

INDIA

Giving an accurate account of my assignment to India is undoubtedly the most difficult part of discussing my professional career. Over 40 years I thought I was able to identify long-range American national interests to whatever country or regime I was sent to by the U.S. Government. In India, I found that there were times I disagreed with our policy toward the region, or that the U.S. authorities had not one policy but several policies, sometimes even conflicting policies with each other. More specifically, one Government Department pursued policy A, and another Department engaged in policy B. The two policies would be diametrically opposed to each other. Furthermore, unlike at other posts, I found that in India the Ambassador was at times not the coordinator of U.S. activities in the field, but behind the Ambassador's back Washington took initiatives on major issues without keeping the Ambassador directly informed. For the purpose of this oral history, I prefer to remain imprecise on certain subjects, or even omit certain events, and leave it to others to search for the truth.

Perhaps the first question I should answer is why I was ever appointed to India and how this came about. To be quite candid, I don't really know myself. In December 1984, around 3:00 a.m. (3:00 p.m. Washington time), the phone rang in our bedroom in Bangkok, Thailand. A person on the President's White House staff called me to say that the President

was thinking of sending me to India. Since my wife and I had been fast asleep, I guess my reply was not very enthusiastic. I replied that I did not speak the language. My interlocutor came back by pointing out that in India English was the official working language. My wife only heard what I was saying, and when she heard that "I did not speak the language", she was convinced I was offered a posting in Central America. I don't speak Spanish, and my wife and I had decided many months before that we did not want to get involved in the imbroglio in that part of the world. After so many tough assignments, we had agreed to beg off if Central or South America were offered as a follow on to Thailand. I then suggested to my caller over the phone "that I had no previous experience in the area." Since this statement applied both to South Asia and Central/South America, my wife got more and more convinced that I was being offered an assignment in Spanish-speaking America. She made it known by vigorous signs and shaking of the head that she did not think that my caller's proposal was a good idea. Finally, the person on the telephone said: "The President wants you to go to India" and at that point, I replied that I was very honoured to be considered for such an important position by the President. Before hanging up, I wished everybody a "Merry Christmas". When I explained to my wife that our next assignment might be India, she was stunned. And so was I. The actual transfer only occurred several months later, in the summer of 1985. What I did not know at the time was that the State Department had a different candidate in mind for New Delhi and that the Foreign Service Officer was actively lobbying for the job. The newspapers in Washington in 1985 reported some of the behind the scenes maneuvers to have Jim Spain fill the New Delhi position, but

I was far away in Thailand and only knew what I had been told over the telephone in December 1984.

Once in Washington and getting ready for the assignment to India, I was briefed by different Departments and Agencies on the problems with and policies toward that country. Some stressed the close links we had enjoyed with Pandit Nehru and his family in the past, others worried about India's reliance on Soviet weapons and experts to build a domestic arms industry in India. Others called my attention to Pakistan's quest for advanced conventional arms and even nuclear weapons and India's opposition to this effort. The United States also had to take position on India's self-proclaimed nuclear power status achieved in 1974. I was also briefed on the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 and the old British / Russian rivalry over control of that part of Asia. Some of my State Department colleagues noted that I had an excellent predecessor - Harry Barnes - and that I should follow into his footsteps. Did I detect a difference in guidance from Republicans or Democrats in our policy toward India? Perhaps the liberal Congressmen or officials focused more on the developmental challenges facing India, while conservatives and the Defense Department showed more interest in India's role outside of India. Some Congressmen and Senators asked to meet with me in Washington prior to my departure for New Delhi, and most of them stressed the importance of preventing nuclear proliferation in South Asia. This meant primarily keeping Pakistan from obtaining information or parts to build their own atomic weapon. Both the Pentagon and the Intelligence Agencies appeared favorably disposed toward Pakistan, while I felt some concern on their part about which way India would go in the cold war confrontation

which was still very much part of our world in 1985. After all, India had been the leader of the Non-Aligned world, while Pakistan had been one of America's oldest allies since the creation of CENTO in 1950.

In Thailand, I had worked closely with the Reagan White House and I had numerous contacts with the President's personal staff. It was also apparent that the Reagan Administration was quite pleased with my style of leadership. In short, there is no doubt that my appointment to India was the result of the White House decision to send somebody to India they knew and trusted and not leave this up to the State Department to fill this sensitive position. But I would like to underline again that I never used my professional links to advance my personal career. I think I never in my entire career asked for a job or solicited favors from my contacts. I hope it is not too indiscreet to insert here the letter the then Vice-President George Bush wrote to Prime Minister Gandhi to introduce me to him:

August 1, 1985

His Excellency Rajiv Gandhi
Prime Minister of India
New Delhi

Dear Mr. Prime Minister

I am delighted that my old friend, John Gunther Dean, has been appointed to serve as American Ambassador to India. I have known John for many years and have the highest respect for his professionalism.

You will find him an "active" ambassador. We believe that there are unparalleled opportunities to strengthen relations between India and the U.S. and that an ambassador like John is what is needed to take fullest advantage of them. I hope you know, Mr. Prime Minister, of my own strong interest in doing all that is possible to see that our countries move closer together.

Barbara and I think often of our times with you and Sonia in New Delhi, Washington, and Houston. We think of you as close friends and I am delighted to commend to you another close friend. Ambassador John Gunther Dean.

With warm regards,

Sincerely,
George Bush

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It will be recalled that I worked with Mr. Bush while I was Ambassador to Cambodia and he was in Beijing. Later, I worked with him on Thailand when Mr. Bush was Vice President.

For those who do not know India or had no dealings with the American Embassy in New Delhi, it may be useful to describe briefly the setting. Among the sites best-known in India is the Taj Mahal. It is an impressive monument of an Indian ruler to his wife. The British colonizers continued the tradition of impressing the many Indian rulers, princes, maharajas, with the might and power of the British Empire by building magnificent palaces, gardens, and mansions for the British Viceroy and some of his representatives. The British Viceroy's Palace in New Delhi was every bit as impressive and grand as Buckingham Palace in London. By the time I arrived in India, the President of India had moved into the Viceroy's Palace and it became known as "The President's Palace". When the United States emerged after World War Two as the most powerful nation on the globe, the American Ambassador's residence and Chancery in New Delhi reflected the new power status of America. Both the Ambassador's residence and the Chancery were designed by Edward Durrell Stone who also was the architect for the Kennedy Center in Washington. Both in scale and design they resembled the Kennedy Center. In short, the buildings and the landscaping of these two American buildings were impressive and were tourist attractions in New Delhi. Some people even called the residence "the American Taj Mahal". Living in such a grand home with beautifully landscaped grounds, with numerous Indian helpers and gardeners also did not make the occupant forget that one only lived in such a place for a few years and that the real owner of the house and what it represented was the United States of America.

In order to stress the American side of the residence, which was called "Roosevelt House", I had brought to India a life-size painting of George Washington which hung in the main hall. My son's father-in-law obtained it for me on a loan from the current owner and the painting quickly became a tourist attraction for visitors from America. The portrait of President Washington was by none other than Gilbert Stuart and had a history linked to India. In 1801, the famous painting was presented by grateful American merchants in New England to an Indian merchant in Calcutta. It hung there for more than a century and a half before it was sold to an American collector. When I brought it back to India, it became a symbol of U.S.-Indian cooperation for the three years it graced the official representation of our country.

Presenting credentials in India was also on an impressive scale. Having had the honor to present Letters of Credentials in several countries

-- republics and monarchies -- I was quite used to the ceremony involved in the official beginning of an ambassador's mission. In this ceremony, the ambassador presents a letter from the American President to the Chief of State in which he confirms his trust in his envoy and asks the recipient to assist him in his mission. When the Chief of Protocol came to the residence to take him to the Presidential Palace, he was accompanied by 12 Indian lancers dressed in colorful costumes on beautifully groomed horses. After reviewing a detachment of Indian troops in modern battle dress, I walked up the huge stone staircase at the Presidential Palace to meet the President of India. At every step of this very broad staircase Indian Lancers, with their lances and small flags, saluted the foreign Chief of Mission until he faced the President of India standing in front of the silver throne, formerly used by the British Viceroy. It was certainly a memorable

event for me, as it undoubtedly was for my predecessors and successors. In 1985, the President of India was a Sikh. It is customary for Presidents of India to be either Hindu, Moslem, or Sikh, which reflects the secular character of India. I stress this aspect because it is essential to understand India today. For example, one of India's claims to Kashmir is in part defended by the Indians as the basis of India's secular status where states can be in majority of different religious affiliation, i.e., Moslem, Hindu, Christian, or Buddhist. The same secular tradition is also very much part of the Indian Armed Forces where the command positions are rotated, and very senior officers in the Indian Armed Forces could be Hindu, Moslem, Sikh, Christian, Buddhist, and even Jewish.

From the day I first met Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in the summer of 1985, until my departure in November 1988, I supported Mr. Gandhi's efforts to modernize India. Rajiv was the grandson of Pandit Nehru and the son of Indira Gandhi who were both forceful Prime Ministers. Rajiv was very much aware of the responsibilities that weighed on his shoulders, as heir to the Nehru dynasty. I liked Rajiv Gandhi and found that with his attractive wife Sonia they made a good team to lead India into modernity. Both the Prime Minister and his wife were nationalists, secular, and tolerant, while at the same time they also had a very good understanding of the West, and specifically what the United States could do for India on its road to progress. Rajiv was directly involved in liberalizing the Indian economy, but also agreed with an Indian tradition of avoiding giving multinational corporations control over sectors of the Indian economy. Another feature I observed and fully supported was the Nehru tradition of religious tolerance

which endeared him to the large muslim minority. In his relationship to Pakistan, he was aware of both the problems caused by emotional outbursts of violence by the masses against each other, and the tradition of powerful foreign countries applying the policy of "divide and rule" to South Asia. Navigating between these forces was the fate of any Indian and Pakistani leader.

Rajiv Gandhi was a thoroughly modern man and understood the developmental role high technology could play in modernizing India. Shortly after my arrival, the Chairman of Texas Instruments came to India and set up a branch office in Bangalore where Indian computer experts turned out computer programs at a fraction of the cost of similar programs designed in the United States. This information was then beamed via satellite from Bangalore, India, to the U.S.A. A huge satellite dish was built in Bangalore to receive and send messages via this device. Texas Instruments was only the first of many other companies that came to India to have their computer work done by highly competent Indian mathematicians and programmers. It became one of India's great exports and certainly Mr. Gandhi encouraged this development. Bangalore and Bombay were the first cities to benefit from this new industry.

How did the U.S. Embassy help in this field? Among the many ways our Commercial Section assisted directly Indians and American businessmen, was that the Embassy issued a booklet listing some 300 projects of U.S.-Indian cooperation actually in progress. Once it became known how many U.S.-Indian joint ventures were in progress, especially in Science and Technology, companies from other countries as well as new American companies became interested in following the American pioneers. The Reagan Administration also gave U.S.-Indian cooperation in high

Technology a big boost when the White House approved the sale of a CRAY super-computer to the Indian Meteorological Service. Robert Dean, a namesake but no relative, who worked on the White House staff at the time on high technology issues, was most helpful in obtaining top level clearance for the sale of such high technology to India. The sale of this item was an exception, at the time, of U.S. willingness to export its top technology. In the meantime, U.S. authorities have learned that if the United States will not permit the export of American high technology items, foreign countries will fill the gap from non-American sources.

And this brings me to a field where U.S. and Indian national interests did not coincide: arms sales. When India became independent in 1948, India first turned to the United States to obtain weapons and equipment for the Indian Armed Services. As the late Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi explained to me one day, the United States refused to sell ammunition and spare parts for American military equipment during the Bangladesh War of Independence which pitched India against Pakistan. Mr Gandhi said that when the United States refused the Indian request, it was interpreted by the Indian political establishment and the Indian Armed Forces as American interference in Indian internal affairs, and even worse, it was considered by some as the U.S. military tilting toward Pakistan in this conflict. To make things worse, the United States decided to send an aircraft carrier in front of the city of Calcutta which, again, was interpreted by the Indians as a symbolic gesture of intimidation and a sign of pro-Pakistani support. It will be recalled that since 1950, Pakistan had received significant U.S. support for its armed forces. In the eyes of India, the U.S. was not even-handed in its approach to the problems of South Asia. Rajiv

Gandhi also mentioned that he had detected some American concern about India's role in the area, which he felt the U.S. interpreted as an Indian effort to establish some form of hegemony over the area. Even more worrisome for Gandhi was what he thought was American unjustified concern over India having turned to the Soviet Union for weapons to replace American suppliers. In U.S. eyes, Rajiv Gandhi opined, India had tilted toward the Soviet Union. He disputed that. Gandhi reassured me, and also in private letters to our leadership in Washington, that the construction of Soviet arms factories in India gave India control over its own destiny and was in line with India's over-all political policy of non-alignment. Had the United States been willing to build arms factories in India, Rajiv Gandhi thought India would have preferred that alternative.

As I will explain in a later section, it was during my tour of duty in India that India "leased" a Soviet nuclear submarine so that the Indian Navy could learn how to operate such advanced naval vessels. The failure of the United States to provide weapons and parts to India when requested or needed meant that India turned to those countries which provided and sold arms "without political strings attached to it". I might add that in the 21st century U.S. leaders indicated a willingness to sell advanced American weaponry to India, but nonetheless, in June 2001, Russia and India signed an agreement to manufacture advanced Soviet arms in India until the year 2010. Covered by the agreement is the construction in India of fighter aircraft, transport aircraft, and the exchange of missile and submarine technology. Also, Russia agreed to sell to India an aircraft carrier from the Soviet fleet. On the subject of arms sales or weapons manufacturing in India,

Perhaps it would be better for both countries to acknowledge that their long-term objectives are different, and spend more time on working on those areas where there is a willingness to cooperate.

One of those areas was education and exchange of information on science, technology, and agriculture. The close relationship I enjoyed with Prime Minister Gandhi and his team permitted me to initiate a project which I felt reflected the willingness of both countries to work together. I am referring about the use of funds deposited in India by the United States Government stemming from the PL 480 surplus food legislation. The amount came to the equivalent of \$200 million and I negotiated with the Indian financial authorities that these funds be turned over to a "U.S.-India Fund" to be spent over 10 years for U.S.-Indian cooperation in education, science, technology, and agriculture. The head on the U.S. side was the American ambassador to India, and on the Indian side, it would be the Minister of Finance. The authorities in Washington favored the use of these funds for the administration of the American Foreign Service establishment in India, i.e., for running the Embassy in New Delhi, and the three American Consulate General in Bombay, Calcutta, and Madras. In my opinion, then, and now, the establishment of the Fund in 1987 for the purposes and projects set forth above is an excellent example of U.S. assistance for the development and progress of an emerging nation. It also highlights mutually beneficial cooperation rather than confrontation with India, the latter policy not being without followers in Washington.

During the 1980s, there existed a tendency in Washington to confront India in the field of nuclear arms and nuclear technology. In that period the U.S. authorities had a tendency to twin India and Pakistan on nuclear issues. Gandhi discussed this issue with me on several occasions and he deeply resented equating India with Pakistan. He argued that India was at least six times bigger than Pakistan, and it was like equating France with Belgium. Reality was different. Gandhi argued, and I reported it to Washington, that India had the brain power and the industrial capacity to be a full-fledged nuclear power. On the other hand, Pakistan had to import or obtain through illegal means essential parts to develop a nuclear capacity. Armed with these facts, obtained through overt and covert sources, I was able to convince my colleague Mike Armacost, at the time Under Secretary of State, to have the U.S. Senate reverse a Senate Committee resolution which treated Pakistan and India equally on nuclear matters. The Senate Committee had originally adopted that resolution on the advice of some State Department experts, and reversing course on that issue was an achievement that could only be brought about by the top leadership in the State Department and in the White House seeing the logic and good politics of Mr. Gandhi's reasoning. Confronting India on nuclear matters leads to the opposite result sought by the United States. For example, despite persistent U.S. pressure, India in 1996 refused to sign the Nuclear Proliferation Treaty as drafted. As we all know, today both India and Pakistan are considered nuclear nations by the world, but it would be a great mistake to equate the nuclear power and potentials of the two nations.

But the nuclear competition between India and Pakistan has another angle which, to the best of my knowledge, has not been discussed anywhere else. The reason is simple: it is political dynamite not only in Asia but

especially in the United States. I am referring to the role of Israel and pro-Israeli elements in the U.S. to prevent Pakistan to develop "the Islamic bomb". While I had some American visitors trying to convince me of the need of "doing" something about Pakistan obtaining the "Islamic bomb", I found Mr. Gandhi more relaxed on this issue. For him, nuclear arms were a deterrent, and he certainly thought that India needed them, not only for deterring Pakistan, but as a deterrent against all others who wanted to do serious harm to the Indian nation. Mr. Gandhi did not hide his disappointment over U.S. willingness to provide advanced conventional weaponry - at times on credit - to Pakistan but at the same time refused similar weapons or technology to India.

Many American visitors came to India to discuss with me compliance with the Pressler Amendment, U.S. legislation which prohibited assistance to Pakistani efforts to build an atomic bomb and, if proven, would lead to a cut-off of U.S. over-all assistance to Pakistan. Some American legislators who came to me on this issue appeared to me less concerned about the danger of a Pakistani atomic bomb used against India than the development of an "Islamic bomb" which could threaten Israel. But obviously the discussion was in terms of making Pakistan live up to the letter and spirit of the Pressler Amendment. At the same time, I followed closely in New Delhi the efforts of the Pentagon to build up Pakistani conventional forces and covert efforts to assist the Pakistani Intelligence Service support the Afghans fighting the Communist regime in Kabul brought to power by the Soviet Union. Since the Indian Intelligence Service was well informed, I was always told about the weapons the Pentagon provided to Pakistan, and sometimes even their final destination... Afghanistan. But more about that later,

The United States and India also held different views on national long-term interests in South Asia, and this was also reflected in the field of Intelligence. On the whole, in many Intelligence areas, cooperation between the two countries was good. For example, in the field of exchanging information on nuclear developments in third countries. Also, remember, the Indians could also obtain information on the same countries from the Soviet Union. But let us be frank: every nation that can afford it wants to know what others are doing in various vital fields, and U.S.-Indian relations were no exception to this truth. In short, situations arise in which U.S. agents get caught in flagrant violation of the law, and vice-versa to Indian officers. Let me say here that the job of certain members of the staff is to penetrate certain secrets of the host country, and foreign countries do the same in their contacts with the United States. My job as ambassador was to avoid situations where "incidents" became an obstacle in the relationship between our country and the host nation in order to preserve the over-all trust in mutually beneficial cooperation. Failure meant the deterioration of the relationship.

In 1987, the Indian Navy had leased a Soviet nuclear submarine. The purpose of the lease was to train the Indian navy in the use of such a technically advanced naval vessel. The reactor unit was sealed and the spent fuel was to be returned to the Soviet Union. Mr. Gandhi had assured President Reagan that "this specific submarine on lease from the Soviet Union would not be used in any manner in the event of any hostilities." Prime Minister Gandhi had assured President Reagan in writing that there was "no ground for any apprehension". Naturally, our navy wanted to know more about the submarine leased from the Soviet Union to India, and this led to a covert operation to obtain

detailed plans and drawings of this vessel.

The incident occurred when an Indian Navy Captain was arrested at Bombay International Airport before boarding a flight for the United States in possession of detailed technical data on the Soviet nuclear submarine. Apparently, Indian Intelligence had tracked the Indian naval officer - or was he a double agent - and, in any case, I was asked to meet with the Prime Minister who confronted me with the facts. I did my best to smooth ruffled feathers, and fortunately Mr. Gandhi was sufficiently experienced in international relations to know that information on the Soviet vessel was a legitimate target for our Intelligence agencies. I urged that the apprehension of the Indian officer before leaving India with the drawings should not adversely impact on over-all U.S.-Indian relations. At the same time, I protected vis-a-vis Washington the American official who had been in charge of this case at the Embassy. He left the post quite rapidly, but has enjoyed an interesting career after his service in India.

Another incident occurred in southern India in 1988 where the Security of the American Consulate General in Madras was breached. Again, I was called in by the Prime Minister who apparently had been thoroughly briefed on the issue. I agreed to the immediate departure from India of the American employee in question. He left within 24 hours and his personal effects had to be shipped to him, since he was unable to pack them in time to take them with him. In this case, I also stood up vis-a-vis Washington and New Delhi for the Consul General in Madras who was nominally responsible for everything going on at the post. Since India and the United States had different views on their long-term national interests in South Asia, it was quite normal in my

Opinion that incidents could occur-in overt diplomacy and covert actions – which had to be handled expeditiously to prevent them affecting adversely the over-all relations between the two countries.

Let me switch from the opaque world of Intelligence to the more transparent discipline of diplomacy. India, as the leader of the non-aligned group of nations, had played a prominent role in supporting Mr. Arafat's efforts to obtain a home for the Palestinians. In those days, Mr. Arafat sometimes wore a military uniform and even carried a pistol as a symbol of his fight for his people, even when invited by a friendly country to present his case. India, having struggled for decades for its independence from Britain, had empathy for the Palestinian cause and Mr. Arafat was invited to visit India on several occasions. Some American legislators and Indian businessmen had pleaded with me to try to convince the Indian authorities to upgrade the role of the sole Israeli representative in India - the Vice Consul In Bombay - so that India would be able to hear both sides of the story. Whether it was my effort In New Delhi or other diplomats working in other capitals, after a couple of months the Israeli Vice Consul in Bombay was elevated to the rank of Consul General and his jurisdiction was extended to the port of Cochin, hundreds of miles south of Bombay, where an ancient Synagogue is still standing. As far as I could see, the Indians had been quite tolerant toward other religions. It must be remembered that India has a larger Moslem population than all of Pakistan. Also, Jews had lived in peace with their Indian neighbors. Some Jews have played an important role in Indian business for centuries. Many of the prominent Jewish families from Bombay had come from Bagdad decades ago and had made a name for themselves in India. That was the case of

the Sassoon family who were raised to the peerage in England in the 20th century. Could it be that the Indian political establishment made a distinction between a religion (Judaism) and a nationality (Israeli Zionism)? The latter was perceived by the Indians as being opposed to the concept of secularism, principle enshrined in the Indian constitution.

But apparently the upgrading of the Israeli representation to the rank of Consulate General was not enough for some elements in the United States. I was asked whether I could be helpful to bring Prime Minister Gandhi together with Foreign Minister Perez of Israel at a forthcoming U.N. General Assembly in New York. The reason advanced for the suggestion was to "give more balance to India's policy toward the Near East." I must have mumbled something about my wish that my own government would be more balanced in its approach to the Israeli - Palestinian conflict, but through some private circles, a meeting did take place in New York at the United Nations between the two leaders. It was my understanding that a well-known American Congressman attended the meeting, but according to Mr. Gandhi not much came out of it. India's policy toward the Near East imbroglio did not change visibly.

U.S. relations with India had been through many phases since Independence in 1948, and during my tenure, the Republican administration made a determined effort to improve the relationship which had been somewhat neglected during the period of Mrs. I. Gandhi's leadership. One element which was very helpful in the process was the thousands of well-educated Indians who had made America their home and had begun to have some influence in their country of adoption. Earlier in the 20th century, some Sikhs had come to America and had been successful in farming on

the West Coast. But the arrival of highly skilled and educated Indians in America well after the Second World War introduced a new dimension into U.S.-Indian relations. These Indians had often become prominent in computing, finance, research, academia, and business, and they were a natural bridge between the United States and India. They organized themselves in the United States and got to know their congressman, and became part of the local establishment where they lived. Having contact with their family left behind in India, they promoted trade, research, and contact between the two countries. During my tenure, I spoke to several Indian associations in the United States and I was amazed to see how helpful they were to "bridge-building" between our two countries. Many of the joint ventures started by American corporations in India were the result of an Indian engineer who was able to convince his American boss in the United States about the prospects of India as a reliable, hard working, inexpensive partner.

The primacy of the Soviet Union in the arms field annoyed the Pentagon. As far as the U.S. military and the American Intelligence Agencies were concerned, India "was in the Soviet camp." As I explained earlier, this was a complete misunderstanding of modern India, but under President Reagan an effort was made to increase military to military links. One way of doing that was for the Secretary of Defense, Caspar Weinberger, to visit India. On the policy side, cooperation in the field of defense was clouded by the permissive U.S. policy toward Pakistan obtaining advanced conventional arms, over U.S. policy toward Afghanistan, and specifically, the role of the Pakistani Intelligence Service in Afghanistan. Weinberger came to India on an official visit with a large entourage, and the Indians appreciated the visit of an American Secretary of Defense, the first in many years. It was also

important for the Indians that the Americans had taken the initiative, interpreted by New Delhi as a desire by America to work more closely with India. While there emerged no change in the Indian determination to stick with the Soviet Union on the procurement of arms and weapons, the Weinberger visit did help to identify areas of possible cooperation between American and Indian armed forces. The fact that the officers of the Indian Armed Forces were all English speakers and followed English military traditions made contact easy. But the Indians are proud of their past and their traditions. Successful interaction with all Indians must be based on treating counterparts with equality and respect. The difference in long-term goals regarding Afghanistan's future once the Soviets had withdrawn was one important limit to U.S. military cooperation with India. At the risk of repeating myself, during the 1980s and 1990s, India and the United States did not share the same vision as to the kind of world the 21st century would bring. India needed U.S. support for India's efforts to develop its economy, infrastructure and society, but India was not prepared to follow automatically U.S. lead in international affairs, especially in South Asia. On Afghanistan, both countries had different goals. As I saw it then, India considered non-alignment for Afghanistan good enough. We wanted a pro-western Afghanistan.

Before discussing Afghanistan, let me mention briefly a factor which counted in U.S.-Indian relations, but which played no role during my tenure. It is the role of Diego Garcia in the American global strategy to be militarily present in every corner of the globe. This tiny island, which was made available to the United States by the United Kingdom, has become over time the major forward base of the U.S. in South Asia. It is perhaps the largest warehouse for U.S. military

equipment in Asia and it can support both men and equipment needed in most parts of southern Asia - from Suez to Indonesia. Since the island is near the Indian subcontinent, the Indians are sensitive to the use of this island by the U.S. Armed Forces, but over time this essential base is no longer a source of major dispute between the two nations.

Another subject on which I was asked by Washington to stay on the sidelines was the Bhopal chemical disaster which occurred before my arrival in India. On the night of December 3, 1984, a toxic cloud released by a pesticide plant belonging to the U.S. multinational Union Carbide killed between 16,000 and 30,000 inhabitants and poisoned half a million others. It was the most deadly chemical accident in history. Those deemed responsible for this tragedy, to begin with Warren Anderson, at the time Union Carbide's CEO, have never been brought to court to explain why they shut down one by one the devices which were to guarantee the safety of the plant. Mr. Anderson retired in 1989. Soon after the horrible disaster, the Indian Government filed suit for \$3 billion in damages, but the case was settled out of court in 1989, with Union Carbide agreeing to pay \$470 million toward compensation. Of that amount, \$200 million was spent. As of today, the balance remains unspent. Efforts by the numerous victims to bring the case to court have been unsuccessful, but occasional hunger-strikes or demonstrations revive the sad memories of this disaster where 95 % of the people who have been compensated received only \$500 each. I am still today grateful to my superiors in Washington for the telephone call I received from them "to stay out of this legal confrontation." Still today, the numerous victims of this horrendous disaster are trying to get the U.S. multinational corporation Dow Chemical – now the owner of Union Carbide – to assume the responsibility of the

defunct corporation in matters regarding medical treatment of the victims and the liability for damages done to the environment. Union Carbide disappeared in 1984, leaving hundreds of tons of toxic effluents on the side of its abandoned plant. This mass of poison pollutes each day a little more the underground system that provides the water for the wells of those who still live in the immediate vicinity of the rusting metallic structure of the old Union Carbide installation. But today, the emphasis in India is on getting major international corporations to invest in the subcontinent and it is doubtful that the victims's voices will be heard so many years later.

Before leaving completely the nuclear field, it may be useful to discuss the differences between the Indian and Pakistani nuclear programs. In the spring of 1987. I wrote a paper on this subject based on what I was told by Indian specialists, and approved by my staff: According to my paper: (1)

– The Indian nuclear program was originally conceived in great detail 45 years ago, before the Non-Proliferation Treaty had been discussed. India's declared objective at the time was to use its 500.000 tons of thorium in Kerala, the world's largest deposits, for energy production. For political reasons, India detonated a nuclear device in 1974, but that explosion used enriched plutonium. The Indians tried to demonstrate by that explosion their ability to master complex advanced technology. The Indian nuclear program was primarily civilian and open. Financial and technical details of the program were published by the GOI. Foreigners were allowed to visit Indian nuclear facilities. It is for these reasons that India has not gone in for many years for the enrichment of Uranium which is the fuel best suited for a nuclear armament program.

(1) See New Delhi's telegram 29183 dated December 3, 1987.

The Pakistani program, on the other hand, has been kept highly secret, and its thrust, as stated by Prime Minister Bhutto in the mid-1970s, is to build a nuclear weapons capability. The large enrichment facility at Kahuta is not justified for a civilian program because Pakistan has neither the ability nor a declared program of building numerous nuclear power stations, as has India. Moreover, Pakistan has obtained materials in a clandestine manner and does not allow visitors to see those facilities. Pakistan also chose to produce enriched uranium, which is the ideal fuel for nuclear armaments. The financial and technical details of Pakistan's program have always been kept highly classified.

India's baseline nuclear program today is to build natural uranium, heavy water-moderated Candu reactors, which produce plutonium, and to use this plutonium in breeder reactors to get energy from India's vast deposits of thorium. Thus, India's main nuclear energy program is not enriching uranium, as is Pakistan. It is reprocessing its spent fuel to recover plutonium in order to reduce its waste storage problems and to use the plutonium in its fast breeder reactor program. Current estimates are that less than half of India's plutonium production to date is used in its one small breeder reactor at Kalpakkam. The rest, India argues, is an inventory to be used in a new generation of commercial scale breeders, currently being designed. In the case of Pakistan, there is no such demonstrated need for either an inventory of plutonium or enriched uranium.

India's commitment to nuclear power required that it has the capability to reprocess waste from both Candu and the enriched uranium Tarapur-type reactors. Their experience with Tarapur fuel and parts requirements makes it natural for them to want to do everything

themselves. The Pakistan uranium enrichment and related occurrences of U.S. export violations strongly suggest that their goal is to produce weapons.

- Finally, the positions of India and Pakistan on full scope safeguards are philosophically different. In the case of Pakistan, their concern is India's nuclear capability. In the case of India, it considers the NPT discriminating against the non-weapons states. It also finds that its major long-term adversary, China, is treated differently under the safeguards regime, simply because it happened to have tested a nuclear device before India. Nonetheless, it must be stated that India developed a nuclear weapons program and tested these weapons again in the late 1990s.

Obviously, over time, this rationale has changed, but it may be useful to remember what was the thinking back in 1987.

In order to understand U.S. relations with South Asia in the 1980s, one must also have some understanding of Indian-Pakistani relations during that period, and the crucial role of Pakistan in U.S. policy toward Afghanistan. Little was written in the United States during the 1980s about the links between arms for those fighting the Soviet Union in Afghanistan and the boom in the drug culture in Pakistan and Afghanistan. Perhaps the overriding U.S. policy consideration toward all of South Asia in those days was "to trap and kill the Russian bear in Afghanistan, and Pakistan was a staunch ally in its strategy." (1)

For obvious reasons, I prefer to quote from public documents in discussing the connection between drugs and arms for Afghanistan rather than

(1) CNN film on Afghanistan entitled: "Terror Nation, a U.S. creation?" as reported In the TIMES OF INDIA, Bombay, page 27. Wed. 19 1994.

referring to classified official cables; moreover, they say about the same thing. This subject was much discussed at the time within the American Embassy in New Delhi. As I stated in earlier chapters, different agencies and departments of the U.S. Government could have conflicting positions. This was also the case in Embassy New Delhi; specifically, it applied to the relationship of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA). Generally speaking, to protect its "assets" abroad, the CIA had ensured in those days that the DEA's concerns outside the United States were subordinated to its own. We are talking about the 1980s. No DEA country attaché overseas was allowed to initiate an investigation into a suspected drug trafficker or attempt to recruit an informant without clearance from the local CIA station chief. DEA country attaches were required to employ the standard State Department cipher and all their transmissions were made available to the CIA Station Chief. The CIA also had access to all DEA investigative reports, and informants' and targets' identities when DEA activities outside the United States were involved. (2)

The boom in the poppy growing and heroin refineries in Pakistan and Afghanistan coincided with the beginning of the Afghan War in early 1990. Madame Benazir Bhutto, then Prime Minister of Pakistan, said that "today Pakistan society is dominated by the culture of heroin and the kalatchnikof rifle" (3). With drugs came arms. But who had heard in the United States, in 1985 when I arrived in New Delhi, about the role of General Zia-ul-Haq's adopted son and drug smuggling? Yet, in December 1983, a young Pakistani was arrested at Oslo airport with 3.5 kilos of heroin. It eventually led back to the President of

(2) International Herald Tribune - December 3 1993.

(3) Le Monde - Page 11 - 19 April 1990.

Pakistan's involvement in drug smuggling. Even as the U.S. Government was congratulating in 1984 General Zia-ul-Haq for helping control narcotics traffic, the Police of Pakistan, under Norwegian pressure, arrested Hamid Hasnain, the "adopted son" of General Zia, who turned out to be a kingpin in the drug running mafia. In Hasnain's possession were found cheque books and bank statements of Zia-ul-Haq and his family. I am relating these facts here not to undermine General Zia's reputation but to demonstrate the linkage of drug dealing with arms to fight the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan and how we interacted with these criminals to achieve our own ends, i.e., the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan and the toppling of the communist regime led by Najib Boulla in Kabul. On the Norwegian bust of the Pakistani drug smuggling ring, I rely on the detailed newspaper article which appeared in the TIMES OF INDIA. Please note that the author is an American journalist, formerly the South Asia correspondent of the FAR EASTERN ECONOMIC REVIEW and later working on special assignment with the New York publication THE NATION. (4).

By reproducing Mr. Lifschultz' lengthy article, I am trying to give the American public a glimpse of what we knew at the American Embassy in New Delhi, India, in 1988 about the covert struggle and the relationship between Pakistan - United States - Afghanistan, subject which remained taboo for the American mass media for many years: drugs, arms, and Afghanistan. It may also explain my actions taken in 1988 as American Ambassador to India, which I will relate shortly. Please note that what follows was written on October 25, 1988 when I was still the American Ambassador to India.

(4) TIMES OF INDIA - Pages 1 and 7 - October 24, 1988 - Article by Lawrence Lifschultz.

"THE HEROIN TRAIL: PAKISTAN AUTHORITIES ARE DEEPLY INVOLVED"

by Lawrence Lifschultz (5)

The Norwegian case is almost completely unknown in Pakistan. Until now efforts have been largely successful within the country to keep it from public view. Yet, other similar scandals involving heroin are well known. In 1986 the British Broadcasting Corporation's documentary programme, Panorama, told the tale of a Japanese courier named Hisayoshi Maruyama who was arrested in Amsterdam in May 1983 carrying 17 kilos of high grade heroin.

Serving a ten-year sentence in a Dutch prison, he spoke on camera describing the organisation in Pakistan with which he had worked as a courier for several years. Maruyama identified the head of the syndicate as Mirza Iqbal Baig who based his smuggling operation out of the Plaza and Capital cinemas in Lahore. A BBC team travelled to Pakistan and managed to briefly meet Baig in his office at the Plaza cinema. Carrying a disguised camera and microphone, the BBC reporters began to interview Baig about allegations concerning his involvement in heroin smuggling. The two British reporters were promptly dragged out of Baig's office by a dozen thugs and severely beaten on the road in front of the cinema. The cinema is opposite the town's main police station, and as the two journalists were kicked and their equipment smashed, the local police stood and watched. The police were no fools. They knew not to interfere with Baig's men.

Iqbal Baig is well known in Lahore for the political and commercial associations he maintains in high government circles at the provincial

(4) TIMES OF INDIA - