupt pursuit of power by many politicians and the international trend toward ethno-nationalist realisation. For a discussion of the Congress Party and the social cleavage theory see P. Chibber and J. Petrocik, "The Puzzle of Indian Politics: Social Cleavages and the Indian Party System," *British Journal of Political Science*, April, 1989, pp. 192-5.

determining factor for political party affiliation in India. In general Congress has been the party of the lower levels of society, while the parties of the left have been led by the left leaning upper levels of the social strata. Since the emphasis has shifted away from issues of development to inter-communal strife, class has been a less significant factor in political orientation.

Traditionally modern Indian political elites have tended to lean towards leftist ideology. A study conducted in 1971 found Indian political elites self identification with the extreme left to be 2.3%, the left 30.6%, the centre 57.9%, the right 8.5%, and the extreme right .6%.²³ Interestingly the study found "... no strong evidence for correlation of caste and income with ideology along the lines of the usual class ideology linkage models..." These findings indicate a larger importance of political orientation to class, or even caste background, when dealing with issues of political economy. The five variables used to establish inter-correlations were economic control, bank nationalisation, ceiling on property, strikes and gheraos and land grabs. All of these issues are fundamentally economic issues. Contrary to what one would normally expect in other societies, class did not dictate political orientation amongst the elite.

Race

The basic racial divide in India, between the northern Aryans and the southern Dravidians is a blurred one. The Aryans are thought to have migrated into the subcontinent in the second millenium BC. Since they have mixed with the darker skinned Dravidians, though there remains a visible difference between the lighter skinned northerners and the darker southerners. In the north and east of India there are a number of peoples of Mongol descent. Added to this are the few negroid inhabitants of the Andaman and Nicobar islands. While Dravidian and Aryan Indians are, to outsiders, broadly similar in appearance a

²³ Subrata K. Mitra and V.B. Singh, "Social Class and Belief Systems in the Indian Political Elite," *Indian Journal of Political Science*, March, 1979, p. 43. The sample was compiled from the responses given by 800 political leaders at the state, district, parliamentary constituency and assembly constituency levels.

distinction is made by Indians based on skin colour. Lighter skin is considered to be more attractive. Beyond this, other factors such as caste (represented by the strength of the non-Brahman movements of the south) or linguistic differences (southerners' resentment of attempts for Hindi linguistic dominance) are of importance in creating separate identities.

The history of the Dravida movement includes notions of race as a source of separate identity. The Dravidian movement started as an attempt to gain political and economic power for non-Brahmin, Tamil speaking, southern Indian, Dravidian peoples. The identity of the movement had race, caste, language, territorial, and racial components. During the 1920s Periyar E.V. Ramaswamy Naicker, in articulating the objectives of the Dravida movement, called for the creation of a Dravidian state to be composed of Tamils, Malayalis, Telugus and Kannadigas and to be named Dravida Nadu. The Dravida Kazhagam (DK) saw independence as a victory for the Aryan Brahmins of the north. With independence the DK became the Dravida Munnetra Kazhgam (DMK) and shifted its emphasis from race and caste to class issues related to Tamil ethno-linguistic identity and the north/south split of the country. The new DMK scored electoral victory by polling 15% of the vote in the 1957 general election. A constitutional amendment in 1963 made secessionism illegal. The need to capture Hindu votes, and the independent Tamil identity, as opposed to a racial one based on Dravida, made the decision to abandon the objective of an independent Dravidian state a forgone conclusion. As a result of this more moderate position the DMK captured the Tamil Nadu government in 1967 and 1971.²⁴ The Tamil ethnic identity became more central to the identity of the party. In this way the movement, with its origins as a racial-separatist movement, came to emphasise an autonomous ethnic identity.²⁵

K.M. Panikkar has conceptualised India as in reality two Indias. The northern India being "Aryavarta, with its centre in the Gangetic

²⁴ P.K. Balachandran, "The Changing Face of the Dravida Movement," *The Business and Political Observer*, 12/19/90.

²⁵ A.B. Mathur, "Dravidian Heritage: MGR and Tamil Nadu," *The Indian Journal of Political Science*, Jan.-March 1988, p. 121.

