

THE UNITED STATES AND
THE 1971 CRISIS IN SOUTH ASIA

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by

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Introduction

"The United States made a determined effort throughout 1971 to prevent a war in South Asia and to encourage a political solution. We did not succeed."

President Nixon
1972 Foreign Policy Report

The purpose of this report is to examine the geopolitical environment of the South Asian crisis of 1971 with main emphasis on the policies, actions, and interactions of the principal parties in the crisis, and a comparison of U.S. policy choices with those of the other actors.

There were six principal actors in the crisis -- the United States, Soviet Union, People's Republic of China (PRC), India, West Pakistan, and East Pakistan (Bangla Desh). Each actor's response was affected by regional and/or global interests and a perception of historical experience in the region.

A careful study of reaction to the crisis throughout 1971, e.g., official pronouncements, economic and military aid, treaties, visits by leaders, United Nations diplomacy, and military maneuvering, when combined with an interpretation of each actor's historical experience and interests in the region, permits a reconstruction of the parameters which defined U.S. policy choices. This report surveys the crisis which culminated in the Indo-Pakistani war of 1971 from three perspectives -- the internal situation within Pakistan, India's

involvement, and great power involvement.

Chapter 1 analyzes the internal developments within Pakistan that were relevant to the crisis and the extent to which the United States was able to influence Pakistan's policies and actions. The root cause of the crisis in Pakistan was the attempted military suppression of an East Pakistani independence movement. This movement climaxed cultural disputes between the two Wings, long-standing economic disparities, and social discrimination against the Bengalis. The gulf between the two Wings widened in the 1950's and 1960's, and the national election of December, 1970 set in motion a series of events which led to the December war between India and Pakistan. The National Awami League won a overwhelming victory in both the provinces and national assemblies. The inability of President Yahya Khan to reach a political compromise with the Awami League resulted in the attempted suppression of the Bengali elite.

Chapter 2 examines India's involvement in the crisis with particular attention given to an analysis of the official U.S. view that India intended to ensure the dismemberment of Pakistan. India's intentions are inferred from an analysis of official Indian pronouncements and actions concerning issues such as the military crackdown in East Pakistan, the refugee influx into India, the guerrilla forces operating within East Pakistan, regionalism, communalism, military preparedness, United Nations initiatives, and great power involvement.

Chapter 3 analyzes great power involvement -- U.S., USSR and PRC -- and addresses the interests which affected their response to the crisis. The U.S. government was concerned that its actions in South Asia would be linked to other regions such as the Middle East or threaten great power negotiations. The Soviet government was interested in promoting a South Asian collective security arrangement and wished to protect its position in the region. The PRC was opposed to Indian hegemony in South Asia and the increased influence of the Soviet Union in the region. Against this backdrop of great power interests, U.S. diplomatic activity is surveyed. Particular attention is given to the administration of the two principal levers available to the U.S. diplomatic effort -- military aid and economic assistance.

Chapter 4, the conclusion, reviews the choices that were available to each actor in terms of their respective perceptions of threat awareness, the degree of threat, and available decision time, and discusses possible lessons for U.S. foreign policy.

Chapter 1

THE CRISIS IN PAKISTAN

"Bangla Desh was a nation awaiting to become a state."

Elliot Tepper
International Journal
Summer, 1972

"...for Mujibur Rahman, equity lay in an independent Bengal; for me, in the retention of Pakistan. For him, Six Points was the property of the people -- for me, Pakistan was the property of the people."

Z.A. Bhutto
The Great Tragedy

"Regionalism was raison de'tre for the emergence of Bangla Desh."

G.W. Choudhury
International Affairs
Spring, 1972

The U.S. involvement in the 1971 crisis in South Asia was greatly affected by the official perception of events and developments in Pakistan. As the internal political situation in Pakistan deteriorated, the U.S. continued to advocate the status quo. This chapter examines two aspects of the policy and actions of Pakistan: First, it presents a portrait of the internal situation within Pakistan and its impact on the crisis. Second, since U.S. policy was partially defended on the grounds that it enhanced U.S. political leverage in Pakistan, this chapter assesses the effectiveness of that leverage as indicated by the actions of President Yahya Khan and his government.

Portrait of Alienation

Since the partition of India in 1947, East Pakistan has found itself at odds with West Pakistan. The first significant and open dispute arose over a move in 1948 to have the Bengali language, as well as Urdu, used in the National Assembly. As an answer to this language question, the then Prime Minister, Liaquat Ali Khan said:

Pakistan is a Muslim State and it must have as its 'lingua franca' the language of the Muslim nation....It is necessary for a nation to have one language and the language can only be Urdu and no other language.

The language problem came to a head in January, 1952, when Prime Minister Nazimuddin declared in Dacca, the capital of East Pakistan, that Urdu would be the sole official language of Pakistan. This statement precipitated an uprising led by Dacca students in which a large number of students were killed or injured.²

Several studies describe, in quantitative terms, the dominance of West Pakistan in political, military, and social functions of the state (See Table 1 for examples of economic discrimination).³ The widening gulf between the two Wings was largely economic in genesis, economic in objectives, and its resolution depended largely on economic factors.⁴

The manifestation of East Bengali frustration was laid out in the election manifesto of the Awami League on November 16, 1953, and the 21-Point Program adopted by the United Front (a coalition of opposition parties to the Muslim League).

Table 1

Economic Discrimination of East Pakistan

Factor	East Wing	West Wing
Percent of population	54%	46%
Per capita income:		
1959-60 (32% higher in West Wing)	Rs. 269	Rs. 355
1969-70 (61% higher in West Wing)	Rs. 308	Rs. 492
Shares of central government's developmental expenditures:		
1954-55	20%	80%
1969-70	36%	64%
Share of private investment funds (1958-68)	25%	75%
Share of export earnings (1958-68)	50-70%	30-50%
Share of imports (1958-68)	25-30%	70-75%
Value of exports to other Wing (1964-69)	Rs. 3174 m.	Rs. 5292 m.

Sources: Ayoob, Liberation War, pp. 40-45 and Mason, Dorfman, and Marglin's "Conflict in East Pakistan: Background and Prospects," U.S. Congressional Record, 1971, p. 10133.

The 21-Point Program is interesting in light of the subsequent demands made by the East Bengalis in 1970-1971. The main features of the Program were:

- (1) Complete provincial autonomy, with the central government responsible for defense, foreign affairs and currency.
- (2) Naval Headquarters to be shifted to East Bengal and the establishment of ordnance factories there.
- (3) Bengali to become a state language, on par with Urdu.
- (4) Nationalism of the jute trade and complete freedom from the center with regard to the export of jute.
- (5) Devaluation of the Pakistani rupee.
- (6) Reallocation of foreign exchange.
- (7) Abolition of trade restrictions between India's West Bengal and Pakistan's East Bengal.
- (8) Radical land reforms.
- (9) Direct election of the Constituent Assembly.⁵

East Pakistan's disenchantment with Islamabad increased after the Indo-Pakistani war of 1965, in which East Pakistan was

left undefended and at the mercy of Indian intentions.⁶ This event, coupled with the lack of East Bengali concern over the Kashmir issue and the interruption of the jute trade with India, resulted in Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's famous Six Points of February, 1966.⁷

The Six Points bore a great deal of similarity to the 21-Point Program of 1953: a federal constitution, direct elections, federal (central) control only over defense and foreign affairs, protected currencies, power of taxation and revenue collection to the federating units (provinces), separate foreign exchange accounts, and the establishment of a militia or para-military force in East Pakistan.

On May 8, 1966, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and the leadership of the Awami League were arrested. In January, 1968, it was announced that the Sheikh would be tried for treason. Specifically, he was accused of conspiring with India to separate East Bengal from East Pakistan.⁸ Following a transfer of power from Ayub Khan to A.M. Yahya Khan, Commander-in-Chief of the Army, on March 25, 1969, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was acquitted by the Dacca High Court and released on May 7, 1969 in an obvious attempt to gain support for the new leadership.⁹

On November 28, President Yahya Khan announced that the one unit in West Pakistan was dissolved, that he accepted the principle of one man-one vote (representation in the National Assembly on the basis of population), that the regional autonomy issue would be left to a Constituent-cum-National Assembly to decide, that the ban on political activity was lifted, and that national elections would be held on October 5, 1970.¹⁰

Referendum on Autonomy

President Yahya Khan's November 28 announcement eliminated the most important issue in West Pakistan, that of the four provinces being considered as one unit. In the East, the one man-one vote decision made it theoretically possible for the East Bengalis to gain control of the Constituent Assembly (East Pakistan represented 54% of the total Pakistani population) and decide the regional autonomy issue for themselves. In essence, Yahya had reduced the issues for the electorate in the East to a referendum on autonomy. There is some evidence that the political leaders in the West discounted the possibility of a party in the East receiving enough support to override a coalition of Western-based parties.¹¹ Two events, however, may have been responsible for the crystallization of support for Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's Awami League. The first event was the catastrophic cyclone which hit the coastal areas of East Pakistan on November 13, 1970. It was estimated that over 500,000 people lost their lives, and the Sheikh vehemently criticized the government for inadequate warning, evacuation efforts, rescue operations, relief operations, scope of assistance, and flood control. He said that the disaster had demonstrated the callousness and apathy of the government toward the people of East Pakistan, and that the only solution was "full regional autonomy."¹² The second event was the decision of the principal opposition party, the National Awami Party (Bhashani faction), to boycott the elections. This left the Awami League in full control of the field.¹³

The election results set the stage for the political events of 1971; in the Pakistan National Assembly, the Sheikh's Awami League won a total of 167 seats out of 313, giving it an absolute majority. The next closest party was Z.A. Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party (PPP) with 88 seats. In the East Pakistan Provincial Assembly, the Awami League won 288 seats out of 300.¹⁴

Without detailing the political maneuvering which occurred between January and March, 1971, it is sufficient to say that President Yahya was unable to secure a political accommodation from Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and the Awami League which would satisfy Z.A. Bhutto and West Pakistani interests. The Sheikh would not compromise on his pledge to frame the country's constitution on the basis of the Six-Point Program. Although the West could accept portions of the Program, it objected to the demand that the East Wing have complete control of its economic affairs, to include trade agreements with foreign governments.

On February 15, Z.A. Bhutto announced that he would boycott the National Assembly meeting which had been set for March 3, and he threatened to liquidate those West Pakistani representatives who ignored the boycott and traveled to Dacca. On February 21, President Yahya dismissed his civilian Cabinet and appointed top-ranking generals as martial law administrators in each province; on March 1, he announced that he was postponing, sine die, the first session of the National Assembly. This announcement led to massive public demonstrations in the East, with hundreds killed or injured. On March 6,

the day before the Sheikh was scheduled to make an address that many thought would be a declaration of independence, Yahya announced that the National Assembly would convene on March 25, but he appointed the notorious Lt. Gen. Tikka Khan as the new Governor of East Pakistan.

On March 7, in the face of an increasing military build-up in East Pakistan, the Sheikh gave a public address to approximately one million people at the Dacca Race Course. In reference to the announcement by President Khan that the National Assembly would meet March 25, the Sheikh said:

Before we go to the Assembly, our demands have to be conceded. The first demand: the martial law has to be withdrawn. Second, the army has to be returned to the barracks. Third, power has to be transferred to the elected representatives of the people. And fourth, official enquiries have to be made about the recent killings. After that we will consider whether we can sit in the Assembly or not.¹⁵

In a press statement released on the evening of March 7, the Sheikh continued:

Today after the elections the only legitimate source of authority in the country are [sic] the elected representatives of the people. No individual can claim authority superior to that of the elected representatives. We as the representatives of the overwhelming majority of the people of Bangladesh assert that we are the only legitimate source of authority for Bangladesh. Indeed by virtue of our majority position, we are the legitimate source of authority for the whole country.¹⁶

In addition to the four demands made at the Dacca Race Course, the press statement demanded:

- (1) Immediate cessation of firing upon civilians.
- (2) Immediate cessation of the military build-up and

inflow of military personnel from the West.

(3) Maintenance of law and order to be left exclusively to the Police and East Pakistan Rifles.

(4) Non-interference by the military in the Government of Bangladesh.

The March 7 press statement concluded:

The objective of the present phase of the struggle is the immediate termination of the Martial Law and the transfer of power to the elected representatives of the people. Till this objective is attained, our non-violent, non-cooperation movement must continue.

On March 22, the same day that President Yahya again postponed the session of the National Assembly scheduled for March 25, a message from the Sheikh was printed in the leading dailies as a special supplement:

This struggle of ours is for the complete liberation of the seven crore people of Bangladesh. Our struggle will go on until our rights are secured. The people of Bangladesh will no longer be cowed down by bullets, guns and bayonets, for today the people are united.

We must be ready for any sacrifice in order to achieve our goal. Every home must become a fortress of resistance. Ours is a just demand. So we are sure to win. Joi Bangla!¹⁷

On March 26, between 12:30 and 1:30 a.m., and just prior to being arrested in the midst of the army crackdown, the Sheikh capped nearly three months of political maneuvering with a formal declaration of independence.¹⁸

At this point it must be stressed that East Pakistan was experiencing a national movement for independence, and any 'objective' analysis of statements and events should have been convincing evidence that the East Bengalis would settle for

nothing less. It has been suggested that President Yahya Khan's savage military crackdown and arrest of the Awami League leaders prevented a political solution, or that India refused to permit a political evolution that allowed East Pakistan to remain a federated province of Pakistan. However, based on internal events in Pakistan prior to March 25, it can just as forcibly be argued that the perceived and actual exploitation of the East by the West made the birth of Bangla Desh inevitable, and that the real issue was the survival of West Pakistan.

Point of No Return

On the evening of March 25, 1971, the Yahya regime decided to abandon its bargaining with Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and initiated a planned military effort to suppress the Bengali movement by decimating the elite of East Pakistan (East Pakistan Rifles, police, East Bengal Regiment, intellectuals, students, professionals, and Awami League leaders).¹⁹

Even though the die was cast prior to March 25, President Yahya's subsequent actions could not have been more damaging to his image, international support of Pakistan's position, or any hope of a political accommodation with the leaders of East Bengal. The following events, listed chronologically, demonstrate the ineptness of the Government's actions:

On May 12, in response to U Thant's offer of United Nations assistance on April 22, President Yahya rejected the aid and said that the humanitarian assistance was not immediately needed; he said that reports of casualties were "highly exaggerated -- if not altogether tendentious."²⁰ At this

very time, May 15-16, Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi was visiting refugee camps in Assam, Tripura, and West Bengal, and claiming that 335 camps had been erected for the 60,000 refugees that were crossing daily into India.²¹ By May 17, supposedly at U.S. urging, Pakistan reversed its position and agreed to the admission of U.N. international relief experts.²²

On June 28, President Yahya Khan made an address which was accepted as a signpost of Pakistan's intentions toward resolution of the crisis in East Pakistan. Although he announced that Pakistan would return to civilian rule within four months, his other announcements indicated that there was little room for compromise; Yahya stated that certain Awami League members of the Provincial and National Assemblies would be expelled, that a new constitution would ban regional parties, that martial law would continue and that the Army was in full control, that new by-elections would not permit political views that were critical of the central government, and that a new constitution would be prepared by a committee of "experts" appointed by the President. It was obvious from the speech that the election of December, 1970, was being contravened; in addition to tightened control over the internal politics of Pakistan, Yahya threw down the gauntlet to India by saying that Pakistan was "fully prepared to defend our territorial integrity and sovereignty."²³

In July and August, President Yahya continued to make bellicose statements and take actions that made a political solution even more remote. On July 19, President Yahya announced his readiness to accept U.N. observers in East

Pakistan to supervise the return of refugees, but he also announced that any attempt by India to seize an area of East Pakistan for use as a rebel base would be answered by general war.²⁴ On August 7, in the midst of numerous reports of mass killings of innocent men, women and children, Yahya rejected any likelihood of his troops having committed atrocities, and his Government's White Paper on the crisis accused the Bangladesh guerrillas of a reign of terror.²⁵ This whitewash was followed by a report on August 9 that Sheikh Mujibur Rahman would be tried by a military tribunal for treason.²⁶ On August 20, the government announced that only 94 Awami League members would be able to retain their Provincial seats and that only 88 Awami League members would retain their National Assembly seats.²⁷ This measure was significant in that it ensured West Pakistani control of any eventual meeting of the National Assembly; it was also additional evidence that a political settlement attuned to East Bengali aspirations was impossible.

In September, President Yahya Khan made two conciliatory moves; on September 1, Lt. Gen. Tikka Khan, the man who had been appointed to implement the crackdown which started March 25, was replaced by a civilian, Mr. A.N. Malik, as Governor of East Pakistan. The reason for the change was "to restore democracy and undertake measures that would facilitate the transfer of power."²⁸ The move was seen as a transparent attempt by Yahya to retain control over the East, and even Bhutto referred to the appointment as a "gimmick."²⁹ The second conciliatory act in September was a declaration of a General

Amnesty on September 5.³⁰ On four earlier occasions (May 21, June 4, June 10, and June 28) various East Pakistan officials had appealed for the refugees to return home. Presumably at U.S. urging, President Yahya extended amnesty to all "those who have committed or are alleged to have committed offenses during disturbances in East Pakistan beginning March 1 and ending September 5, 1971."³¹ Significantly, the amnesty was not extended to Sheikh Mujibur Rahman or several hundred members of the Awami League.

On October 12, Yahya continued to add to his alienation of world opinion and the East Bengalis. It was announced that Sheikh Mujibur Rahman had been found guilty of treason and that the death penalty had been recommended.³² It was further announced that 53 of the National Awami League seats taken away in August would be filled without contest.³³

On November 19, President Yahya reversed his bellicose position and appealed for good neighborly relations with India at a speech marking the opening of Id-ul-Fitr. It was a case of too little too late, for on November 22, heavy military contact occurred in the vicinity of Boyra (India), resulting in 13 Pakistani tanks being knocked out and three Pakistani F-86 Sabre jets being shot down. Pakistan declared a State of Emergency and charged India with launching an all-out military offensive without a declaration of war.

On November 26, President Yahya Khan stated that his country's relations with India had reached a point of no return;³⁵ on November 27, in what Robert Shaplen referred to as an "alcoholic outburst," Yahya told a small group of reporters

that he'd be off fighting a war in 10 days.³⁶ The Indians seized upon this statement as an "ultimatum", and linked the Pakistani air attacks of December 3 to the November 27 statement. By late November, then, the situation between India and Pakistan had deteriorated to the point where West Pakistan had started to evacuate leading families from the East, and the U.N. had decided to withdraw its relief personnel to Bangkok.³⁷ On November 27, Z.A. Bhutto was quoted as saying that "old Pakistan is finished and either we create a new Pakistan or we have to face a catastrophe."³⁸

India stepped up its military support to the East Bengalis in late November, and the rules of engagement for Indian forces were liberalized to the extent that Indian forces could cross into East Pakistan to the depth of the Pakistani artillery. In the West, however, India was content to move forces into defensive positions. On December 3, West Pakistan launched an air attack along the West Pakistan-India border. The decision to escalate the conflict appears to have been motivated more by a desire to arouse international concern and bring pressure for a cease-fire than a feeling that any substantive gains could be made in the West. The infantry strength ratios were fairly equal in the West and Pakistan had shorter lines of communication, but India had almost a 2-1 advantage in tanks and aircraft (See Table 2). The Pakistani air attacks of December 3 were designed to destroy Indian aircraft and cut Indian lines of communications with Kashmir, but poor intelligence and Indian preparations resulted in negligible Indian losses.

Table 2

Land and Air Forces Employed in the December War

	Divisions	Regular Forces		Tanks	Aircraft	
		Army	Air Force		Fighters	Bombers
East						
India	8	160,000	20,000	180	150+	12
Pakistan	4	73,000	1,700	100	18	--
West						
India	13	320,000	60,000	1,270	335	40
Pakistan	12	240,000	15,300	700	190	25

Source: Strategic Survey-1971, International Institute for Strategic Studies, p. 52.

The decision of West Pakistan to attack in the West could not have been based on military considerations; if the decision was based on a desire to seize terrain which could be used in later negotiations, the employment of the Pakistani Army is suspect. Pakistani armored forces were committed piece-meal to blunt Indian thrusts, and the major portion of the Pakistani forces remained uncommitted.³⁹ This reinforces the theory that Pakistan's objective was to cause international concern and pressure for a cease-fire, but still retain adequate military forces for a defense of West Pakistan should India launch a full-scale attack.

U.S. Influence with Pakistan

On December 7, 1971, Dr. Henry Kissinger and Mr. Ronald Ziegler conducted a background briefing on the crisis for the press; although the briefing was supposed to be off the record, Sen. Goldwater had a transcript of the briefing inserted into the Congressional Record of December 9, 1971.⁴⁰ In both the

briefing and in the President's Foreign Policy Report to Congress for 1972, the case was made that Pakistan had made positive responses to U.S. initiatives and that India had been intransigent. In an evaluation of U.S. diplomatic effectiveness, it is useful to examine some of the Administration's claims against specific actions of the Pakistan government.

Dr. Kissinger stated that \$155 million had been given to the Pakistan government to avert famine, and that this grant was contributed at the specific request of the Indian government. In Ambassador Keating's cable to the State Department on December 8, however, he stated that India had opposed the aid on the grounds that the money would be used to "bail out Yahya."⁴¹ It was later revealed that, in fact, at least \$10 million of the sum was diverted to military use.⁴² Dr. Kissinger also stated that the Pakistan government had agreed to the distribution of relief supplies in East Pakistan by international agencies. In fact, however, distribution of supplies remained under Pakistan's control and, as of November 19, 1971, the U.N. had not yet begun distribution.⁴³

According to Dr. Kissinger, Pakistan had agreed to a timetable for a return to civilian rule by the end of December, 1971, and the Indian Ambassador was supposedly told of the proposal for a precise timetable for East Pakistan's political autonomy on November 19, the same day that President Yahya Khan made his Id speech. Ambassador Keating, in his December 8 cable, could not recall mention of a timetable to the Indians on November 19, and although Yahya did announce his

intention to return the country to civilian rule, he also made some other announcements which diluted its substance. The decision to have a committee of "experts" draw up the new constitution, the tribunal's recommendation that Sheikh Mujibur Rahman be put to death, and the expulsion of many Awami League members from the Provincial and National Assemblies overshadowed the announcement concerning civilian rule. Although President Yahya Khan replaced the military governor with a civilian on September 1, the replacement lacked any effective base of support in the East, and even Z.A. Bhutto ridiculed the appointment.⁴⁴

The Administration also attempted to show Pakistan's good faith by pointing to the General Amnesty declared on September 5;⁴⁵ as mentioned previously, however, the amnesty was not extended to the Sheikh and several hundred members of the Awami League, and it was unlikely that any influential East Bengali would have surfaced after becoming aware of the military's purge of the elite.

As far as negotiations are concerned, the Pakistan government is supposed to have agreed to talks with Bangla Desh representatives, but President Yahya Khan would only talk to those not suspected of treason or other crimes against the state. In addition, the Awami League Working Committee had decided to reject any solution which fell short of complete independence.⁴⁶ Lastly, both India and the East Bengalis demanded that the Sheikh be released as a condition to negotiations. The net result was that the talks never took place.

Dr. Kissinger mentioned that the Pakistan Government had

agreed to let the U.S. establish contact with the Sheikh through his defense attorney. In fact, Ambassador Farland never talked with Mr. Brohi, the Sheikh's attorney, primarily because President Yahya would not permit it.⁴⁷

There is some evidence that the U.S. failed to understand the history of the East Bengali demands; Dr. Kissinger stated that the Pakistan government had indicated that substantial political autonomy would be granted to East Pakistan -- everything except foreign policy, defense and currency. The crisis had its genesis in economic demands, and one of the Six Points was control over the currency -- a demand that Bhutto could not accept. More importantly, any rational assessment of events after March 25 must conclude that the autonomy movement had escalated to an irreversible independence movement, and that federation was no longer possible.

Pakistan's Role in the Political Transformation

Pakistan's advocacy of the status quo and political evolution was incompatible with the situation within East Pakistan. In East Pakistan, a history of perceived exploitation and discrimination by West Pakistan served as the foundation for an autonomy movement which was rapidly transformed into an independence movement. The lack of affective linkage (nationalism, cultural, racial), the charismatic leadership of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and his ability to aggregate Bengali demands and articulate their grievances, and the political bungling of the Pakistan government condemned any policy which supported the West Pakistan position of opposing East Pakistan's demands.

West Pakistan was put on the horns of a dilemma. On the one hand, accepting the demands of East Pakistan and its virtual independence would have opened the door to similar movements within West Pakistan and threatened the survival of West Pakistan. On the other hand, if East Bengali demands were denied, West Pakistan would be forced to suppress the almost certain uprising of a nation of East Bengalis more than 1000 air miles away (3,500 miles by sea) and separated by a hostile India.

The decision to suppress the East Bengalis by force of arms resulted in brutal excesses by the West Pakistani Army, created a flood of refugees into India, and intensified the hatred of the East Bengalis for the West Pakistanis. Although West Pakistan may not have anticipated the vast numbers of refugees its actions would cause, there is some evidence that West Pakistan attempted to purge East Bengal of thousands of Hindus in order to increase the reliability of the population. The crackdown, however, was unable to neutralize sufficient numbers of the Bengali elite, and the development of an effective resistance movement, supported by India and the monsoons, eventually neutralized the effectiveness of the West Pakistani Army.

West Pakistan's inability to suppress East Bengal quickly, and the influx of refugees into India, increased pressure for India's intervention. After India stepped up its military activity in support of the East Bengalis, West Pakistan initiated an attack along the West Pakistan-India border. This decision appears to have been motivated by a desire to create international concern and the hope that great power

diplomacy would force a cease-fire on both fronts (a repeat of the 1965 war) before India could defeat Pakistan in the East and present an independent Bangla Desh as a 'fait accompli.'

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17. Ibid., p. 115.
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23. For text of June 28 speech, see Pakistan Horizon, XXIV, No. 3 (1971), pp. 111-123.

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25. Dawn (Pakistan), August 7, 1971, p. 3.

26. Dawn (Pakistan), August 9, 1971, p. 3.

27. Dawn (Pakistan), August 20, 1971, p. 1.

28. Dawn (Pakistan), September 1, 1971, p. 1. Tikka Khan became a corps commander in West Pakistan along a stretch of frontier with India.

29. Mukerjee, op. cit., p. 144.

30. New York Times, September 5, 1971, p. 8.

31. Ibid.

32. Statesman (India), October 12, 1971, p. 1.

33. U.S., Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, U.S. Foreign Policy in a Changing World, op. cit., p. 71.

34. Hindustan Times (India), November 20, 1971, p. 1.

35. Hindustan Times (India), November 26, 1971, p. 1.

36. Robert Shaplen, "A Reporter at Large -- Bangla Desh II," New Yorker, February 19, 1972, pp. 89-108.

37. Hindustan Times (India), November 26, 1971, p. 5.

38. Hindustan Times (India), November 28, 1971, p. 1.

39. D. K. Palit, Lightning War (New Delhi: Thomson Press, Ltd., 1972), p. 219.

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43. New York Times, January 6, 1972, p. 16.
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45. Dawn (Pakistan), September 5, 1971, p. 1.
46. Mukerjee, op. cit., p. 159.
47. Shaplen, loc. cit.

Chapter 2

INDIA'S INTERVENTION

"...the Indian side wanted a maximum of rapidity, and perhaps, more speed than the Pakistan political process would stand."

Dr. Henry Kissinger
December 7, 1971

"Governments do not apportion praise or blame according to facts, but as their interests dictate."

Hindustan Times
August 12, 1971

"We have a deep and abiding interest in seeing Pakistan disunited. We are therefore bound to work to secure its attenuation, even if not actually to plan and promote its destruction."

Rasheed Talib
Hindustan Times
November 28, 1971

"Confederation remains our ultimate goal."

Prime Minister Nehru
Washington Post
December 19, 1962

The official U.S. view of the 1971 crisis in South Asia was that what started out as a tragedy in East Bengal became an "attempt to dismember a sovereign state and a member of the United Nations."¹ If India chose the time for the war, i.e., provoked Pakistan into an attack at a time and place of India's choosing, then U.S. policy was doomed from the start. No amount of U.S. pressure on Pakistan for political accommodation would have succeeded, short of political capitulation by the Pakistani government. In addition, the

later actions of the U.S. Administration to "tilt" in favor of Pakistan would have assumed greater rationality if India had been intent on dismembering Pakistan. This chapter examines the evolution of India's role in the crisis and the compatibility of military intervention with India's perception of international, regional, and internal factors.

In an analysis of Indian policy objectives and actions toward Pakistan, it is, of course, necessary to consider the events of 1971 against a backdrop of hostility which includes three earlier armed conflicts between India and Pakistan. Since the Tashkent Conference of January 10, 1966 (which formally terminated the 1965 war), there had been little evidence of a spirit to do much more than to disengage troops; the Kashmir issue prevented any meaningful dialogue.²

In December, 1970, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi decided to call a snap election of the Lok Sabha, 14 months before the next scheduled election. Z.A. Bhutto, now President of Pakistan, stated that Mrs. Gandhi's decision was motivated by a desire to seek a firm mandate "so that she could assist rebellion in East Bengal."³ However, a survey of Indian newspapers from November 1, 1970 to December 27, 1970 (the date the Lok Sabha was dissolved) indicates that the Princes issue, regionalism, communalism, and the general lack of social progress had made it increasingly difficult for Mrs. Gandhi to administer the nation effectively. The Prime Minister's Administration had been criticized for ineffective land reform, high food and drug prices, and stagnant industrial production. In addition, communal incidents had increased to

the point of political embarrassment.⁴

In January, 1971, India moved to curb secessionist activity in Kashmir by banning the re-entry of Sheikh Abdullah and the Gen. Secretary of the Plebiscite Front, G.M. Shah, for three months. On January 24, India expelled a Pakistani diplomat for alleged involvement with Al Fatah, an underground organization in Jammu and Kashmir.⁵

Relations between India and Pakistan became even more strained when an Indian civilian aircraft was hijacked by two Kashmiris on January 30, 1971; although all the passengers were released unharmed, the plane was destroyed. India responded by prohibiting overflights of all Pakistani air traffic and said that the ban would remain in effect until Pakistan accepted responsibility for the destruction of the aircraft and paid damages. Although a Commission appointed by President Yahya Khan concluded that the hijacking had been arranged by Indian Intelligence Agencies and was "the culmination of a series of actions taken by the Indian Government to bring about a situation of confrontation...",⁶ the actions of Z.A. Bhutto and the Pakistan Government indicate that the incident was used to draw attention to the situation in Kashmir. Bhutto welcomed the hijackers at the airport, they were given political asylum, and they were honored at a parade in Lahore on February 13. Even if the hijacking had been staged by Indian Intelligence, Pakistan could not have done much more to benefit India's cause. The aftermath of the hijacking dominated the newspapers throughout the month of February, and the "decisiveness" exhibited in Mrs. Gandhi's

decision to ban all Pakistani overflights surely was an asset to her in the Lok Sabha election campaign. Although the crisis may have temporarily taken the spotlight off the political negotiations with the Awami League and the Sheikh (there was some suspicion that Yahya and Bhutto were attempting to create an external crisis as a diversion), the ban on overflights definitely hampered communications between the two Wings.

Within India, two important factors indicated that India would be inclined to act aggressively in the crisis. First, there was a volatile situation in West Bengal, East Pakistan's western neighbor, where the bulk of the East Pakistani refugees would come. Between April, 1970 and March, 1971, 600 assassinations had been recorded in West Bengal. The failure of two state governments in 15 months led to "President's Rule" (centrally controlled government) in June, 1971.⁷

The second factor concerns India's defense posture. India's military posture underwent a shift in orientation after 1964.⁸ From 1950-1962, India apparently concentrated on prestige and sophisticated weapons to deter the Chinese;⁹ after the 1962 border war with China, however, India expanded her army, and she concentrated on strengthening her mountain divisions and acquiring aircraft which could operate at high altitudes. In 1964, India initiated a procurement program that was designed to improve her air defense system, armored forces, navy, and air force. It is the conclusion of the SIPRI that these efforts were directed primarily

against Pakistan, for China posed no significant air or naval threat to India, and large armored forces could only be effectively utilized in the desert areas of the northwest (adjacent to West Pakistan).

Although there is some disagreement as to whether India took the initiative in strengthening her defense establishment or reacted to Pakistan's procurement, the results show a marked superiority in favor of India (Table 3). Aside from obvious manpower advantages, India increased her arms procurement and major weapon end-item modernization; between 1966 and 1971, India received over \$933 million of arms from the USSR and the other members of the Warsaw Pact.¹¹

Major weapon acquisitions included Soviet-built T-54 and T-55 tanks (at least 115), four ex-Soviet submarines, 200 Fitter (SU-7) fighter-bombers, 33 Sea Hawk attack aircraft for the Navy (carrier aircraft supplied by Great Britain), 160 MiG-21's, and approximately 20 Guideline (SA-2) SAM sites¹² (See Table 4 for both Pakistan's and India's major weapon acquisitions). India's total military procurement after 1965 was more than four times that of Pakistan; India obtained from abroad almost twice the quantity of arms as Pakistan, and India built up its capacity to produce its own heavy arms -- a capacity Pakistan lacked.¹³

In making an ordered analysis of India's actions toward Pakistan in 1971, it is convenient to adapt David Bayley's staging approach:¹⁴ Stage I considers those actions taken between March 25 and August 9; Stage II examines the period between August 10 and October 27; Stage II examines the

Table 3

Comparison of the Military Forces of India and
Pakistan, prior to December War

India	Pakistan
Defense Budget 1972-73: \$1,817 million	\$405.5 million
Total Armed Forces: 960,000	395,000
Army: 840,000 (plus 100,000 para-military)	Army: 368,000
2 armored divisions	2 armored divisions
3 independent armored brigades	1 independent armored brigades
13 infantry divisions	10 infantry divisions
10 mountain divisions	1 air defense brigade
6 independent infantry brigades	
2 parachute brigades	
20 AA artillery units	
1200 medium and heavy tanks	450 medium and heavy tanks
290 light tanks	210 light tanks
3000 artillery pieces	900 artillery pieces
Navy: 28,000	Navy: 30,000
1 16,000 ton aircraft carrier (incl. 33 attack aircraft)	4 submarines
4 submarines (ex-Soviet F-class)	1 light cruiser
2 cruisers	4 destroyer escorts
3 destroyers	2 frigates
8 destroyer escorts	4 patrol boats
8 frigates	6 minesweepers
15 patrol boats	
1 landing ship	
8 minesweepers	
17 Alize maritime patrol aircraft	
12 helicopters	
Air Force: 92,000; 650 combat aircraft	Air Force: 17,000; 200 combat aircraft
4 light bomber squadrons (B-57)	2 light bomber squadrons (B-57)
6 fighter-bomber squadrons-Su-7	2 fighter bomber squadrons with Mirage IIIE
2 fighter-bomber squadrons-HF-24	6 fighter-bomber/interceptor squadrons with F-86
7 fighter-bomber squadrons-F-6	4 fighter squadrons-MiG-19
2 fighter-bomber squadrons with Mystere IV	1 interceptor squadron-F-104
8 interceptor squadrons-MiG-21	1 reconnaissance squadron
8 interceptor squadrons with Gnat	9 transport aircraft
1 reconnaissance squadron	35 helicopters
1 maritime reconnaissance squadron	
13 transport squadrons	
12 squadrons of helicopters	
20 SA-2 SAM sites	

Source: Military Balance-1971, International Institute for
Strategic Studies

Table 4

Comparison of the Introduction of Major Weapons
and Sophisticated Items in India and Pakistan, 1965-71

Year	Aircraft & Missiles		Tanks & Anti-tank Missiles		Naval Vessels	
	India	Pakistan	India	Pakistan	India	Pakistan
1965	6 B-58 ^c 36 Mi-4 ^a 10 HS-748 ^c 60 MiG-21 ^a 57 MiG-21 ^a 102 SA-2 missile ^a	4 MiG-15 ^b	66 tanks ^c	500 missiles ^e 80 tanks ^b		
1966	40 Mi-4 ^a 16 HF-24 ^e 14 MiG-21 ^a 8 An-12 ^a 80 Alouette ^d	8 Il-28 ^b 40 MiG-19 ^b 5 Mi-6 ^b 90 F-86 ^e 2 C-130 ^f	600 missiles ^a		2 LCT ^a	
1967	36 F-6 ^c 12 F-6 ^c 3 TU-124 ^a	4 C-130 ^g 1 Trident ^c	300 missiles ^a		2 patrol ^a	
1968	4 DHC-4 ^h 100 Su-7 ^a 4 HS-748 ^c	5 Alouette ^d 24 Mirage III ^d 3 F-104 ⁱ 28 Mirage V ^{d*} 2 Mirage III ^{d*} 18 F-104 ^{f*} 7 B-57 ^{f*}	40 tanks ^c	100 tanks ^j (M-47)	3 subs ^a	1 hover- craft ^c
1969	30 MiG-21 ^a 100 Su-7 ^a			100 tanks ^b (T-59)	2 frigates ^a	
1970					1 sub ^c 3 subs ^{d*} 6 patrol ^a	3 subs ^d
1971	6 ASW ^c 50 SAM ^c unk. no. SA-2 ^a	unk no ^b MiG-19 ^b	Approx. 75 tanks ^a unk. no. APC ^a	100 tanks ^b (T-59)		unk. no. OSA patrc

Source: SIPRI, p. 833-838.

Source of supply: a-USSR; b-PRC; c-UK; d-France; e-W. Ger; f-US; g-Iran; h-Canada; i-Belgium; j-Italy

Note: Indian aircraft industry is geared mainly to the assembly of imported components but has produced the HF-24; GNAT, MiG-21, Alouette III Helicopter, and HS-748 transport. India has also established a medium tank plant in Tamilnadu with the capacity to produce 200 Vijayantas (37-ton) tanks a year; India also produces over \$100 million of small arms per year. Pakistan lacks these production capabilities.

* Not delivered due to arms embargo.

period between August 10 and October 27; Stage III is concerned with events between October 28 and November 30; and Stage IV analyzes actions between December 1 and December 17, 1971.

Stage I: Consensus Building

March 25, 1971 marked the beginning of a series of events which demanded the attention and involvement of India; the only question was one of degree; as previously mentioned, the Pakistani Army moved in a coordinated effort to suppress the National Awami League and its supporters in the schools, East Pakistan Rifles (para-military), the Bengal Regiment, the police, and the intelligentsia.¹⁵

On March 31, 1971, both Houses of the Indian Parliament adopted a resolution that demanded:

immediate cessation of the use of force and the massacre of defenseless people....This House calls upon all peoples and Governments of the world...to put an end to the systematic decimation of people which amounts to genocide. This House records its profound conviction that the historic upsurge of 75 million people of East Bengal will triumph. The House wishes to assure them that their struggle and sacrifice will receive the wholehearted sympathy and support of the people of India.¹⁶

Mrs. Gandhi's reaction to the repression in East Pakistan and subsequent refugee influx, even in the face of her tremendous election victory in March (350 seats out of 518), appeared tempered and measured in her appeals for national solidarity and sacrifice. In her Lok Sabha speech of May 24, 1971, the Prime Minister talked of the "national Problem" and said that "time was the essence of the matter." She

said that there could be no military solution but if the world did not take heed, "we shall be constrained to take all measures as may be necessary to ensure our own security and the preservation and development of the structure of our social and economic life."¹⁷ It is apparent that Mrs. Gandhi, even in the euphoria of her election victory, sought to mobilize the nation and guard against the dangers of communalism and regionalism. Indeed, the last paragraph of her May 24 statement emphasized that it was "no time for any interplay of regional or sectional interests....Everything must be subordinated to sustain our economic, social and political fabric and to reinforce national solidarity."¹⁸

In assessing Indian decision calculus in March, 1971, it seems that India rejected early intervention in East Pakistan without first laying a solid foundation of domestic consensus and international understanding. Internally, India's leaders had to ensure that the problem was kept in the secular arena and did not become a question of Hindu vs. Muslim; the East Bengal situation also had to be managed so as not to encourage separatist elements in India (West Bengal, Kerala, and Tamilnadu). Internationally, the mobilization of public opinion was slow, Chinese intentions had to be ascertained, and the Third World's aversion to intervention had to be mollified. Lastly, any military involvement had to consider reorganization, the effectiveness of the guerrillas in East Pakistan, and the monsoons which limited any large-scale military operations in East Pakistan from late May to late October. Had India so elected, justification for

intervention in the early months of the crisis (May-June) could have been based on the social pressures created by the refugee influx into India's eastern states (Table 5); an average daily influx of 96,000 refugees was reported for May and June,¹⁹ and the costs were a grave threat to India's

Table 5
Refugee Influx from East Pakistan into India
(as of October 25, 1971)

State	In Camp	Out of Camp	Total in state
West Bengal	4,948,598 ^a	2,224,560	7,193,158
Tripura	879,746 ^b	523,300	1,403,046
Meghalaya	573,630	73,335	464,965
Assam	206,278	85,283	291,561
Bihar	9,282	-----	9,282
Total ^c	6,617,534	2,926,478	9,544,012

Source: U.S., Congress, Senate, Report by Sen. E. M. Kennedy to the Subcommittee to Investigate Problems Connected with Refugees and Escapees, Crisis in South Asia, November 1, 1971. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1971), p. 7.

^a236,028 were transferred to other states; 85,537 are in central camps in West Bengal.

^b27,150 were moved to Assam.

^cDoes not include 4,117,000 refugees who crossed into India between 1947-58, nor 1,114,000 who crossed into India between 1964-70.

economic development plan. It was estimated that direct costs (food, clothing, shelter) for one year's care of nine million refugees would be between \$500 million and \$1 billion, and the cost to the Indian economy was estimated to be even greater (Table 6). These figures take on added significance when they are compared to the foreign aid which India received

from the "Aid-India Consortium" -- \$800 million before debt financing.

Table 6

Official Estimates of Financial and Economic Costs for
Refugees in India
(for 1 year, in million U.S. dollars)

	Financial (direct)		Economic (indirect)	
	High	Low	High	Low
Recurrent costs (6,000,000 in camps, 3,000,000 outside of camps)	568.2	350.4	606.6	370.8
Nonrecurrent (1 time costs)	423.3	120.9	831.6	247.2
Future income fore- gone			380.0	380.0
Totals	991.5	471.3	1,818.2	998.0

Source: Senate Report, Crisis in South Asia, November 1, 1971, op. cit., p. 34.

In late March, Mrs. Gandhi responded to her Parliament's criticism of India's Foreign Office for a lack of action, including India's failure to recognize Bangla Desh. The Prime Minister appealed for unity and for a curb on communal tendencies, sidestepping the recognition issue which, she said, was "constantly under review." Mrs. Gandhi also said that "all parties must help to ensure that the question of Bangla Desh and of the refugees is not reduced to a communal level but is kept on its true level which is a national and international one."²⁰

The months of April, May, June and July can be categorized

as being devoted to consensus building within India and India's continued attempts to generate international support for her position. In a July 2 address to the Parliamentary Committee on Communalism, Prime Minister Gandhi said:

Political education is not only concerned with our own view on secularism but also putting the whole story of Bangla Desh in correct perspective, because when the focus is given that it is mainly the Hindus who are being forced out, communal tendencies grow. If the correct perspective is put across, namely, that it has nothing to do with the communal problem, that it is a national problem for Bangal Desh, that would be the right education.²¹

From various accounts that were printed after the war, it is fairly certain that India began giving covert material support to the Bengali guerrilla forces in mid-April, 1971, with training cadres furnished by those members of the East Pakistan Rifles and East Bengal Regiment (approximately 10,000) who had escaped the crackdown.²² Training of the recruits varied from a few weeks to six months, and large-scale attacks by the guerrilla forces (Mukti Bahini) commenced in mid-August, 1971.

India's delay in intervening in East Pakistan can be partially explained by India's hope that West Pakistan would first suffer an economic collapse. With the jute from East Pakistan no longer available for the West Wing's textile mills, West Pakistan's foreign exchange reserves declined from \$300 million to \$170 million.²³ The military operations against the Mukti Bahini were costing approximately \$2 million a day, and a \$500 million trade deficit was forecast for the year.²⁴ U.S. economic assistance was vital to Pakistan, and as

Professor Dorfman put it, "The continued flow of American grants and loans was the most important immediate objective in West Pakistan's strategy, more important by far than any military operation."²⁵ But India's hopes for Pakistan's economic collapse were dashed when, in July, even though the World Bank's Aid Consortium recommended a suspension of economic aid, the United States decided to continue its \$250 million grant and loan program.²⁶ Also, on May 15, Pakistan announced that the PRC had offered a \$207 million interest-free commodities loan, bringing Chinese economic aid for the year to \$307 million.²⁷ Indian newspapers commented on the ability of Pakistan's economy to weather the crisis through a combination of outside aid, moratoria on the payment of loans, and rising textile production in the West.²⁸

During the first stage, India's official energies were also directed at educating world opinion on the situation in East Pakistan; United Nations assistance was requested on March 29, and diplomatic pressure was exerted to obtain a suspension of economic and military aid to Pakistan.²⁹

Top-level diplomacy assumed center stage in mid-July with Dr. Kissinger's visit to India and Pakistan. Presumably, the visit had the purpose of negotiating a common ground for the two countries to arrive at a political settlement of the crisis in East Pakistan. Since the United States had been one of the two principal supporters of the Yahya regime, India wanted the U.S. to suspend aid and to apply pressure on Pakistan for political accommodation. Regardless of what actually transpired during the official talks, the net impact

of the Kissinger visit was that India felt that she had been used as a staging ground for Dr. Kissinger's visit to the PRC. The Hindustan Times pointed out that Dr. Kissinger had spent only 24 hours in Pakistan, but that three days had been used to build bridges with the PRC.³⁰ There were also reports that the U.S. had known of a draft Indo-Soviet treaty that had been prepared in 1967-1968, and that Dr. Kissinger had warned India that U.S. aid would not be forthcoming in the event of a Indo-Sino conflict.³¹ In any event, there should have been little surprise when the Indo-Soviet Friendship Treaty was announced on August 9, 1971.³²

The treaty accomplished two short-term objectives; first, it gave formal recognition to Soviet support for India and reduced the effect of U.S. pressure and Chinese uncertainties. Although the treaty was not "mutual defense" in orientation, it prohibited participation in any alliance directed against the other party (Article VIII), prohibited assistance to any third party in conflict with the other (Article IX), and affirmed that neither party had any obligations existing which would cause damage to the other party (Article X).³³ In effect, Soviet prestige was committed to India's cause, if not direct assistance in the event of an Indo-Pakistani conflict. Secondly, the treaty quieted right-wing elements within India which were demanding action; states and Parliament had called on Prime Minister Gandhi to take decisive action in favor of Bangla Desh. The Jana Sangh had organized a 12-day demonstration for early August which was to be capped with a massive "satyagraha".³⁴ The Indo-Soviet treaty deflected

this right-wing pressure and left Mrs. Gandhi with her options intact.

Stage II: Diplomatic Offensive

The Indo-Soviet treaty marked the beginning of intense Indian diplomatic activity to bolster her position and of overt moves to heighten war preparations. The Indian Government had repeatedly rejected suggestions involving the posting of U.N. observer teams on both sides of the border. India maintained the position that the events in East Pakistan were an international problem, but that the problem could only be solved by direct negotiations between the Pakistan government and the elected leaders in East Pakistan. The "equating" of India to Pakistan by such suggestions as U.N. observer teams and Indo-Pakistani talks were considered to be "unfriendly acts."³⁵

There were also signs that India was seeking some sort of rapprochement with the PRC; a letter from Mrs. Gandhi to Premier Chou En-Lai was sent on September 2, 1971.³⁶ The likelihood of Chinese intervention (commitment of troops) had been minimized to the point that responsible military leaders in India stated publically that China would not aid Pakistan and that "with snowbound passes on our north-east border almost plugged, and with a fast depleting economy, Pakistan could not afford to fight against India."³⁷ Also of crucial interest was the confusion within the PRC and the reported death of Lin Piao. It is not difficult to imagine that the possibility of a paralysis of Chinese foreign policy crossed the minds of India's strategic planners.³⁸

Although a military solution was constantly rejected in all public statements by both Soviet and Indian leaders, there appeared to be a gradual escalation of India's demands for a political settlement. On September 26, 1971, Mr. Hossain Ali, a member of the unofficial Bangla Desh High Commission in India, stated that there could be no negotiations for a settlement before

a complete withdrawal of West Pakistani troops and the release of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. There have been talks of a settlement and reconciliation and all this is being done behind the back of the people. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman is the only man who has the mandate of the people and who can negotiate on this question.³⁹

On September 27, 1971, Prime Minister Gandhi arrived in Moscow; the subsequent Indo-Soviet Joint Statement of September 29 gave evidence that the Soviet Union, although still pushing for a political solution, had recognized India's problem:

The Soviet side took into account the statement by the Prime Minister that the government of India is fully determined to take all necessary measures to stop the inflow of refugees from East Bengal to India and to ensure that those refugees who are already in India return to their homeland without delay....Both sides consider that urgent measures should be taken to reach a political solution of the problems which have arisen there....⁴⁰

It is significant that the joint statement of September 29 was a near replica of a June 9, 1971 communique which resulted from talks between India's Minister of External Affairs, Swaran Singh, and Premier A.N. Kosygin of the Soviet Union.⁴¹ The principal difference between the two texts was that instead of both sides agreeing that Pakistan should be the party to take urgent measures to stop the influx of refugees

from East Pakistan (June 9 communique), both sides recognized the determination of India to take all necessary measures to stop the influx of refugees from East Bengal, and to ensure a speedy return of those refugees already in India (September 29 statement).

On October 1, 1971, President Podgorny of the USSR visited India and stated that "further sliding towards a military conflict must be prevented,"⁴² but by October 15, Prime Minister Gandhi was saying that India was ready for war and that Bangla Desh could not be crushed;⁴³ on October 17, India's Defense Minister, Jagjivan Ram, stated that a war would be fought on Pakistani soil and that India would not vacate the territory that was gained.⁴⁴

Just prior to Mrs. Gandhi's first formal press conference since the March eruption of civil strife in East Pakistan, Pakistan began a massing of troops along her borders with India.⁴⁵ To many observers, the move was not meant as a threat to India but was an attempt to deny the border to the guerrillas, the Mukti Bahini. An additional reason for the forward deployment in the East was the fear that a small pocket of the border area might be "liberated" by the guerrillas, and that Indian de jure recognition and support would be given to the de facto control by the Mukti Bahini. From a military standpoint, however, the Pakistani deployment played into the hands of Indian strategy, for it permitted a freer hand for the guerrilla operations in the interior of East Pakistan and also allowed Indian military forces to use fire support to assist guerrilla actions against the Pakistani Army near the

border.

At her October 19 press conference, Prime Minister Gandhi rejected a proposed mutual withdrawal of troops from the border:

It seems very simple and plausible to say that Pakistan troops will withdraw. But the situation has not begun a week ago; it has been an escalating situation, and the Pakistani hate-India campaign, their call for a war of 'jehad' on the basis of religion -- all those things have to be considered. You cannot just ignore them and say: we will remove troops. Furthermore, Pakistan's line of withdrawal to their bases is very close to the borders whereas our bases are very far. So all these things have to be taken into consideration.⁴⁶

This answer appears to have been directed at international pressure for a mutual withdrawal of troops resulting from a Yahya-Podgorny meeting at Persepolis, Iran, on October 15, where President Yahya supposedly proposed a mutual withdrawal of troops. India's Defense Minister, Jagjivan Ram, also rejected troop withdrawal on October 19, saying that the troops would remain until the crisis in East Pakistan was solved, and that India would not submit to pressure.⁴⁷

On October 20, 1971, U Thant of the United Nations sent a letter to both President Yahya Khan and Prime Minister Gandhi, offering the use of his good offices in the "potentially dangerous situation."⁴⁸ Yahya accepted the offer immediately (October 21), but India declined to answer until November 16, after Mrs. Gandhi had completed a tour of Western capitals which she had started on October 24.⁴⁹

By October 21, the Indian position had hardened to "no withdrawal until the refugees can return in safety and honor,"

and India reserved the right to take further steps.⁵⁰

On October 21, Indian Army reservists and certain categories of Navy and Air Force reservists were called up; on October 24, Defense Minister Jagjivan Ram acknowledged that Border Security Forces had been relieved by the Army in certain areas.⁵¹ On October 25, the Defense Minister reiterated India's resolve to keep its forces on the borders until the movement of refugees into India had stopped and their movement from India into Bangla Desh had started.⁵²

On October 24, Prime Minister Gandhi left New Delhi for a tour of six Western capitals. In the midst of her visit to Austria, on October 27, India invoked Article IX of the Indo-Soviet Friendship Treaty, which called for consultations "when either party faces external aggression."⁵³ India asked the Soviet Union to take "proper effective measures to ensure India's peace and security against Pakistan."⁵⁴

Stage III: Measured Escalation

Although the Indo-Pakistani war did not, by official Indian accounts, begin until Pakistan initiated an air attack on the evening of December 3, there was significant military contact throughout November; there had been frequent complaints lodged by both sides regarding the cease-fire line in Kashmir, violations of airspace, and reports of artillery shelling.⁵⁵ In late October-early November, ground forces of both India and Pakistan became involved.

On October 31, Indian military forces crossed into East Pakistan to silence Pakistani guns which had been shelling Kamalpur village in Tripura, India, for 11 days. Despite

official denials, Indian military spokesmen admitted the crossing on November 7.⁵⁶ On November 1, the Union Territory of Tripura had been placed under President's rule. Military contacts were reported in Mymensingh District on November 4, Belonia (Noakhali-Tripura border) on November 11, and in the Shikarpur (West Bengal)-Kashtria District (East Pakistan) area on November 12.⁵⁷

With guerrilla activity steadily increasing in East Pakistan, Mrs. Gandhi used her tour of Western capitals to explain India's position; she told the British that India was determined that the vast majority of refugees must return to their homes in East Bengal, that India resented being equated with Pakistan, and that India "might be forced to take action in its national interest."⁵⁸ She told the Austrians that there was no basis for Indian-Pakistani negotiations and that India could not accept U.N. observer teams, told the Americans that mutual withdrawal of troops was unacceptable, told the French that an independent Bangla Desh was inevitable, and concluded her tour by telling the West Germans that Indian public opinion had forced her to give the Mukti Bahini a "minimum of aid" and that India could not prevent guerrilla use of Indian territory along the 1,500 miles of border.⁵⁹

Upon Prime Minister Gandhi's return from her tour of Western capitals, she addressed Parliament on November 15, 1971. In her speech, she stated that the release of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was an essential element of a political solution. She also informed Parliament that all of the governments she had visited had agreed to suspend arms shipments to Pakistan,

and that they supported additional funds for refugee relief.

But, she said:

The brunt of the burden has to be borne by us and by the people of Bangla Desh who have our fullest sympathy and support.

So far as the threat to our security is concerned, we must be prepared -- and we are prepared -- to the last man and woman, to safeguard our freedom and territorial integrity. Obviously we cannot take risks such as the withdrawal of our forces from the border unless the situation in Bangla Desh is resolved satisfactorily as it poses a serious threat to our security.⁶⁰

Stage IV: Military Solution

A combination of factors -- international conditions, regional opportunities, and internal pressures⁶¹ -- affected India's military policy and the timing and planning of the military effort against Pakistan.⁶²

International factors. As the crisis progressed into mid-1971, it became apparent that none of the great powers was in a position to prevent India from undertaking those actions it deemed to be in its interests.

The United States has demonstrated its intention to use "quiet diplomacy" in affecting a political solution, and it was obvious that the U.S. was adverse to pressuring Pakistan. It is quite likely that India perceived the U.S. to be pre-occupied with the Middle East, Berlin, SALT, and the China initiative. In addition, the U.S. experience in Vietnam, the Kissinger trip to Peking in July, and the pro-India public opinion in the United States could have been logically considered

as limitations to the credibility of any U.S. threat to intervene.⁶³

Of at least equal significance was India's decision to sign the Friendship Treaty with the Soviet Union in August, 1971. In addition to huge amounts of military equipment supplied to India by the USSR, the treaty pre-empted Chinese threats and off-set, somewhat, the impact of the earlier U.S.-PRC initiative. Whereas the U.S. desired to manage the crisis from the sidelines and keep it from affecting relations among the great powers, the Soviet government decided that it was in her interest to become a direct participant in the affairs of the region and to commit her prestige to India's cause.

Although the Chinese had approximately 100,000 troops in Tibet, India had nine mountain divisions available to guard the passes through the Himalayas, and the passes were blocked with snow. Chinese reaction had been much less aggressive than that of 1965, and Chinese intervention was thought to be unlikely in light of improving Sino-American relations and the Chinese interest in joining the United Nations. If the Chinese attempted to restrict their support to military supplies, Indian strategists felt that the eclectic nature of the Pakistani inventory (40% U.S.-supplied) would make it impossible for the Chinese to fill Pakistan's war-time supply needs.

Lastly, India's restraint in reacting to the flood of refugees and the brutal suppressions of the Bengalis had

benefited West Pakistan, for it allowed the world community to treat the crisis as an "internal matter" of Pakistan and kept the issue on the periphery of diplomatic concern. Indian strategists discounted the effect of international public opinion and considered it to be immaterial in the event that India decided to take the initiative against Pakistan.⁶⁴

Regional factors. The Indians slowly came around to the realization that Pakistan was not going to suffer an economic collapse. The West, particularly the United States, did not suspend economic aid to Pakistan, and Pakistan, even in the face of reduced export earnings which resulted from the loss of East Pakistan's jute, was able to sustain the costs of military operations in the East and to even raise two new divisions.

Pakistan had increased its forces in the East to 80,000 troops, but there was inadequate air cover to support conventional military operations (18 F-86 Sabre jets). In addition, there were monumental logistical problems, both outside and inside East Pakistan; resupply of bulk supplies was limited to a 3,500 mile sea route, and the Mukti Bahini had effectively interdicted lines of communication within East Pakistan.

Pakistan had another liability which could have been overcome in the long run, but which had a high short-term impact. It was estimated that the Pakistani Air Force and Navy had lost up to 30% of their manpower because of the relatively large numbers of Bengalis that had been in each of these services.

Internal factors. India had to consider the stress of the refugee influx, costs and effects of a possible war with India, communal harmony, and the need for military reorganization.

During the first half of April, the refugees were a mix of Hindus and Muslims, but by the second half of April, the refugees were almost all Hindus.⁶⁵ This change in the nature of the refugee influx led some Indians to conclude that Pakistan was attempting to "purify" East Bengal at the expense of communal harmony in eastern Indian states. The direct costs of caring for the refugees were estimated at a minimum of \$800 million for one year, which just about equaled the total economic aid that India received before debt financing.

The 1965 war with Pakistan had cost Rs. 50 crores (\$65 million), and it was estimated that, short of great power intervention, a war with Pakistan would last no longer than three months, incur no more than 40,000 casualties, and cost no more than Rs. 500 crores (\$650 million).⁶⁶ There would be no need for mobilization, and replacement of material losses could be spread over future defense budgets. The net impact of these calculations was that a war with Pakistan would cost less, both in direct and indirect costs, than in caring for the millions of refugees.

It was also argued that India's failure to act would further alienate the West Bengalis, encourage Pakistan to escalate its crackdown with such measures as "hot pursuit"

operations into Indian territory, lessen Indian credibility due to the earlier state and national resolutions that had voiced support of East Bengal, encourage Hindu-Muslim friction, and assist Naxalite activity in the region.

The Indian armed forces were not prepared to initiate operations in East Pakistan when the West Pakistani crack-down commenced on March 25, 1971. In the eastern states, there was only one infantry division oriented on the West Bengal-East Pakistan border. Two other divisions were involved in internal security missions in the Mizo Hills and in Nagaland, but they were without bridging material and adequate armor and artillery support.⁶⁷ With 4 1/2 Pakistani divisions in East Pakistan, India had to increase its combat power ratio, construct airfields, and develop lines of communications for logistical support. By the time the monsoon season ended and the terrain permitted conventional military operations (early November), eight divisions had been organized under a joint Eastern Command which was prepared to drive into East Pakistan.

Indian applies pressure in the East. On November 21, Indian military forces assisted the Mukti Bahini who were fighting Pakistani forces at Boyra (India), some five miles from the border with East Pakistan. In the course of the fighting, Indian forces crossed the border, an act which was justified on the grounds of "self-defense."⁶⁸ Significant clashes were also reported near Sylhet, Comilla, Chittagong, Rangpur, Dinajpur, Hilli, Kushtria, and Khalna.⁶⁹

On November 23, President Yahya Khan announced a State of Emergency, and he called up Army reservists on November 24.⁷⁰

On November 23, India announced that her military forces had been given the right to cross the border into East Pakistan if they were under attack. On November 27, Indian troops crossed the border near the towns of Hilli and Balurghat. The crossing was justified by a Defense Ministry spokesman who said that:

whenever our people are shelled or whenever the integrity of our territory is threatened, we shall cross the border to take defensive action. If there is a direct threat to our positions and our citizens, then we shall cross the border, and if necessary, stay put.⁷¹

Although there was a last-ditch effort by President Yahya and the United States to arrive at a diplomatic accommodation with India, India's stand hardened even further on November 30.⁷² Defense Minister Jagjiman Ram broadened the rules of engagement for Indian forces along the border, giving them permission to go as far into East Pakistan as the range of Pakistani artillery. Since the Pakistani Army had 175mm artillery with a range of 32 kilometers, such key centers as Jessore, Sylhet, Dinajpur, and Comilla were well within the limits announced by the Defense Minister. Also on November 30, Prime Minister Gandhi addressed the Rajya Sabha and rejected any troop withdrawals unless Pakistani troops in Bengla Desh were returned to West Pakistan; "...the very presence of Pakistani troops in Bangla Desh is a threat to our security."⁷⁴

On the evening of December 3, one day after India had rejected a proposal to post U.N. observer teams along the border, the crisis came to a head when Pakistan initiated air attacks along India's border with West Pakistan. On December 4, the Indians attacked into East Pakistan in strength, creating more than 20 salients with eight divisions (approximately 160,000 troops), and they were supported by 50,000-100,000 Mukti Bahini.⁷⁵ On December 6, India gave de jure recognition to Bangla Desh.⁷⁶

India's Role in the Political Transformation

U.S. policy toward India in the crisis had been based on the assumption that India's military intervention should be prevented. The United States, however, lacked effective means of exerting its influence on India (excepting a cut-off of economic aid); the USSR had become India's principal source of military equipment and international support, and the U.S. position of "political evolution" in East Pakistan was unacceptable to India. U.S. concern for the status quo, balanced great power relationships in South Asia, and the implications for the global system were incompatible with India's concern for a rapid settlement of the crisis and India's perceived role perception as the dominant power in South Asia.

Although in the West the war was started by a pre-emptive air strike by Pakistan, in the East the war was started by Indian military advances which had been initiated as early as October 27, 1971.

Circumstances (external and internal settings) dictated India's choice of a military solution; West Pakistan refused to compromise and agree to a peaceful break by East Bengal, and the attempts to suppress the East Bengalis placed enormous pressures on India. Initially, India moved slowly and responsibly, bearing the burden of the tremendous influx of refugees and attempting to mobilize international opinion. At the same time, Prime Minister Gandhi sought a national consensus based on India's national interests and not on communalism or regionalism. International pressure was ineffective in moving Pakistan, and international constraints on India's alternatives were neutralized; none of the great powers was in a position to intervene or prevent India from undertaking those actions which she deemed appropriate. Within India, public opinion demanded that the government take action to curb the influx of refugees and to assist the Bengalis. The unsettled conditions in West Bengal and the costs of caring for the refugees for an indefinite time made it mandatory for India to effect a solution.

Once it was realized that Pakistan was not going to collapse under economic strain and that the Mukti Bahini were not going to be decisive without outside assistance, India prepared for a military solution. There is no substantive evidence that India intended to invade West Pakistan; although there were, no doubt, contingency plans to support operations against West Pakistan, the disposition of military forces and combat power ratios in the West indicated that India's primary objective was the liberation of East Pakistan, supported by a

holding action in the West.

India appears to have been content with the "limited objective" of Pakistan's dismemberment, and she apparently realized that the world community regarded the fate of West Pakistan in different terms from that of East Pakistan.

India, as the dominant state in the South Asian subsystem, was able to act (in East Pakistan) relatively unencumbered by great power restraints, primarily because a transformation affecting the global system was not at stake; India convincingly established her position as the dominant power in South Asia, and although the Soviet Union enhanced its prestige and influence during and after the crisis, the Indo-Soviet relationship preceded the crisis--the Indo-Soviet Friendship Treaty merely formalized the relationship.

India's military intervention, although not inevitable, was the logical result of West Pakistan's brutal suppression of the East Bengalis, the pressures which the tremendous influx of refugees placed on India's economic and social structure, and the inability or refusal of the great powers to effect a peaceful political solution.

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Chapter 3

THE GREAT POWERS AND THE CRISIS

"In central areas of policy, we have arranged our procedure of policy-making so as to address the broader questions of long-term objectives first; we define our purposes and then address the specific operational issues."

President Nixon
U.S. Foreign Policy for
the 1970's: A New
Strategy for Peace

"The one-dimensional approach to diplomacy is wrong. Although it is a natural propensity of people to think in terms of their own situation, the global situation defies this limited approach. World developments have now become so complex and interconnected that no important decision tolls the bell for one people alone."

Z.A. Bhutto
The Myth of Independence

"In our time, which cannot be compared with former times, many factors determine the interconnections and interdependence between events, both in the field of world politics and in the world economies."

A.N. Kosygin
 September 28, 1971

In order to assess U.S. involvement in the India-Pakistan crisis of 1971, it is necessary to discuss the historic involvement of the great powers in India-Pakistan relations and their respective roles in the crisis.

The crisis produced over nine million temporary refugees from East Pakistan, charges of genocide against the West Pakistani Army for its actions in attempting to suppress East Pakistan, the possibility of Chinese intervention to assist West Pakistan, USSR support of India, and the eventual dismemberment of Pakistan through the efforts of the East Bengali

guerrilla forces and the 14-day war between India and Pakistan.¹ This chapter will investigate the extent to which United States interests as a great power affected or determined U.S. policies and actions toward the crisis. In addition, the role of the other great powers will be addressed, for it was within this systemic environment of great power and subsystem interests that U.S. capabilities and limitations were defined.

USSR Involvement in South Asia

The Soviet Union had no vital interests directly affected by the events in South Asia in 1971. There were, however, certain conditions which pointed to a growing Soviet commitment to India based on an incremental combination of specific commitments such as military aid and economic assistance.

In the 1950's, Soviet interests in South Asia involved countering the U.S. policy of containment and U.S. supported alliances such as the Baghdad Pact of 1955. Since Premier Khrushchev's visit to New Delhi in 1955, the USSR had supported India both militarily and economically, and has also supported India on the Kashmir issue with Security Council vetoes in 1957 and 1962.²

By the time of the 1962 Sino-Indo border war, the growing Sino-Soviet rift necessitated a change in Soviet foreign policy. The USSR adopted a neutral position toward the Sino-Indian war, thus increasing the military strength of India and serving as a warning to China. The Soviet indecisiveness, however, forced the Indians to seek needed military supplies from the U.S.

In the Indian-Pakistan war of 1965, the situation was more complicated; On August 24, 1965, Pravda published a commentary which made it clear that the Soviet Union was still not willing to take sides and that the USSR was intent on improving her relations with Pakistan:

Strengthening the ties between the USSR and Pakistan must be regarded as a part of a general policy aimed at ensuring peace in South Asia and throughout the world. We would like Soviet-Pakistani relations, like our traditional friendship with India, to be a stabilizing factor...in Asia and to contribute to the normalization of relations between Pakistan and India.³

The neutral stance adopted by the USSR was followed by a furious Chinese demand that the Indians should pull back within three days or face grave consequences.⁴ The possibility of Chinese intervention put the Soviets in an untenable position. If the Indians defied the Chinese threat and if the Chinese did in fact intervene, the USSR would be faced with choosing between India (probably supported by the West), and advancing the cause of a potential enemy (China). The USSR solved this problem by initiating a diplomatic offensive which included four appeals by Premier Kosygin and the offer of Soviet good offices to mediate a settlement. The USSR pressured the Indians into relinquishing control over the strategic Kargil Heights to Pakistan as a quid pro quo for Pakistan's agreement to a negotiated settlement.⁵

From 1965 to the end of the decade, the Soviet Union attempted to establish a balanced relationship with India and Pakistan. The USSR extended economic and military aid to both

countries in an attempt to lessen the influence of the U.S. and the PRC. By mid-1969, however, the Soviet government apparently concluded that Pakistan would not weaken her relationship with the PRC; the USSR then accused China of initiating the border war with India in 1962 and offered India a Soviet-backed "Asian Collective Security" concept.⁶

The U.S. initiative in China in 1971 increased the importance of India to Soviet strategic security. The existence of a militarily strong India complicated China's defensive planning. In addition, the growing capabilities of the Soviet Navy could be used in the Indian Ocean (with India's consent) to serve two purposes: First, the presence of two super-powers in the Indian Ocean increases pressure for its neutralization by the riparian countries. Since the U.S. Polaris submarine began patrolling the Indian Ocean in late 1964, and since its A-3 missile can hit all the USSR's industrialized areas from the Ukraine to the Kuzbas, any successful neutralization of the area would seriously impair the credibility of the U.S. nuclear deterrent.⁷ Secondly, the Soviet Navy's presence in the Indian Ocean complements the "psychological" outflanking of the PRC through such instruments as the Indo-Soviet Friendship Treaty of 1971.

The Soviet Union reacted quickly to the crisis in East Pakistan. On April 3, 1971, President Podgorny, in an open letter to President Yahya Khan, spoke out against the West Pakistani Army's actions and urged a halt to the "bloodshed and repression."⁸ The Soviet Union, however, avoided bombastic

rhetoric which would have completely removed any influence they might have been able to exert on President Yahya. For example, the Soviet government continually referred to "East Pakistan" instead of "Bangla Desh" and early statements called on Pakistan, not India, to take the necessary measures for a political solution.

A change in Soviet policy appears to have coincided with the U.S. initiative in China (PRC) and the realization that a June 28, 1971 speech by President Yahya Khan left little hope for Pakistan's acceptance of a political settlement that included the loss of East Pakistan. The Indo-Soviet Friendship Treaty of August 9, 1971 added a measure of security to the Soviet southern flank and gave the USSR more control over their client's actions.

Although the treaty was a positive step in Indo-Soviet relations, other Soviet actions were significant for what they did not do. The Soviet Union did not sever economic aid to Pakistan, did not recognize Bangla Desh, did not demand that Pakistan negotiate with Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and the Awami League, did not send officials on tours of refugee camps, and did not use the term "Bangla Desh" in official statements.⁹

The 59th Conference of the Inter-Parliamentary Union in September, 1971, offered additional evidence that the Soviet government did not intend to give free rein to support of India's policies concerning Pakistan. A resolution was introduced which urged the Pakistan government to

take all appropriate peaceful and democratic steps to halt the flow of refugees and to establish conditions in East Pakistan which will stimulate and encourage the safe, voluntary return of the refugees to their homeland.

Tunisia asked that the words "to continue" be inserted so that the resolution would read, "...urges Pakistan government to continue to take all appropriate actions...", implying that Pakistan was already proceeding in a peaceful and democratic manner.¹⁰ The Soviet Union and Bulgaria abstained on the vote to amend the resolution, which was won by Tunisian supporters, 16 to 15. The next day, the USSR voted to suppress the resolution, even though India had voted to maintain the resolution; the Bangla Desh resolution was defeated 22-19. Possible explanations of the Soviet action are that the USSR did not wish to offend the Muslim nations which had supported Pakistan, that the Soviet government did not appreciate India's recent overtures to the PRC, and/or that the USSR did not wish to totally offend and alienate Pakistan's President Yahya Khan.

In late September, 1971, Prime Minister Gandhi visited the Soviet Union. The USSR, in a joint statement, acknowledged India's right to take necessary actions in her interests, and military supplies and Soviet officials began arriving in India on a regular basis in October.¹¹ Possible explanations of the Soviet change in policy are that the internal turmoil in the PRC had effectively neutralized China as a threat to intervene, that India may have convinced the Soviet leadership that she intended to act with or without the Soviet

Union's assistance, that both parties realized that the strength of the Mukti Bahini made it likely that guerrilla war would continue, and that the 9,000,000 refugees and instability in the area were creating an advantageous opportunity for Naxalite (Maoist) activity.

The principal military activity of India in October and November was concentrated in the East; the decision of West Pakistan to initiate attacks on the Western front (Jammu and Kashmir) gave India the opportunity to declare a "no holds-barred" war which left the Soviet Union with the choice of supporting a "limited objective" war (liberation of East Pakistan) or of facing the possibility that India's threat to West Pakistan might result in Western and/or Chinese intervention.

The actions of the USSR after the war began on both fronts provide some insight of Soviet objectives. Although the Soviet Union consistently blocked United Nations action through use of her Security Council vetoes on December 4, 5, and 12, she allowed a Security Council Resolution to pass on December 17 (USSR and Poland abstained) that demanded that a cease-fire remain in effect and that both parties respect the cease-fire in Jammu and Kashmir supervised by the U.N. Military Observer Group.¹² The net result of the Soviet action was to block U.N. action until the liberation of East Pakistan was a "fait accompli", which occurred on December 16, and then to use the U.N. to put pressure on India to restrain her from continuing the war into West Pakistan.

To sum up, it appears that the Soviet Union considered an independent East Bengal (Bangla Desh) to be inevitable, and that India possessed the capability to execute a swift military solution at the end of the monsoon season. Beyond that, there is nothing substantive to indicate that the USSR supported any continuation of the conflict into West Pakistan; the primary Soviet objective was to protect her position in South Asia (India) and to prevent the military intervention of the other great powers.

People's Republic of China (PRC) Involvement in South Asia

Events in South Asia, such as the crisis in 1971, represent a direct link to the vital interests of the PRC. Although geography and historical experience make the Soviet Union the most immediate and credible threat to Chinese security, Indian hostility presents China with the possibility of a two-front war. In addition, the PRC gained access to the Indian Ocean in February, 1971, through the all-weather Karakoram Highway in Pakistan; this highway passes through Pakistani-occupied Azad Kashmir, and its security is linked to long-range Chinese interests. Chester Bowles is of the opinion that the PRC's long-range goal is to extend her influence southward, using her access to the Indian Ocean, and to gain a foothold in East Africa;¹³ attainment of this goal would, as the Chinese perceive it, outflank the USSR's "containment" of the PRC, assist "wars of national liberation" in Africa, and assist the PRC's strategic missile program (overflight, impact areas, tracking stations).

Chinese interests in South Asia appear to be reflected in the promotion of a "Balkanization" process along India's northern tier of states. The dilemma for China in the 1971 crisis, however, was to decide on whom to support--the independence movement of the East Bengalis or West Pakistan, an ally and enemy of India. Support of the East Bengalis would have been consistent with support of "national liberation" movements and the furtherance of regional tension within India. The PRC, however, chose to interpret the crisis as an internal matter of Pakistan, and India (and to some extent the U.S. and USSR) was criticized for interference in the internal affairs of Pakistan.

Although the PRC was quick to voice its support of West Pakistan and extended both military and economic aid, Chinese reaction to the events in East Pakistan was much less aggressive and clear than during the 1965 India-Pakistan confrontation.¹⁴ The improvement in Sino-U.S. relations, diplomatic maneuvering to arrive at an acceptable solution of the Taiwan issue in the U.N., and continued Sino-Soviet mutual hostility (there were reports that the Soviets promised to open up a diversionary front in Sinkiang), forced China to consider the global implications of her actions.

Regionally, although the insurgency in East Bengal complemented regional tension in West Bengal and contributed to a possible Balkanization process of India's northern tier of states, regionalism also threatened the survival of West Pakistan, particularly in Baluchistan and the North-West

Frontier Province. In addition, it was clear that most African states considered the primary issue in the crisis to be interference in the internal affairs of a sovereign nation, and China had been seeking to increase her influence in East Africa.

Had the PRC been free of the above-mentioned restraints, it is still possible that China's internal situation and the element of time may well have forced the Chinese to remain passive. An internal struggle for power had resulted in the death of Lin Biao, and the September grounding of the Chinese Air Force indicated that the loyalty of the armed forces was questioned.¹⁵ In addition, the Indians had substantially increased their Himalayan defenses, and the passes were blocked with snow; in 1962, against very weak Indian resistance, the Chinese had taken one month to get to the Himalayan foothills on India's side.

Chinese actions reflected imposed restraints; in early November, Z.A. Bhutto and a military delegation visited Peking in an obvious attempt to secure overt Chinese support and lessen the impact of Prime Minister Gandhi's tour of Western capitals. It is interesting to note that no joint communique was issued at the end of Bhutto's visit; the only "official" Chinese response was Foreign Minister Chi Peng-fei's speech at a banquet on November 7. The Foreign Minister voiced China's support of mutual troop withdrawal (Indian and Pakistani) from the borders and said that:

...should Pakistan be subjected to foreign aggression, the Chinese Government and people, as always, resolutely support the Pakistan Government and people in their struggle to defend state sovereignty and national independence.¹⁶

There was no mention made of any specific Chinese commitment.

One of the most significant Chinese actions involved a response to Mrs. Gandhi's September 2 letter to Premier Chou En-Lai; in his response of November 14, Premier Chou stated that he hoped that "friendship between the two countries will develop daily."¹⁷ India responded to this signal by refusing to accept a Formosan business delegation on November 21.¹⁸

With the step-up of military activity in late November, the New China News Agency did not comment, and the first official mention of events occurred on November 25, when Premier Chou referred to India's "military provocations" without suggesting any Chinese action to support Pakistan.¹⁹ As late as November 29, the Chinese would only suggest that "serious consideration be given to President Yahya Khan's reasonable proposal for the armed forces to withdraw respectively from the border."²⁰

The impact of the PRC's decision to refrain from a more active role in the crisis, a decision dictated by global, regional, and internal factors, resolved one of the most important variables in India's decision calculus -- Chinese intent.

U.S. Involvement in South Asia

U.S. influence in India and Pakistan, in relation to the other great powers, has declined since the 1950's, even though

the United States has poured billions of dollars into the region. In February, 1955, after Turkey, Iraq, Iran, Pakistan, and the United Kingdom formed the CENTO alliance, the U.S. announced its support of the alliance and became an unofficial member. U.S. support of Pakistan was defended on the basis of Cold War ideology, and approximately \$3 billion in economic aid and close to \$1.5 billion in military aid (Table 7) was provided between 1950-1971.²¹ In 1959, the U.S. and Pakistan entered into a bilateral defense agreement under which the U.S. was committed to take such action, "including the use of armed forces, as may be mutually agreed upon in event of aggression against Pakistan."²² India, a recipient of \$10 billion in U.S. economic aid and \$168 million for military aid, rejected the U.S. policy of containment and the Cold War rationale; instead, India adopted a policy of non-alignment (interpreted as neutralism by U.S. officials) which was extremely unpopular with the U.S. Government. In 1954, Secretary of State Dulles said:

India's foreign policy is not one which measures up to what we think are the best standards.... Neutrality...except under exceptional circumstances--is an immoral conception.²³

President Nixon, then the Vice-President, urged the 1954 bilateral defense pact with Pakistan "as a counter-blast to the confirmed neutralism of Nehru."²⁴

The Sino-Indian border war of 1962 caused a reappraisal of India's foreign policy, especially towards the United States. India's antiquated defense establishment and Chinese successes

in the Himalayas resulted in an Indian emergency request for military aid; within a few days after receipt of the request, the United States airlifted \$70 million in military supplies to India.²⁵

TABLE 7

U.S. Military Aid to India and Pakistan, 1950-71
(Dollars in Thousands)

Fiscal Year	Military Assistance Program (MAP)		Excess Defense Articles*		Military Sales Deliveries	
	India	Pakistan	India	Pakistan	India	Pakistan
1950-65	82,928	671,609	4,942	8,809	53,369	33,239
1966	5,960	71	965	138	1,782	211
1967	2,114	21	1,430	--	1,487	2,727
1968	184	82	--	--	3,017	6,581
1969	976	130	--	--	1,567	14,735
1970	708	163	--	--	2,899	19,196
1971	910	174	1	--	1,071	14,307
1950-1971	93,780	672,250	7,338	8,947	65,192	90,996
1965-1971	10,852	641	2,396	138	11,823	57,757

Source: Military and Foreign Military Sales Facts, Defense Security Assistance Agency, Washington: Government Printing Office, April, 1972.

* Legal value represents 33% of the original acquisition value.

Note: Pakistan also received \$619,624,000 in Security Supporting Assistance and \$79,260,000 in PL 480 grants between 1950-1963 (when the programs were terminated).

At a time when it appeared that India and the United States might find a common ground for closer relations (India's support for a negotiated settlement in South-East Asia in exchange for \$500 million in U.S. military aid), President Kennedy was assassinated, and India's Prime Minister Nehru

died six months later. The Johnson Administration decided to postpone talks with India after Nehru's death, whereupon the Indian negotiators proceeded to Moscow and quickly closed a deal for military assistance.²⁶

The idealism of India's foreign policy was shattered by the border war with China in 1962. India was forced to expand and modernize its defense establishment in order to counter both a Pakistani and Chinese threat. With the U.S. decision to embargo arms shipments to both India and Pakistan in 1965 and the Sino-Soviet rift, the Soviet Union became the logical source of support for India.

India has never accepted the proposition that the British partition of the subcontinent created two separate nations; as the most powerful entity in the South Asian subsystem, India objected to the equating of India and Pakistan in U.S. or other Western eyes and also objected to a great power concern for a "power balance."

With the British pull-out from South Asia in the late 40's and early 50's, the U.S. and the Soviet Union regarded the region as a power vacuum; the United States attempted to fill this "vacuum" with its support of CENTO and membership in the SEATO alliance system (Pakistan also was a member). India refused to participate or support either, and she interpreted the U.S. actions as containment of India as much as the avowed purpose of containing Communism.²⁷

India argued that a stable military imbalance managed by India was preferable to an unstable military balance managed

by outsiders.²⁸ Many Indians considered Pakistan to be a temporary aberration which had been forced on them by the British, and they objected to being "equated" with Pakistan. Attempts by the great powers, particularly the United States, to balance Pakistan and India prevented India from exerting her leadership in the region, and the military strengthening of Pakistan was viewed as a direct threat to India's security. As a non-nuclear power, India's relations with the great powers was, and is, dominated by the axiom: my enemy's enemy is my friend, and my enemy's friend is my enemy.

Of all the relevant actors, Pakistan had the most flexibility in the exercise of her foreign policy. Whereas the U.S., USSR, PRC, and India had to balance triadic relationships, Pakistan's foreign relations were dominated by her hostility towards India. This situation has three significant aspects: First, Pakistan was able to play off the great powers against each other; in the 50's, U.S. military aid was used to play off the United States against the USSR; in the 60's, Soviet military aid allowed Pakistan to play off the Soviet Union against the PRC; and in the late 60's, Chinese assistance was used to play off both the U.S. and the USSR.²⁹ During the crisis of 1971, the United States justified its continued military aid to Pakistan on the grounds that suspension of aid would force Pakistan to expand her other sources of support, primarily the PRC.

The second aspect of Pakistan's one-dimensional foreign policy is that Pakistan was forced to go outside the region to

obtain assistance in an attempt to increase Pakistan's military capability against India. This not only encouraged the great powers to use military aid as a lever in promoting their respective interests in the region, but led to an ill-defined commitment of their prestige.

The third and last aspect overlaps the second; the objectives of Pakistan and her great power sponsors were not always congruent; whereas U.S. military assistance to Pakistan in the 50's was motivated by a desire to contain Communism, Pakistan's acceptance of military aid was motivated by her desire to strengthen her military capability against India. As a subordinate member of the South Asian subsystem, Pakistan's relations with the great powers depended on their relations with India. In this respect, Pakistan's interests appear to be more in harmony with those of the PRC. Sino-Pakistani relations have grown and deepened since the Tibetan revolt of 1959 and the Sino-Indian border war of 1962. The U.S. and Soviet Union, on the other hand, have struggled through intermittent highs and lows in their relations with Pakistan.

Pakistan felt that the U.S. military aid to India in 1962 should have been a quid pro quo for a settlement of the Kashmir issue. Relations with Pakistan were further strained in 1965, when the U.S. placed an embargo on all military arms shipments to both India and Pakistan. This embargo hurt Pakistan much more than India, for Pakistan was almost entirely dependent on U.S. equipment and spare parts. Pakistan was further aggravated by the failure of CENTO to provide any support to her in her confrontation with India.

By 1971, Pakistan had all but formally withdrawn from SEATO, had been extremely critical of the U.S. role in Vietnam, had terminated the U.S. lease on its U-2 bases at Budaper (near Peshawar), and had improved her relations with both the Soviet Union and the PRC.³⁰

India continued to strengthen her relationship with the Soviet Union after 1965, and as President Nixon described the situation:

India and the Soviet Union already had a political tie of a kind that the United States would not attempt to match. This tie--inherent in the expanding Soviet-Indian military supply relationship after 1965--originated long in advance of the November war, the August treaty of friendship, our July China initiative, or the March crisis in Pakistan. When the August treaty was signed, both sides told us that it had been in preparation for more than two years.³¹

U.S. Interpretation of the Crisis

Bernard K. Gordon has proposed that the United States behavioral pattern in foreign policy fits three different levels of national interest.³² 'Level One' interest is characterized by a willingness to risk general war in connection with dominance in Europe, East Asia, and Latin America. 'Level Two' interests represent certain conditions under which the United States might risk major war, such as continued access to specific resources or locations, and specific commitments to act. 'Level Three' interests, furthest removed from resort to force, represent the concern for world peace and political stability, and a diminution of violence.³³

The South Asian crisis appears to have fit somewhere between

a 'Level Two' and a 'Level Three' interest in the U.S. interpretation. Although there was no direct threat posed to vital U.S. security interests (Level One), there was a possible indirect linkage through a threat to the continuance of U.S. access to the Indian Ocean and the commitment (CENTO, SEATO, and 1959 bilateral pact) of the United States to protect Pakistan against Communist aggression (Level Two).

The argument that the U.S. interest and actions should have been tied to a moral concern for the millions of refugees, the victims of the brutal Pakistani military suppression, and the independence movement of the East Bengalis fits a 'Level Three' interest. The massacre of over 200,000 Indonesians in 1965-1966, the Yemen conflict of 1962 (over 100,000 casualties), and the tremendous loss of life in the Nigerian-Biafran conflict of 1968 caused little official U.S. concern.³⁴ The U.S. reaction was "predictable" in light of the geographic location, the absence of a possible denial to the U.S. of a vital resource, and the lack of any U.S. commitment to any party in the above-mentioned conflicts.

In the case of the South Asian crisis of 1971, however, the levels of interests were less clearly defined. The Soviet Union, through its growing ties with India, was perceived as promoting Indian hegemony of the subcontinent and increasing Soviet influence in the Indian Ocean at the expense of the U.S. and the PRC. Strategic security of the U.S. required that its nuclear submarines have access to the Indian Ocean (Arabian Sea), and the economies of the United States and

Western Europe required assured passage via the Cape of Good Hope and access to the Indian Ocean. Lastly, the U.S., through her association with Pakistan in CENTO and SEATO, had committed substantial prestige to the continued sovereignty of Pakistan.³⁵

From a global perspective, 1971 saw major developments which affected U.S. interests and her relationships with the other great powers. As President Nixon stated:

Globally, the world could see the beginning of a new relationship between the United States and the Peoples Republic of China; concrete progress on important issues in U.S.-Soviet relations; a mature relationship between the U.S. and East Asia as the Nixon Doctrine took effect and the U.S. sharply reduced its military involvement in Vietnam; the increasing contribution of Japan in Asian affairs; and efforts among industrialized nations to create new economic relationships increasing the trade opportunities of the developing world.³⁶

In practical terms, the U.S. move from a posture of confrontation to one of negotiation necessitated a reappraisal of relationships which had been based on the policy of containment. This reappraisal was reinforced by the "balance of terror" of two super-powers, the United States and the Soviet Union.

Against this global perspective, the United States defined its policy for South Asia:

Our policy is to help these nations deal with their own problems and to bring our own activities into a stable balance with that of the other major powers with

interests in the area....We have a deep interest in ensuring that the subcontinent does not become a focus of great power conflict....We have no desire to press upon them (India and Pakistan) a closer relationship than their own interests lead them to desire....We will try to keep our activities in the area in balance with those of the other major powers concerned....We will do nothing to harm legitimate Soviet and Chinese interests in the area. We are equally clear, however, that no outside power has a claim to a predominant interest, and that each can secure its own interests and the interests of South Asia by conducting its activities in the region accordingly.³⁷

In addition to the U.S. objectives of balance and stability in South Asia, the United States was concerned over the implications that its acts and the crisis in general could have for other parts of the world. This was particularly true after the India-Pakistan war officially started on December 3, and the U.S. fear that West Pakistan's sovereignty was at stake. As President Nixon explained the Administration's position, the U.S. had two alternatives: to take a stand and try to stop the war or to acquiesce in it. As for the latter:

Acquiescence had ominous implications for the survival of Pakistan, for the stability of many other countries in the world, for the integrity of international processes for keeping the peace, and for the relations among the great powers. These risks were unacceptable.³⁸

It was President Nixon's view that if the United States failed to take a stand on the war, the likelihood of an attack in the West was greatly increased. If West Pakistan was

reduced to impotency, not only would CENTO and SEATO suffer, but the U.S. credibility in other parts of the world would be questioned. The President addressed the problem in the following terms:

The global implications...were clear to the world community. The resort to military solutions, if accepted, would only tempt other nations in other delicately poised regions of tension to try the same. The credibility of international efforts to promote or guarantee regional peace in strife-torn regions would be weakened all around the world....It was our view that the war in South Asia was bound to have serious implications for the evolution of the policy of the Peoples Republic of China. That country's attitude toward the global system was certain to be profoundly influenced by its assessment of the principles by which this system was governed.³⁹

U.S. Policies and Actions

It has already been established that the Nixon Administration linked the response to the crisis with implications for the global system, but the question is whether the U.S. response was determined by global interests, bureaucratic bungling, or by a pragmatic assessment of the situation within India and Pakistan. There are several documents which are excellent sources of information concerning the formulation and implementation of U.S. policy towards the crisis--Dr. Henry Kissinger's background briefing to the press on December 7, 1971; a General Accounting Office (GAO) report concerned with U.S. military aid to Pakistan in 1971; and the famous Anderson papers, which contain minutes of the Washington Special Actions Group (WSAG) and an enlightening cable from the U.S. Ambassador to India to the State Department.⁴⁰

Crisis management. Throughout the crisis, there appeared to be a lack of synchronization and orchestration of U.S. policy. Although some of the confusion can be laid to bureaucratic bungling, there also appears ample evidence that U.S. policy toward the crisis was over-shadowed by events involving the Middle East, China, and the Soviet Union.⁴¹

President Nixon has characterized U.S. actions during the crisis as "quiet diplomacy," asserting that this was the best approach in attempting to achieve a political solution.⁴² It appears, however, that this "quiet diplomacy", apart from preserving a foothold in both camps, also prevented the crisis from interfering with delicate negotiations involving the Middle East and the China initiative. There were 87 State Department statements or comments concerning the Middle East from April to December, 1971, but only 24 concerning the South Asian crisis.⁴³ Whereas the Soviet Union responded to the crisis through a public letter to Pakistan's President Yahya on April 3, 1971, and whereas Premier Chou En-Lai of the PRC voiced support for West Pakistan's cause on April 12, 1971, the U.S. State Department would only state that it regarded the events in East Pakistan as an "internal affair."⁴⁴ President Nixon made no public statement on the crisis until August 4, 1971 (involving economic aid to Pakistan), and Secretary of State Rogers did not officially comment on the situation until August 11, 1971 (warning West Pakistan of the consequences of trying Sheikh Mujibur Rahman for treason). Although diplomatic contacts were frequent (the Secretary of

State saw the Indian Ambassador 18 times during the summer and Dr. Kissinger saw him seven times after late August),⁴⁵ there was evidence that the State Department and the National Security Council had been excluded from policy formulation. For example, the U.S. Ambassador to India, Kenneth Keating, was not informed of the Kissinger trip to Peking, and only one National Security Study Memorandum (NSSM) had been prepared on the region, and that NSSM (on Pakistan) had been prepared in February, 1971.⁴⁶ The crucial point, however, is the effectiveness of the "quiet diplomacy", as measured against its effect on the policies and actions of India and Pakistan, with emphasis on the management of the two most important components of U.S. policy: military assistance and economic assistance.

U.S. military assistance. As has been previously mentioned, the U.S. placed an embargo on the supply of all military equipment to India and Pakistan in 1965. In early 1966, the embargo was modified to permit the sale of non-lethal items, and in 1967, a new supply policy was implemented whereby military sales would be made on a case-by-case basis and credit would be extended only for non-lethal end items. In October, 1970, the U.S. announced a "one-time exception" to its policy and offered to sell 300 armored personnel carriers and about 20 aircraft to Pakistan.⁴⁷

Following the outbreak of internal fighting in East Pakistan on March 25, 1971, the U.S. placed a hold on the release of

foreign military sales items, suspended the issuance of new export licenses, and held in abeyance any action on the one-time exception that had been announced in October, 1970.⁴⁸

On April 15, a clarification of U.S. arms policy was issued by the State Department:

Since 1966-67, under the foreign military sales agreement with Pakistan, a very modest quantity of such items as communications, medical, and transportation equipment, as well as spare parts and ammunition for arms provided prior to the 1965 embargo, have gone to Pakistan. With respect to the question of ammunition, no more than 10 or 15 percent of the total material has been ammunition....We have been informed by the Department of Defense that none of these items have been provided to the Pakistan Government or its agents since the outbreak of fighting in East Pakistan, March 25-26, and nothing is now scheduled for such delivery. In short, no arms have been provided to the Government of Pakistan since the beginning of this crisis, and the question of deliveries will be kept under review in light of developments.⁴⁹

In a letter of April 23, to Sen. Fulbright, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, David M. Abshire, an Assistant Secretary of State for Congressional Relations, said that, since 1966, the U.S. had continued to sell spare parts and ammunition to Pakistan in order to keep previously supplied U.S. equipment operational, in the belief that "to allow this equipment to become inoperative would compel Pakistan to purchase more expensive and modern replacements, ...fueling an arms race in the Subcontinent." Abshire reiterated that the State Department had been informed by the Department of Defense that "no military items have been provided to the Government of Pakistan or its agents since the

outbreak of fighting in East Pakistan March 25, and nothing is now scheduled for such delivery."⁵⁰

On May 6, Abshire, in response to Sen. Fulbright's request for the Executive Branch's comments on a concurrent resolution calling for the suspension of military assistance to Pakistan, stated that:

Our Military Assistance Program (MAP)... acknowledged the right of that country to use equipment provided under MAP to maintain its internal security as well as its external defense.

The continuing military supply program, however, has been, and continues to be, an important element in our overall bilateral relationship with Pakistan....All past experience suggests, however, that suspension of U.S. military sales will not shut off a flow of supplies from other sources. Thus an absolute suspension, regardless of developing circumstance, would not significantly affect the military situation in East Pakistan and could have a strongly adverse political impact on our relations with Pakistan. Thus we believe some flexibility is desirable in our military supply program, in the light of developments, to permit us to preserve a viable relationship with the Government of Pakistan that will be essential if we are to help in providing assistance to those whose lives have been disrupted in the recent fighting and in rebuilding normal patterns of life.

It would, therefore, appear desirable for the U.S. to be able to continue to supply limited quantities of military items to Pakistan to enable us both to maintain a constructive bilateral political dialogue and to help ensure that Pakistan is not compelled to rely increasingly on other sources of supply.⁵¹

In answer to the State Department's rationale for continued supply, the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, in its May 6 recommendation that all military aid should be suspended, said:

By no stretch of the imagination, however, was it intended that such assistance would be used for the purpose of suppressing freely elected representatives of the people and killing innocent civilians. In the words of Senator Mondale:

'There is something very wrong when guns, tanks, and planes supplied by the United States are used against the very people they are supposed to protect.'⁵²

On June 22, 1971, the New York Times reported that two ships under Pakistan's charter, the Padma and the Sunderbans, were in the process of transporting military supplies to Pakistan.⁵³ The Sunderbans had received her cargo on April 23 and had left New York on May 8; the Padma had received her cargo on May 21 and was preparing to sail. The State Department's immediate explanation was confusing, with one official quoted as saying, "There evidently has been some kind of slippage here."⁵⁴

On June 23, in response to an inquiry by the Indian Ambassador in Washington, Charles Bray III, speaking for the State Department, said that no fresh foreign military sales to Pakistan had been authorized or approved and no export licenses for commercial purchases issued or renewed since March 25; as for the Padma and the Sunderbans, "the determining factor is whether such items had been turned over to Pakistani officials in U.S. territory before March 25."⁵⁵

On June 25, the State Department stated that the order to halt the issuances of licenses for military sales went into effect on April 6, not March 25.⁵⁶ In addition, it was learned that another ship, the Kaukahla, had left the U.S. for

Pakistan on April 2.⁵⁷ At this point, Secretary Rogers ordered a special study to determine how the arms policy was being implemented.⁵⁸

To further complicate matters, neither the State Department nor the Department of Defense could immediately specify the cargoes of the Padma or the Sunderbans, and there had been reports of aircraft on board. In addition, another ship, the Kaptai, was in the process of taking on cargo and was due to sail for Pakistan on June 29.⁵⁹

A GAO report⁶⁰ requested by Sen. Kennedy and released on February 3, 1972 showed that:

a. Between March 25 and September 30, 1971, about \$3.8 million of Munitions List Articles were exported to Pakistan under valid licenses issued on or before March 25, 1971. Some of the items exported were lethal.

b. The Department of Defense, despite a departmental directive issued in April, continued to release from their stocks spare parts for lethal end-items.

c. The U.S. Air Force delivered to Pakistan about \$563,000 worth of spare parts between March 25 and mid-July, 1971 on a priority basis using Military Airlift Command aircraft. These shipments required no licenses.

d. Military departments entered into foreign military sales contracts of about \$10.6 million with Pakistan between March 25 and June 30, 1971. The Department of State, however, did not issue any export licenses.

To put the issue in perspective, the articles on the

Munitions List which were licensed for export up to March 25, 1971 were valued at \$35 million.⁶¹ On November 8, the Department of State revoked all outstanding licenses for the export of Munitions List items to Pakistan. The value of the revoked licenses was put at \$3.6 million.⁶² Between early April and the end of October, some \$5 million worth of spare parts were shipped to Pakistan on old licenses in commercial channels.⁶³ The difference between the sum of shipments and revoked licenses (\$8.6 million), and the value of licenses in effect on March 25 (\$35 million), was attributed to expired licenses.

For the sake of clarity, some explanation should be made of the controls and licensing procedure. The Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended (formerly called the Mutual Security Act of 1954), and the Foreign Military Sales Act, as amended, provided the authority of the U.S. Government to control all military export sales whether on a government to government or commercial basis. The Department of State had the responsibility to determine whether a sale should be made; within the Department of State, the Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs had the primary responsibility to control arms exports. Commercial sales were processed by the Bureau's Office of Munitions Control and foreign military sales were processed by the Office of Military Assistance and Sales. The Department of Defense was responsible for coordinating foreign military sales proposals with the Department of State or Treasury Department prior to responding to a purchase request.⁶⁴

The Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs also maintained a Munitions List which covered sensitive and significant military articles which required export controls. The Office of Munitions Control processed all requests to export Munitions List articles commercially. An export license was required whenever a Munitions List article was to be exported by a non-U.S. Government entity. An export license was not required (1) when all aspects of a transaction were made by a U.S. Government agency or (2) when the actual transfer of possession of U.S. Government-owned articles was made in the U.S. by a U.S. Government agency to a foreign government or its carrier and when no private person or forwarding agent was involved in the export transaction.⁶⁵ The ability to export on a government-to-government basis gave the Department of Defense the capability to accept purchase requests and fill them without a license being required. In fact, it is known from the GAO report that at least \$563,000 worth of repair parts were shipped to Pakistan by the U.S. Air Force without a license.⁶⁶

One additional point should be mentioned before analyzing the U.S. actions which concerned arms policy. In 1967, the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 was amended to prohibit the transfer of any defense article or service to any other government unless the President of the U.S. approved the action and the country was otherwise eligible to receive defense articles.⁶⁹ Thus, transfers from third countries to Pakistan were contingent upon the U.S. being legally able to supply

military aid to Pakistan.

On June 29, an Assistant Secretary of State, Christopher Van Hollen, in testimony before the Senate's Refugee Subcommittee, indicated that arms shipments to Pakistan were continuing, not because of bureaucratic bungling, but as part of the Administration's overall policy. Continued military aid was defended on the basis that:⁶⁸

a. An embargo would be seen as unwarranted intrusion into an essentially internal problem which could only be resolved by the Pakistanis.

b. An embargo would cause the Pakistan Government to look for other sources of supply.

c. An embargo would be interpreted as a symbolic sanction, and would undermine efforts to influence Pakistan's actions in the areas of relief, refugee return, and political accommodation.

Dr. Kissinger's visit to India in July of 1971 added to the confusion of U.S. intent. Although all other arms suppliers had suspended aid to Pakistan except the U.S. and China, the Indians received no assurances that U.S. military aid to Pakistan would be terminated.⁶⁹ There were confusing reports that Dr. Kissinger referred to the arms shipments as bureaucratic bungling, and not related to policy.⁷⁰ In the United States, meanwhile, both the House and the Senate passed a resolution calling for an end to the military aid to Pakistan.⁷¹ In India, there were demands to recall the Indian Ambassador in Washington, and as a former ambassador to the U.S. said:

The point is not quantum or value or arms supplied or its character but the approval of a Government prepared to bolster a regime that can only be characterized as barbarous.⁷²

On November 8, 1971, after a visit to Washington by Prime Minister Gandhi as part of her tour of Western capitals, the U.S. Government announced that all outstanding arms licenses for Pakistan, except for \$160,000 already cleared for shipment, had been canceled.⁷³ This action represented about \$3.3 million of military supplies (\$2.3 million in licenses and \$1 million of equipment in depots). Two important aspects of this action should be noted: First, the United States saw fit to include in its announcement the fact that the cancellation was being effected with Pakistan's knowledge and consent. The fact that Pakistan "consented" to the suspension made it strictly symbolic and lacking in any pressure, and it also appeared as a weak acknowledgement of India's position. The second aspect of the arms suspension is that it made Pakistan ineligible for direct military aid from the U.S. and, therefore, ineligible to receive transfers from third countries (PL 90-137, November 1967).

After the war officially started on December 3, the U.S. Government attempted to aid Pakistan by transferring U.S. military supplies from third countries. There was ample precedent of U.S. arms being supplied to Pakistan by European countries. In 1966, Germany sold Iran 90 F-86 jet fighters for \$87,000 each (10% of market value) and these aircraft were quietly transferred to Pakistan.⁷⁴ In 1967, the U.S. supported

actions for the sale of M-47 Patton tanks from Italy and Turkey to Pakistan. In addition, Belgium transferred an unknown number of F-104 fighter bombers to Pakistan.⁷⁵ At the Washington Special Actions Group (WSAG) meeting of December 6, 1971, Dr. Kissinger inquired about the right to authorize the transfer of U.S. military equipment from Jordan and Saudi Arabia.⁷⁶ Due to the November 8 cancellation, however, Van Hollen of the State Department told Dr. Kissinger that the U.S. could not authorize the transfer because the U.S. was ineligible to sell arms directly. Dr. Kissinger summed up the situation best when he said, "Maybe we never really analyzed what the real danger was when we were turning off the arms to Pakistan."⁷⁷

After the war, it became known that Jordan and Libya did transfer U.S.-supplied arms to Pakistan; Libya sent five F-5 fighters and Jordan sent 10 F-104s. Jordan said that the aircraft were returned after the war, and the State Department spokesman, Mr. McClosky, said that although the United States had not authorized the move, it may not have been a "transfer" if done with the tacit approval of the U.S.⁷⁸ It was also revealed in 1973 by Pakistan's President Bhutto that Iran had given Pakistan "more material help than any other Muslim country."⁷⁹ Aid included ammunition, aircraft, air defense equipment, aerial resupply, and maritime air reconnaissance. Since Iran had received almost all her transport and fighter aircraft from the United States, it is safe to say that U.S.-supplied equipment was also sent from Iran.⁸⁰

Since the United States has sought to exert her influence in South Asia through the use of military and economic assistance, some assessment of the source and magnitude of the military aid is in order. Between 1966 and 1971 (See Table 8), the United States supplied only six percent (\$16 million) of the \$287 million annual average of major weapons imported to India and Pakistan. The USSR, on the other hand, supplied 49 percent (\$141 million annual average), including an annual average of over \$100 million to India.

As Tables 8 and 9 clearly show, the decision of the United States to institute an arms embargo to India and Pakistan in 1965 failed to achieve its goal of limiting an arms race in the region; other countries assumed the role abdicated by the United States. Between 1966-71 the U.S. provided only \$27 million in aid to India (mostly communications) and \$71 million in aid to Pakistan (non-lethal end-items, ammunition and communications). The USSR, besides providing Pakistan with some \$22 million in arms, delivered \$821 million in military equipment to India. Warsaw Pact members provided approximately 75 percent of all the military assistance received by India from 1966-71 (\$933 million).

The PRC, on the other hand, stepped in to become the primary sponsor of Pakistan, giving \$194 million in arms between 1966-71. France increased her assistance to Pakistan from \$13 million during 1961-1965 to \$107 million between 1966-71.

An increase in military aid provided by such NATO members as Italy, West Germany, and Turkey to Pakistan (presumably with

Table 8

Suppliers' Annual Average and Percentage of
Military Equipment Deliveries to India and Pakistan,
1965-71 (millions of dollars)

Supplier	1961-65		1966-71		1961-71	
	ann. ave.	%	ann. ave.	%	ann. ave.	%
USA	66	41	16	6	39	17
USSR	53	33	141	49	100	44
UK	20	12	32	11	26	11
France	7	4	20	7	14	6
China (PRC)	2	1	32	11	18	8
Other	15	9	46	16	32	14
Totals	163	100	287	100	229	100

Source: U.S. Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs,
United States Interests in and Policies Toward South
Asia. Hearings, 93d Cong., 1st sess., March 12, 15, 20,
and 27, 1973, p. 175.

Table 9

Deliveries of Military Equipment to India and Pakistan,
1961-71 (in millions of dollars)

Supplier	1961-65	1966-71	1961-71
To Pakistan			
United States	229	71	300
France	13	106	120
China (PRC)	10	193	203
Belgium	0	17	17
West Germany	7	24	31
Italy	0	20	20
Turkey	17	13	30
USSR	0	22	22
Other	4	26	30
Total	280	493	773
To India			
USSR	226	821	1,087
United Kingdom	100	190	290
Czechoslovakia	0	80	80
United States	99	27	126
France	20	16	36
Yugoslavia	7	13	20
Bulgaria	0	12	12
West Germany	7	4	11
Poland	0	20	20
Other	35	45	80
Total	534	1,228	1,762

Source: U.S., Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs,
United States Interests in and Policies Toward South Asia.
Hearings, 93d Cong., March 12, 15, 20, and 27, 1974, p. 175.

U.S. blessings) was also noticeable (total of \$71 million), while Warsaw Pact members (Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, and Poland) delivered \$112 million of military equipment to India.

Total major weapon imports to India were almost twice that of Pakistan from 1965-69 and four times that of Pakistan from 1950-69.⁸² In addition to major weapon imports, India developed the capability to produce her own aircraft, tanks, missiles, rockets, and naval vessels.⁸³

The attempt by the United States to limit an arms build-up failed; the annual average of arms deliveries between 1966-71 increased \$124 million over the period 1961-65. The U.S. role in arms deliveries to Pakistan declined from 81% of the total from 1961-65 to 14% of the total from 1966-71. As far as arms deliveries to India are concerned, the U.S. percentage of 18% during the period 1961-65 declined to an almost insignificant two percent from 1966-71.

To the extent that the Administration felt that continued military aid would result in any significant political leverage with the Pakistan government, it failed. Moreover, in the administration of the U.S. arms policy, it is apparent that there was a lack of coordination between the State Department and the Defense Department which India was able to use to her advantage in embarrassing the Administration and in mobilizing public opinion within India. In addition, the last-minute suspension of all export licenses for Pakistan on November 8 had very little direct effect on Pakistan's actions and none on India; its indirect affect, however, was to prevent the

legal third country transfer of U.S.-supplied arms to Pakistan.

U.S. economic aid. When the military crackdown began on March 25, 1971, all economic aid administered under the 11-nation Aid to Pakistan Consortium (U.S. is a member) was suspended. On April 10, 1971, Pakistan requested an extension on a \$20 million debt due the World Bank on June 30, 1971; on May 2, 1971, Pakistan asked the Consortium for a six-month moratorium on an external debt of approximately \$4 billion. Pakistan's monetary reserves had been reduced to one-third of her annual requirements, and it was reported that Pakistan would need \$100 million before July 1, 1971, and another \$500 billion before July, 1972.⁸⁴

On July 12, 1971, the World Bank, in a highly controversial report, severely criticized the situation in East Pakistan and recommended that new development aid remain suspended; the United States, however, announced that it would unilaterally supply \$118 million of developmental aid originally programmed as its share of the Consortium's loan;⁸⁵ American grants and loans amounted to about \$250 million a year, a vital resource to Pakistan.⁸⁶

In addition to developmental aid, the U.S. Government committed \$155 million to "avert famine" in Pakistan. Aside from the humanitarian aspects of the relief aid, it served as a prop to President Yahya Khan and his continued policies in the East. For the nearly 10 million refugees in India, the U.S. committed \$91 million through the United Nations.⁸⁷

On August 3, 1971, the U.S. House of Representatives voted

to suspend developmental aid to Pakistan until the President determined that stability had returned to East Pakistan.⁸⁸

On August 4, 1971, the President made his first public statement on any aspect of the crisis. In addressing the question of aid to Pakistan, the President said:

The most constructive role we can play is to continue our economic assistance to West Pakistan and thereby to be able to influence the course of events in a way that will deal with the problem of hunger in East Bengal. We are not going to engage in public pressure on the Government of West Pakistan. That would be totally counter-productive. These are matters we will discuss only in private channels.⁸⁹

When economic and military aid programs are compared, it is obvious that the economic aid was vital to Pakistan, whereas military aid was more symbolic. Since one of the major criticisms of the Administration's policy was the continued military aid, a possibly more fruitful policy would have been to cancel military aid as the price for continued economic aid, and to then use the developmental aid as a lever to bring Pakistan around to the U.S. position. The fact that the Administration refused to use this economic leverage on Pakistan indicates that (1) there was never any serious attempt to "twist" Pakistan's arm or that (2) U.S. actions were keyed more to Indian actions than to those of Pakistan.

In contrast to the refusal of the U.S. to use economic aid as a lever in relations with Pakistan, the Administration was quick to realize its value in Indo-U.S. relations; as early as August 11, Secretary of State Rogers told the Indian

Ambassador that the "Administration could not continue economic assistance to a nation that started a war."⁹⁰

On December 1, the U.S. suspended all arms shipments to India. The action was supposedly taken because India had refused a mutual withdrawal of troops. The suspension was symbolic, since it represented only about \$2 million in communications equipment.⁹¹ It was a signal, however, that further cuts in aid to India might be taken. On December 3, at the WSAG meeting, \$72 million of P.L. 480 funds were ordered held as well as an "irrevocable" letter of credit worth \$99 million.⁹² The "next turn of the screw" was the announcement on December 6 that \$87.6 million in general economic aid had been suspended in order to avoid "contributing to India's war-making potential."⁹³

Thus, while the U.S. refused to use economic aid as a lever in its relations with Pakistan (aid was actually increased), the Administration readily resorted to its use in an attempt to influence India's actions.

The Global System: Role in the Political Transformation

The three global powers took a very conservative position toward the crisis, indicating their concern for the global implications and their respect for the stability and predictability of the status quo. Of the great powers, the USSR was in the best position to influence events in South Asia.

The Soviet Union had become India's primary source of military aid since 1965, and her influence had steadily risen in the region. The United States, on the other hand, through

its arms embargo of 1965 and general diplomatic indifference toward the region, had seen its influence steadily decline. The PRC had become the major sponsor of Pakistan after 1965, but its influence was limited by the nature of Pakistan's military inventory (40% U.S.-supplied), Soviet support of India, climatic conditions and its own internal problems.

As for the vital interests of the parties, there is nothing to indicate that any of the great powers considered the events in East Pakistan to be a direct threat to their vital interests; they appeared to accept the inevitability of autonomy for East Pakistan and favored a political settlement. In the case of West Pakistan, however, there is evidence that the continued sovereignty of West Pakistan was an indirect link to the vital interests of the great powers. The Soviet Union had to consider the possible reaction of the PRC, U.S., and Muslim nations to an all-out Indian attack on West Pakistan. The dominant position of the USSR in South Asia would have been threatened, and great power confrontation would have been a real possibility. From a PRC perspective, unchallenged Indian hegemony of the subcontinent would increase the military power of India and present China with two strong enemies (India and USSR) who could then concentrate almost solely on their respective Chinese borders.

The U.S. also appeared determined to protect West Pakistan, with the principal reason being that since the U.S. had committed a measure of prestige in her past associations with West Pakistan, U.S. actions would be linked to other areas of

tension in the world, such as the Middle East. In this respect, West Pakistan's security was perceived as an indirect link to U.S. vital interests. A U.S. Naval Task Force sent to the Indian Ocean arrived too late to affect the decision in East Pakistan, but its presence in the Indian Ocean on December 13 served as a signal that the U.S. might act to save West Pakistan.

U.S. concern for political evolution and regional stability and balance supposedly justified the manner in which the major policy tools, economic and military aid, were administered. The results, however, indicate that the military aid program was uncoordinated and provided continuous embarrassment to the Administration. \$5 million of repair parts supplied to West Pakistan were justified on the basis of political leverage with the Khan regime, but no action was taken on over \$100 million in economic aid which was vital to West Pakistan's survival.

The U.S. policy of "quiet diplomacy" was interpreted by critics as being overly concerned with Chinese reaction and insensitive to the plight of the East Bengalis.

On balance, global interests limited great power maneuverability in South Asia, and East Pakistan's security was not directly linked to the vital interests of any of the great powers. This permitted the dominant forces within the subsystem to resolve the crisis without significantly disturbing the global system. The United States possessed less influence, and managed what it had less effectively, than the USSR and PRC.

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16. Keesings Contemporary Archives-1971, p. 10473.

17. Hindustan Times, November 15, 1971, p. 1.

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20. Ibid.

21. Defense Security Assistance Agency, Military Assistance and Foreign Military Sales Facts. (Washington: Government Printing Office, April, 1972), pp. 6, 8, 16.

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30. Dahiya, op. cit., pp. 190-192. Pakistan finally withdrew from SEATO on November 8, 1972.

31. Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents, February 14, 1972, pp. 360-361.

32. Bernard K. Gordon, Toward Disengagement in Asia (Engelwood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1969), pp. 9-30.

33. Ibid., pp. 11-13.

34. Ibid., p. 11.

35. The United States was not a signatory to CENTO, presumably because the U.S. did not wish to offend India and Israel. The U.S. signed a bilateral defense pact with Pakistan in March, 1959.

36. Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents, February 14, 1972, p. 362.

37. Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents, March 1, 1971, pp. 340-341.

38. Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents, February 14, 1972, p. 359.

39. Ibid.

40. For Dr. Kissinger's background briefing, see the Congressional Record, 92d Cong., 1st sess., (1971), CVXII, No. 35, 45734-45738. For the GAO report, see Relief Problems in Bangladesh, Hearing, 92d Cong., 1st sess., February 2, 1972, pp. 85-92. The Anderson papers pertinent to the tilt were reprinted in the New York Times, January 6, 1972, p. 16.

41. There has been considerable comment that the State Department's Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs was preoccupied with the Middle East. See Norman Palmer's comments in "The United States and the New Order in Asia," Orbis, XV (Winter, 1972), pp. 1109-1121.

42. Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents, February 14, 1972, p. 356.

43. New York Times Subject Index-1971.

44. Asian Recorder-1971, p. 10163.

45. U.S. Congressional Record, 92d Cong., 1st sess., (1971), CXVII, No. 35, 45735.

46. John P. Leacacos, "The Nixon NSC: Kissinger's Apparatus," Foreign Policy, No. 5 (Winter, 1971-1972), pp. 2-27. Hindustan Times (India), July 17, 1971, p. 4.

47. U.S., Congress, Senate, Sub-Committee to Investigate Problems Associated with Refugees and Escapees, Committee on the Judiciary, Relief Problems in Bangladesh, op. cit., p. 86. The offer was not accepted by Pakistan until January, 1971, after the offer expiration date had been extended twice. No evidence was found by the GAO that any deliveries had been made or scheduled. On March 13, 1973, the State Department announced that the embargo was being lifted and that \$14 million of military supplies would be shipped to Pakistan; the shipment included 300 APC's, reconditioned aircraft engines, and parachutes.

48. Ibid.

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50. Ibid., p. 8.

51. Ibid., pp. 16-17.

52. Ibid., p. 5.

53. New York Times, June 22, 1971, p. 1.

54. Ibid.

55. New York Times, June 23, 1971, p. 8.

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57. Ibid.

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59. Asian Recorder-1971, pp. 10270 and 10347. On July 15, the State Department reported that the Sunderbans carried \$996,613 worth of repair parts for tanks, artillery pieces, aircraft, and communications equipment. The Padma carried \$1,231,158 worth of similar equipment. No major end-items were included.

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61. Ibid., p. 89.

62. Ibid.

63. U.S., Congressional Record, 92d Cong., 1st sess., (1971), CVXII, No. 35, 45734-45738.

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67. United States Statutes at Large, 90th Cong., 1st sess., (1967), LXXXI, 158.

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74. Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, The Arms Trade with the Third World (Sweden: Almqvist and Wiksell, 1971), p. 500.

75. Ibid. Although supported by the U.S., the transfers were never confirmed.

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79. Dawn (Pakistan), May 9, 1973, pp. 1 and 6.

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82. Ibid., p. 472.

83. Ibid., p. 725. SIPRI concludes that India will continue to be dependent on major weapons imports and foreign assistance for many years.

84. New York Times, May 20, 1971.

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86. U.S., Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Crisis in East Pakistan, Hearings, 92d Cong., 1st sess., May 11 and 25, 1971 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1971), p. 28.

87. U.S., Congressional Record, 92d Cong., 1st sess., CVXII, No. 35, 45737. See also Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents, February 14, 1972, p. 356.

88. U.S., Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, U.S. Foreign Policy in a Changing World, op. cit., p. 70.

89. Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents, February 14, 1972, p. 357.

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93. New York Times, January 6, 1972, p. 16. This \$87.6 million was not released until March 13, 1973, coinciding with the announcement that the arms embargo with Pakistan had been lifted.

Chapter 4

CONCLUSION

"The greater number of policy issues that a country takes on, the more it taxes the psychological resilience of the leadership group. It is not possible to act wisely at every moment of time in every part of the world. It isn't possible for domestic opinion to understand policy in every part of the world at every moment of time."

Dr. Henry Kissinger
Foreign Policy

"Pakistan's preemptive air attack on India December 3 was not unprovoked; India's provocation was not unjustified."

David Bayley
Asian Survey

During the India-Pakistan crisis of 1971, the six relevant actors formulated their policy on the basis of global and regional interests and their perception of the internal and external settings. The three major variables of the crisis -- threat awareness, degree of threat, and available decision time -- had different degrees of impact on each of the actors.¹

The least important explanation of each actor's actions appears to have been threat awareness. The alienation of the East Bengalis toward West Pakistan had steadily increased since the early 1950's, and West Pakistan was highly suspicious of East Pakistan-India relations. There was little affective linkage between the two Wings and the statements of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman left little doubt as to his desires for an independent East Bengal. The United

States, as a result of the historic differences between East and West Pakistan and the charismatic leadership of the Sheikh, should have at least anticipated the autonomy movement once President Yahya Khan announced plans for the national elections based on one man - one vote. The U.S., however, could not have foreseen the brutal military crackdown and the immense refugee influx into India.

As discussed earlier, the degree of threat was perceived differently by the relevant actors. India and Pakistan had vital interests directly involved, but of the great powers, only the PRC can be said to have perceived a direct threat to their national security. The United States appears to have reasoned that the threat to its interests lay in jeopardy through (1) the linking of U.S. actions to U.S. interests in other regions of the world, and (2) to the interference of the events in South Asia with delicate negotiations among the great powers. The USSR, on the other hand, had interests which dictated that she should strive to protect the Soviet position in South Asia and prevent other great power involvement. The Soviet Union obviously felt that the best method to accomplish these objectives was to commit the prestige of the USSR to India through a treaty, and to then attempt to manage the crisis through her increased influence with India.

The crucial variable appears to have been a perception of time, in that it affected policy choices for each actor. Whereas the United States and Pakistan appear to have been

content with the crisis dragging on indefinitely as long as there was no real change in the status quo, the USSR and India were extremely anxious for a settlement. The USSR's desire for a South Asian Collective Security system included Pakistan, and the crisis had an adverse impact on USSR-Pakistan relations. In addition, the longer the crisis wore on, the greater the chances became for disintegration in several Indian states already suffering from communal and regional tension; an enlargement of the crisis would have greatly increased the chances for more dramatic great power involvement. From India's standpoint, the crisis placed an extremely heavy burden on the government's developments program, and the influx of over 9,000,000 refugees into one of the poorest and most strife-torn regions only increased the chances for further regional conflict and threatened to upset the communal balance of India's eastern states.

India was faced with two alternatives: stand by and allow the West Pakistani crackdown to continue or intervene to ensure the success of the East Bengali independence movement. The first choice was never really a possibility after the brutality of the suppression became known and the social impact of the refugees was felt. Prime Minister Gandhi was under intense pressure to recognize Bangla Desh and to offer overt assistance. In the early months of the crisis, the success of the Mukti Bahini in East Pakistan was inflated, in India, as was the notion that West Pakistan would have to concede or face economic collapse. Once it became apparent

that West Pakistan would be able to continue its policies in East Pakistan and that the Mukti Bahini were not strong enough by themselves to be decisive, India appears to have decided on a military solution as soon as weather and troop placements would permit. India appears to have depended on the USSR to deflect international opinion, especially in the United Nations, and to help hold West Pakistan at bay until East Pakistan's independence was ensured.

As far as United States policy is concerned, the U.S. appears to have accepted autonomy of East Pakistan as inevitable, but the over-riding concern of the U.S. was regional stability and the balanced position of the great powers in South Asia. Although many Congressmen, scholars, and newspaper reporters proclaimed the U.S. policy to have been a dismal failure,² its evaluation should be based on U.S. interests, objectives in South Asia, and possibly most important, the ability of the United States to influence the events surrounding the crisis.

The absence of any direct vital interests and the disinterested approach of U.S. diplomacy contributed, since the early 1960's, to a steady decline in U.S. general influence in the region. Further, the U.S. decided not to use its two primary levers, economic and military assistance, in attempts to force Pakistan into an acceptance of a political settlement. Finally, the actions of Pakistan demonstrated that "quiet" U.S. diplomatic efforts were unsuccessful in effecting the desired Pakistani responses.

Lessons for the United States

The crisis in Pakistan offered some important lessons for U.S. foreign policy. As far as the mechanisms for implementing U.S. policy are concerned, there was confusion and a lack of coordination between the State Department and the Defense Department in the administration of the military aid program. Although there was undoubtedly a desire to use military aid as a lever in the crisis, the confused statistics and the inability of State Department spokesmen to adequately explain the policy embarrassed the Administration, aroused U.S. Congressmen, and alienated India. Tighter coordination and State Department control over all military supplies sent to Pakistan might have better served the interests of the U.S.

The State Department was either neglected or distrusted in the policy formulation for South Asia and the crisis, and there was no other adequate organization to pick up the slack and maintain continuity; the WSAG operated in a crisis atmosphere, and the minutes of its meetings indicate the absence of the National Security Council as a means of coordinating policy. As a possible explanation, the State Department's Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs appears to have been preoccupied with the affairs of the Middle East, and it might now be advisable to consider the creation of two distinct and separate Bureaus so as to permit increased emphasis on South Asia (to include the Indian Ocean and the

Persian Gulf).

The famous "tilt" towards Pakistan has been explained by critics as Presidential capriciousness brought about by the refusal of Prime Minister Gandhi to agree to mutual troop withdrawals. It is just as likely, however, that the tilt was motivated by the desire of the President to signal India that West Pakistan's security was considered to be of vital interest to the U.S. The leaks, which are now known collectively as the "Anderson Papers," may well represent an institutionalized attempt by the bureaucracy to sabotage "unpopular" policy. Had the tilt remained a secret, there is nothing to indicate that it would have affected the outcome of events in East Pakistan, but the danger exists that future Executive direction of U.S. foreign policy may be limited by the perceptions of an unaccountable "fifth estate" -- the bureaucracy.

It is now apparent that the intent of the 1965 arms embargo to South Asia was more idealistic than practical. The embargo did not achieve its objective of defusing an arms race in the region -- other powers merely stepped in and actually increased the flow of military aid over what the U.S. had been supplying. This is not to imply, however, that U.S. military aid should not be critically examined to determine the ends for which it is intended. There is a danger that specific commitments, such as prestige, may grow out of diffuse military aid packages and/or outdated policies. In addition, the goals of the recipient should be in harmony with

those of the donor. In the case of U.S. aid to Pakistan, it is now obvious that whereas the U.S. offer of aid was motivated by the policy of containment, Pakistan's acceptance of the aid was motivated primarily by her desire to increase her position against India.

The futility of "equating" Pakistan with India through the creation of a military power in Pakistan to "balance" South Asia was demonstrated by the events of 1971. Military aid merely fanned the flames of Pakistani hostility towards India, but Pakistan was a straw man in the path of India's drive toward hegemony of South Asia -- a fact reluctantly accepted by the United States.

The crisis in Pakistan further weakened the CENTO and SEATO as viable instruments of U.S. foreign policy. There may be considerable merit in the argument that these alliances have outlived their usefulness, and that they limit the flexibility and capabilities of U.S. foreign policy. Iran, for example, appears to have concluded that her security depends on the establishment of an impressive defense establishment, and not on an "inoperative" collective security agreement.³

U.S. policy towards the crisis was broadly labeled "quiet diplomacy" by the Administration. The crackdown in East Pakistan commenced March 25, 1971, but neither the President nor the Secretary of State commented on the events in Pakistan until August. The U.S. attitude was explained as an even-handed attempt to assist a political settlement among the

involved parties. An evaluation of this approach, however, indicates that the U.S. abdicated any initiative it may have had in contributing to a settlement, and that the U.S. position bolstered the Pakistan Government at no cost to the Yahya regime. In addition, the quiet diplomacy may have been related more to great power relations than to events in South Asia. Diplomacy's effectiveness is partly a function of the coordinated application of the factors of national power. The perceived nature of U.S. interests by the other relevant actors, the general decline in U.S. influence in South Asia since the early 60's, and the Administration's failure to effectively utilize economic and military aid, severely constrained U.S. diplomatic efforts.

Lastly, the tendency of U.S. policy-makers to "link" events in one region of the world to implications for another region should be tempered by a consideration of the circumstances. Although President Nixon and Dr. Kissinger worried over the implications of U.S. actions for the global system and the Middle East, it is hard to imagine that the other great powers of the world relied on an equation of U.S. interests and actions in South Asia to those in, for example, the Middle East. If linkage is to be a credible consideration, it should involve areas of similar interests and commitments. In defense of the Administration, however, it is recognized that the merits and circumstances of specific issues may be in conflict with the global interests of the United States. In this regard, the crisis was not, and should not have been,

viewed in isolation from the global system's impact on long-range U.S. interests. The principle of selectivity was, and is, a rational aspect of a nation's foreign policy.

U.S. actions indicated that the primary concern of the United States was that the global system's prevailing pattern of interaction and stability should not be adversely affected by the events on the subcontinent. A subsystem transformation which resulted in an independent East Pakistan (Bangla Desh) had no perceptible short-range impact on the global system, the increase of Soviet influence in South Asia had already been acknowledged, but a transformation which resulted in the disappearance of West Pakistan might well have threatened the stability of the global system.

To the extent that U.S. policy was tied to the survival of West Pakistan and the stability of the global system, it succeeded. To the extent that U.S. policy was designed to influence West Pakistan's acceptance of the autonomy of East Pakistan (Bangla Desh) and inhibit India's military intervention, it failed. The United States, acting as a status quo power with its vital interests only indirectly involved, lacked the necessary influence to affect a transformation of Pakistan without a military conflict in South Asia.

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THE UNITED STATES AND
THE 1971 CRISIS IN SOUTH ASIA

by

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AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S REPORT

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The United States role in the South Asian crisis of 1971 was affected by the Administration's policy of "quiet diplomacy" and its implementation of economic and military aid programs, the inflexibility of the Pakistani government, India's capability to intervene militarily, and the Chinese and Soviet Union's involvement in South Asia.

The United States official position supported the political evolution and eventual autonomy, if not the independence, of East Pakistan (Bangla Desh). The government of Pakistan, however, refused to concede to East Bengali demands and attempted to suppress the East Wing by force of arms.

India's initial reactions to the military crackdown in East Pakistan and the tremendous refugee influx were measured and responsible. Later, after it became apparent that Pakistan was neither going to collapse under the economic strain of the crisis, nor heel to international opinion, India moved deliberately to ensure the independence of Bangla Desh.

Great power involvement was also a critical factor in the crisis. With the Indo-Pakistani war of 1965, the United States embargoed arms supplies to India and Pakistan. This attempt to limit arms supplies to the subcontinent was a dismal failure; the USSR and PRC became the principal suppliers of military equipment for India and Pakistan, respectively, and the deliveries of arms increased significantly after 1965. The arms embargo contributed to the steady decline of U.S. influence in both India and Pakistan; India improved her relations with the USSR, climaxed by the Indo-Soviet Friendship

Treaty of 1971, and Pakistan sought support from the PRC and began to loosen her ties with the United States.

In 1971, the United States used "quiet diplomacy" in an attempt to help India and Pakistan arrive at a political solution. U.S. diplomatic efforts were limited by a concern for issues of global importance (Berlin, SALT, China initiative, Middle East) and by a lack of influence, relatively speaking, with India and Pakistan.

The three major variables of the crisis -- awareness of the threat, the degree of threat, and decision time -- determined each actor's responses. Awareness of the threat, based on historic differences between both Wings of Pakistan and between India and Pakistan, was relatively constant for all involved parties. The degree of threat and decision time, however, varied greatly in their effect on the relevant actors. The independence movement in East Pakistan (Bangla Desh) did not represent a direct threat to the vital interests of the great powers, but Pakistan's continued sovereignty, represented in the West Wing, was perceived in different terms. Decision time was critical to both India and the Soviet Union, but the U.S. and Pakistani governments, supporters of the status quo, used the passage of time as an ally.

India, as the dominant power in the South Asian subsystem, was able to act in East Pakistan because a global transformation was not at stake; the great powers lacked the capability or refused to effect a peaceful solution.

To the extent that U.S. policy was tied to the survival of the West Wing of Pakistan and the stability of the global

system, it succeeded. To the extent that U.S. policy was designed to influence the Pakistani government's acceptance of the autonomy of East Pakistan (Bangla Desh) and inhibit India's military intervention, it failed. The United States, acting as a status quo power with its vital interests only indirectly involved, lacked the necessary influence to affect a transformation of Pakistan without a military conflict in South Asia.