Valley and the other Deccan." Despite the unity of culture and religion he is of the opinion that "Any attempt to impose a unification by the more populous North over the people of the South will be disastrous, for it will awaken the latent racial feelings of difference."²⁶

Ideology

There are two general ideological traditions in modern India. Their origin is to be found either in the indigenous roots of the country or in imported Western perspectives. This ideological split is reflected demographically. The urban, educated, upper and middle classes have more readily adopted Western ideologies. The Congress movement initially found its support among these educated classes. It was only after Mahatma Gandhi rearticulated the freedom struggle that the Congress movement became an all India movement. In many ways the Congress party has survived by being different things to different groups. A recent development in the elections of 1989 and 1991 has been the increasing appeal of Hindu revisionist ideology among the growing ranks of the urban middle classes.

Percentage of Indian population in urban areas

1941	12.8
1951	17.3
1961	18
1971	19.9
1981	23.3 ²⁷

In a class sense the traditional power base of the Congress party is being eroded, apparently because of the corruption of the secular ideal. As the people are increasingly coming to believe that secularism is no longer a viable ideology for the country's governance they will defect to alternative perspectives. This may well mean a return to indigenous idioms such as are being articulated by the VHP, the Shiv Sena and the BJP.

²⁶ K.M. Panikkar, *Geographical Factors in Indian History*, p.90.

²⁷ Frank Conolon, "Urbanisation," in *The Encyclopedia of India*, pp. 52, 56.

While Western ideologies have been dominant since independence there are many ways in which Indian traditions have been incorporated into the Western governmental system. The durbar or audience given by important politicians to allow the people to appeal directly for assistance or patronage continues as part of political life. The village panchayat or council was likewise revived as an indigenous political tradition at the local level. The Rath Yatra of L.K. Advani and the attempts of the Kar Sevaks to reclaim the temple at Ayodhya demonstrate the effectiveness of traditional ideology as a source of political mobilisation. There exists tension between the traditional conservative and hierarchical social structure and an ideology which, at least in its rhetoric, seeks to promote egalitarianism and equality of opportunity. These principles are built into the constitution. Both traditions have spawned a variety of particular ideologies: from Hindu tolerance to Hindu chauvinism and from Naxalite Marxism to Fabian Socialism.

Tribe

Peoples of tribal origin make up 7.7% of the population.²⁸ The Advivasis are not divided by jatis and tend to be either Christian or Animist rather than Hindu. Tribal groups are found in pockets in various part of the country. Some of the bigger tribal groups are the Gonds, Bhils, Santals, Oraons, Minas and Mundas.²⁹ For the purposes of our inquiry those other tribal groups inhabiting territory on the northeast periphery of India (which will be discussed below), are of greater importance for their destabilising effect on the ability of the centre to control diverse elements within the multi-ethnic society that is India. Their connections across the frontier to Bangladesh, Burma and China have given the groups of the Northeast access to external support for their secessionist and autonomous desires. This subsequently influences India's posture and relations with its neighbours.

²⁸ Paul Brass, *The New Cambridge History of India*, p. 179.

²⁹ While these larger groups form roughly half of the tribal population, it is the tribal groups of the northeast border regions that figure more prominently in the connection between identity, centre periphery relations within India, and the relationship between internal and external conflict.

Language

The following Hindu proverb captures the diversity of language in India. "Every two miles the water doth change and every four the dialect."³⁰ The Indian Constitution recognises fourteen languages. Some 30 to 40 percent of the population speak Hindi. The continuing efforts of the electorally crucial political heartland of Uttar Pradesh and the rest of the Hindi belt to have Hindi adopted as the national language have encountered considerable resistance from Bengal and the South. Anti Hindi riots erupted in Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Andhra Pradesh in the face of legislation which would have made Hindi the national language in 1965. As a result English remains the compromise language of government.³¹ Judging from a comparison of English language newspaper readership, as compared with Hindi language readership, over the period 1960 to 1983 English has dropped from 21% to 19% while Hindi has increased its readership from 20% to 29%.

Linguistic divisions of India

Language	Speakers (millions)	% of population
Hindi	162.6	29.7
Telugu	44.8	8.1
Bengali	44.8	8.1
Marathi	42.3	7.7
Tamil	37.7	6.9
Urdu	28.6	5.2
Gujarati	25.9	4.7
Malayalam	21.9	4
Kannada	21.7	4
Oriya	19.9	3.6
Punjabi	16.5	3
Assamese	8.9	1.6
Kashmiri	2.4	.4
Sanskrit	.002	

Source: C. Baxter, et al, *Government and Politics in South Asia*, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1987), p. 48. As based on the census of 1977.

³⁰ Hindu proverb, "Peoples of South Asia," *National Geographic*, December 1984.

³¹ Z. Khalilzad, T. George, R. Litwak and S. Chubin, *Security in Southern Asia*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1984), pp. 86-7.

While demonstrating the slight drop in the preference for English in the informed populace the statistics also attest to the primacy of non-English or Hindi vernacular language papers.³²

There are at least two key levels at which languages becomes involved in the definition of the in group and the out group. At the national level there is the debate as to whether Hindi or English should be used as the language of government. The Hindi speaking belt across the north of India staunchly supports Hindi, while a majority of the non-Hindi speakers prefer English as the neutral compromise language. The second level at which language comes into play is the state level. Each of the states of India has a state recognised language. According to the 1971 Census 17% of the overall population live without a state where they are dominant linguistic group.³³

The constituent assembly recommended that Hindi and the Devanagri script be adopted as India's national language and that English should remain for a period of fifteen years to facilitate the transition. The constitution, which came into effect on 26 January 1950, stated that "The official language of the Union shall be Hindi in Devanagri script. [and that] ... for a period of fifteen years from the commencement of this constitution, the English language shall continue to be used for all the official purposes of the Union ..."³⁴ Articles 343-51 of the constitution made provisions for the use of language within and between states. The constituent assembly's recommendations and constitutional provisions were received by the south as Hindi imperialism. An official language commission was established in 1956 to address the problem and affirmed the objective of Hindi as the national language but was unsure of the previously set time table for conversion. The states reorganisation commission led to the passage of the States' Reorganisation Act of 1956

³² Paul Brass, *The New Cambridge History of India*, p. 145.

³³ Myron Weiner, *The Indian Paradox: Essays in Indian Politics*, (Delhi: Sage Publications, 1989), p. 44. Assam and Tripura were recognised in the census as states while the other states of the northeast were not.

³⁴ Excerpts from the constitution are drawn from L.S. Shastri, *The Constitution of India*, (Allahbad: Law Book Company, 1951), pp. 166 - 70 as referenced in R. K. Barz, "Hindi Since Independence," in Jim Masselos, ed., *India Creating a Modern Nation*, (New Delhi: Sterling publishers, 1990), p. 97.

which reopened debate along linguistic lines. Rioting of Gujarati and Marathi speakers in Bombay state led to the bifurcation of Bombay into present day Gujarat and Maharashtra.

Opposition to the adoption of Hindi resulted in the passage, in May of 1963, of the Official Languages Act which provided for English to be continued as the official language in addition to Hindi. Further states could conduct their business in languages other than Hindi or English with the provision that legislation be translated into these two languages. The 1967 amendment gave the non Hindi speaking states an effective veto on the language issue. This has had the effect of smoothing out much of the controversy at the centre-state and inter-state levels though the issue periodically rises though with less intensity than in the past.³⁵

Tension over the issue of a national language remains despite the legislative compromise of 1963, the Official Language Act amendment of 1967 and the 1973 national integration panels efforts to deal with linguistic differences. As a result English remains the compromise language of government because it is not a primary identity language.³⁶ This compromise is another example of a temporary settlement which allows India to muddle through without a resolution of the underlying conflict. There are signs that the compromise is faltering. Chief Minister Mulayam Singh Yadav of Uttar Pradesh declared in April of 1990 that "Henceforth all memos, petitions, surveys, and any other official UP documents must be completed in Hindi."³⁷

The local elites' success in opposition to the centre over linguistic determination of the territorial delineation of state boundaries set a precedent for other groups seeking concessions from the centre. The Bombay example made it clear that it was possible for sub-national groups to organise movements to obtain concessions from the centre. Whether this is perceived as a demonstration of the reasonableness of the centre to accede to group demands or as an example of how the centre can be forced into making concessions is important. Subsequent sub-national group

³⁵ R. Barz, in *India Creating a Modern Nation*, p. 103.

³⁶ Hans Raj, *Indian Political System*, pp. 16-25.

³⁷ Tony Allen-Mills, "English Language Hindi Challenge," *The Canberra Times*, 4/10/90.

strategies for seeking demands of the centre will be based on such assessments. The recent trend of events indicates that the later interpretation, that the centre can be forced into making concessions, has become dominant. This stems from the confrontational relationship that has been established. If the relationship could be reconceptualised as a non-adversarial one, then a space would be created for sub-national groups to view the centre as not necessarily incompatible with their objectives. The desire to create a separate state is usually not the primary objective in itself but is seen as the best way of realising other goals. This will not come to pass unless the centre addresses the substantive demands of these groups. Suppressing them through the force of arms alone is only a partial solution. If the underlying reasons for the sub-national groups frustrations remain the movements will re-emerge under new leadership despite the success of the police, intelligence organisations or the military. This has been the case in the northeast and will most likely be the case in the Punjab.

Appendix II

Punjab and Kashmir

Appendix two provides some of the background for the insurgencies in Punjab and Kashmir. These are two complex and strategic regions for both India and Pakistan are central to both states security.

Punjab

The political process itself has been undermined by the local rule of Sikh militant commanders. After former Akali Dal leader Simranjit Singh Mann was released from prison his popularity was widespread. His call for negotiations between militants and the centre in 1991, however, undermined his popularity. This effort was rejected by a number of organisations under the control of Sohan Singh. As a result, Simranjit was forced to distance himself from the proposal for negotiations and in the process made it clear that the militants, and not the politicians, were the leaders in Punjab.¹

During the 1980s and early 1990s actual control of large parts of Punjab fell into the hands of some 5,000 militants operating within 200 organisations who were under the umbrella of four key Panthic Committees. These were headed by Dr. Sohan Singh, Baba Gurbachan Singh Manochahal, Wasan Singh Zaffarwal and the Jasbir Singh Rode Group.² Sohan Singh was the most powerful and is considered to be "able by proxy, to virtually run the government in Punjab."³ Schools have stopped teaching Hindi, switched to singing Shabads (Sikh religious hymns) rather than the national anthem, and have had students wear saffron turbans and black salwars; officials have changed their name plates to Gurmuki script and the people have begun to go to the durbars

¹ Kanwar Sandhu, "Punjab: Sudden Eclipse, Man Being Marginalised," *India Today*, 3/15/91, p. 70.

² Vicky Sandhu, "The Unseen Hand That Governs Punjab," *The Sunday Observer*, 2/10-16/91.

³ Vicky Sandhu, "The Unseen Hand That Governs Punjab,"

of the local militant commander for justice rather than Punjab court system. Journalists and editors publish militant notices and dare not disobey demands to refrain from calling the militants terrorists,⁴ while shop keepers respect militant calls for bandhs. Smoking tobacco and drinking alcohol were further discouraged by the militants. These measures evoked negative reactions from the Hindu and Sikh communities alike.

The control of activity in Punjab by the Panthic Committees has marginalized the more moderate Akali Dal which had at times been prepared to work within the existing political process to reach accommodation with the centre through pursuing an autonomous rather than secessionist path. The extremes of the militants forced even the Akalis to press for a separate state of Khalistan. Some of the specific grievances of Sikhs are the diversion of Punjabi water resources, the return of Chandigarh to Punjab, persecution of those involved in the anti-Sikh riots of 1984 and other general autonomous policies.

It is generally accepted that these groups receive substantial support from across the border in Pakistan. The strength of the militants in the border areas of Punjab support this.⁵ Much of the training in arms that the militants receive is carried out in camps inside Pakistan. The reported 50,000 Rs per month⁶ pay received by armed militants would also indicate a source of external funding. Government sources attribute mass attacks against Hindus to "discrete Pakistan-coordinated bids to provoke communal clashes."⁷ Pakistan's policy of supporting insurgents in India has continued steadily despite assurances received to the contrary. At the Male South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Conference, Prime Minister Sharif pledged to not interfere in

⁴ Dozens of journalists and editors have been killed in Punjab for not complying with Sohan Singh's code of conduct for journalists. Shekhar Gupta, "Media: Under Duress," *India Today*, 12/31/90, p. 37 and Kanwar Sandhu, "The Press: Tight Squeeze," *India Today*, 2/15/91, p. 72.

⁵ Shekhar Gupta, "Punjab: Dangerous Upsurge," *India Today*, 12/31/90, p. 29.

⁶ This figure seems unrealistically high though it is here reported because a figure half as much would still support the proposition of outside support. Sumir Lal, "Terrorism in the Punjab," *The Sunday Times*, 2/10/91.

⁷ Sumir Lal, "Terrorism in the Punjab."

India's internal affairs. Less than two months later Pakistani cross border support had resumed.⁸ Counter insurgency training received from Israel helped the Indian paramilitary forces regain some initiative in mid 1992.

Clearly Pakistan has sought to capitalise on the Indian state's weakness in Punjab but the deteriorated conditions which make fertile ground for such intervention are the creation of the cynical politics pursued by Indira and Rajiv Gandhi. The Indian government continues to explicitly blame Pakistan for the assistance that Pakistan gives to insurgents operating in Punjab. "Certain important terrorist leaders like Dr. Sohan Singh, Wasant Singh, Zafarwal, Gurbachan Singh Manochal, Sukhdev Singh Babbar and others are residents in and assisted by elements in Pakistan and are actively directing operations from across the border."⁹

In 1986, the channels of support used by Pakistan were expanded. Prior to this, arms were purchased by Inter-Services Intelligence through the Peshawar based Afghan faction of Yar Hikamat Yar Khan. In 1986 the ISI connection was to involve the Pakistan Intelligence Bureau, the Directorates of Military, Navy and Air Intelligence. The Special Services Group and ISI have formed a "council to work in coordination to help the terrorists."¹⁰ The arms channel seems still to be through a Peshawar connection. The gunsmiths of Dara also reported that many of their arms were going to Punjab and Kashmir.¹¹ There are now reportedly 19 camps in Lahore, Sailkot and Rawalpindi.¹²

As the political situation within Punjab deteriorated, a political wasteland was created in which the extremists found a niche.¹³ This

⁸ S.S. Banyal, "Ultras Emboldened by Sharif Support," *The Hindustan Times*, 2/12/91.

⁹ "Spokesman's Response to Queries on Amnesty International Report of 3/26/92," *India News*, (Canberra: High Commission of India, 3/30/92), p. 1.

¹⁰ Gopal Misra, "Rise in Pakistan Aid to Ultras Leads to Concern," *The Sunday Mail*, 11/11/90.

¹¹ Interviews by the author with various dealers in Dara. Reportedly many of the arms interdicted in 1992 are of Chinese origin.

¹² Aditya Sinha, "Panthic Committee is Govt Stooge: Chauhan," *The Business and Political Observer*, 11/14/90.

¹³ Mohammed Ayoob, "Dateline India: The Deepening Crisis," *Foreign Policy*, winter, 1991-2, p. 174.

situation continues to defy solution by the centre, though in 1992 the military had some counter insurgency success. The military and paramilitary forces deployed in Punjab exceed 200,000.¹⁴ The levels of politically motivated collective violence continue to grow. The police and security forces have been progressively and successfully targeted by insurgents. In Punjab in 1990-1 a total of 973 police were killed as well as 133 of their family members. In Kashmir there were more than 2,000 attacks on security forces reported by the government which resulted in the death of 320 security personnel and 830 insurgents and civilians.¹⁵

Central control was defied through armed resistance as the Sikh extremists occupied the Golden Temple in Amritsar in 1984. This precipitated operation "Blue Star" on 5 June 1984 to reoccupy the temple and oust the extremists.¹⁶ During the operation close to one thousand soldiers, Sikh militants and pilgrims were killed. It was further a watershed because after the incident the Sikh extremists were increasingly fighting for an independent Khalistan and not mere autonomy. Later that year, on 31 October, resentment over the incident led to Indira Gandhi's assassination at the hands of two of her Sikh bodyguards. The assassination led to three days of rioting in Delhi with the result of some 3,000 Sikhs being killed. The time taken to quell the riots, and the lack of prosecutions of those who perpetrated the pogrom, have led to widespread speculation of the Congress Party, and possibly even Rajiv Gandhi's, involvement in the affair. The legacy of manipulation in Punjab continued under Rajiv Gandhi with the failed Rajiv-Longawal Accord and the imposition and continuation, by constitutional amendment, of Presidential rule in the state.¹⁷ Further,

¹⁴ *Janes Defence Weekly*, 1/11/92, pp. 56-7.

¹⁵ "Spokesman's Response to Queries on Amnesty International Report of 3/26/92," *India News*, (Canberra: High Commission of India, 3/30/92), p. 1.

¹⁶ Prior to the storming of the Golden Temple, Sikh extremists were loosely under the leadership of Bhindranwale. Since the storming, and Bhindranwale's death, a profusion of terrorist groups have come into being. Many of the groups were dealt a serious blow by COIN operations in 1992-93.

¹⁷ The accord was signed by Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and the President of the Akali Dal Harcharan Singh on 26 January 1986. This was to be the basis of a centre-state accommodation which would provide for: 1. transfer of Chandigarh to Punjab, 2. a tribunal for the settlement of river and territorial issues with other states, 3. to refer the

the violation of the temple, has had a detrimental effect on the armed forces. Although only two percent of the population, Sikhs constitute 22% of the officer corps and 10% of the other ranks. As a result of the storming of the Temple a few Sikh units mutinied. The uncertain loyalties of the population of Punjab complicates the border situation for India. In the event of another war with Pakistan, a doubt is created as to the disposition of the loyalty of sections of the state.

Kashmir

Throughout history Kashmir has had both the strategic misfortune and economic benefit of being located at the cross roads of Central Asia. This has led to its annexation or domination by various kingdoms as the political fortunes of the Central Asian kings changed. The area's history further complicates the present quandary over the border dispute between India and Pakistan because Kashmir, as a territorial entity, did not always change hands in its entirety. During partition, the Hindu Dogra Maharaja Hari Singh, fearing the invading Muslim Pathan tribesmen, decided to accede to India despite the overwhelming majority of Muslims in Kashmir. India has defended its right to Kashmir on the grounds that its last Maharaja of Kashmir legally transferred control to India. Even this assertion is somewhat tenuous. Accompanying the letter of accession was a letter from Lord Mountbatten, which seems to make the accession agreement contingent upon a subsequent plebiscite.

India's pledge to hold a plebiscite to determine the destiny of the territory and India's actions in Junagadh and Hyderabad undermine the legitimacy of its claim over Kashmir. In these two cases the Muslim Nawab of Junagadh and the Nizam of Hyderabad sought either to remain independent or to join with Pakistan. In both cases India decided to use

Anandapur Sahib Resolution to review, 4. inquiry into the post Indira Gandhi assassination atrocities against Sikhs, 5. removal of the special powers of the military in the Punjab and, 6. merit based entry requirements to the military. In March of 1988, an amendment to the Constitution was passed to allow the extension of President's rule in Punjab beyond the one year allowed. President's rule was first imposed on 11 May 1987 during the lead up to the Haryana elections.

force to decide the issue, and to ignore the rights of the former ruler to make the decision on accession. In Kashmir, the accession decision was conveniently pro Indian so has been used as the basis of India's claim.¹⁸ Both India and Pakistan ultimately justified their actions with regard to Kashmir in the name of their national interests and core ideologies. All other justifications would appear to be rationalisations for domestic and international public relations. 75

In 1990 both Prime Minister Bhutto and Prime Minister Singh found themselves in a position that paralleled that of their predecessors' predicament in 1964-5. President Ayub of Pakistan wished to see relations between Pakistan and India improve through negotiated settlements of the disputes between the two countries. This assertion is supported by the prudence which Ayub demonstrated in his decision not to exploit the opportunity presented by the Sino-Indian war of 1962. The internal domestic situation inside Pakistan was for Benazir in 1991, as it was for Ayub in 1965, pushing the realm of political debate over the Kashmir issue farther and farther towards jingoistic rhetoric and posturing. No Pakistani leader can afford to be perceived as soft on the Kashmir question. Neither Inter Services Intelligence, the army or the populace would allow it. 134

Benazir, like Ayub, was presented with a domestic political environment where she could ill afford to be outflanked on the right by the pro-military element. It is also generally recognised that Benazir's continued support for high military budgets within Pakistan stemmed more from her recognition of the political realities of her former position as Prime Minister, than from her belief in the necessity of continued high level military spending. At that time Bhutto's opposition liked to portray her as soft on India. It was imperative for her political survival for her to be perceived as a proponent of a strong defense and supportive of the frustrations of the Muslim brethren across the border in Indian controlled Kashmir. 117
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¹⁸ Sultana Afraz, "The Junagadh and the Hyderabad Case," *The Round Table*, 1989.

The extent to which her control was limited was highlighted by the 1990 border situation with India that almost led to war. By her account, she was informed by the CIA that the Pakistani military had developed a nuclear bomb and had the will and capability to use it. In a 1992 statement Bhutto made it clear that she felt that the CIA allegations were true.¹⁹ When attempting to make a political come-back in November of 1992, Bhutto was barred from marching to the north of the country.

A similar situation presented itself to the Shastri government prior to the 1965 war. At Nehru's death on 27 May 1964, Shastri had to deal with rising right wing Hindu parties and mounting communal tensions. A combination of the riots over the disappearance of the hair of the prophet and the passing of articles 356 and 357 made the situation tense in Kashmir. Today comparable levels of rioting are increasingly armed and organized. The key difference is that today the Pakistani military will be more wary of an engagement with the Indian military than they were in 1965. They learned from the 1965 war that India could expand the front along the entire Indo-Pakistani border. It was this threat of an expansive war that served to diffuse the conflict.

The Pakistani Foreign Secretary, Mohammed Shaharyar Khan, stated upon his return from the April 1991 round of border talks: "We made it absolutely clear that a sustained improvement in bilateral relations required above all a settlement of the Kashmir issue."²⁰ In an escalation of its support for the Kashmir insurgents, Pakistan broke in August 1990 from the tacit agreement not to use heavy artillery in border skirmishes along the line of control in Kashmir. Such heavy ordnance has not been used since 1972.²¹ Despite this Pakistan refrained from further escalation.

The differences between Pakistan and India over Kashmir cut right to the core of the differing value systems of the national identities of the

¹⁹ "Bhutto Tells of Plan for N-Attack," *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 12/4/92.

²⁰ "Kashmir Said Still Main Obstacle," *Reuters News Service*, 4/8/91.

²¹ Balram Tabdon, "Forces Clash With Pakistani Troops in Kashmir," *The Daily Telegraph*, 8/21/90.

two countries. Pakistan is more rigidly religious than officially secular India. General Zia rationalized his rule through the propagation of religious fundamentalism. Pakistan's *raison d'etat* is grounded in the belief that the Muslims of South Asia should have the right to a separate homeland for their faith. From its conception in the minds of M.A. Jinnah and the Muslim league, Pakistan was to have included Kashmir. In 1933 Choudhri Rahmat Ali created the name Pakistan for the then proposed independent Muslim state with the "k" standing for Kashmir. While the existence of Bangladesh would seem to reduce the validity of Pakistani's claim to be the rightful heir to rule Muslim areas of the subcontinent, they would see this state of affairs as having been achieved through the manipulation of events by the Indians. Kashmir at the time of partition, as it is now, comprised an overwhelmingly Muslim population contiguous with the other predominantly Muslim areas of the former territories of the British Raj.²² The fact that this area remained outside Pakistan at independence was an affront to the very reason for Pakistan's existence as defined by its founding fathers.

Similarly, Indian state values are also at stake in Kashmir. It was the earnest desire of Mahatma Gandhi that India should not succumb to the divisive and communalist elements which were pushing for a Muslim state separate from the Hindus. The vision of the leaders of the Congress movement included a secular state of Muslims and Hindus alike. Without Kashmir, India will move further toward becoming a Hindu, rather than a secular, state.

Sitting at the crossroads of Central Asia, Kashmir controls strategic passes and the waters of the the key rivers of western India and Pakistan. Three of the five rivers of Punjab originate in, or flow through, Kashmir.²³ One of the few bright spots in Indo-Pakistani cooperation has been the division of the waters of the region. These waters are critical to the agriculture of both countries.

²² Ladakh is culturally and religiously quite similar to Tibet. Jammu is largely Hindu with Sikh and Muslim minorities.

²³ Punjab means five rivers.

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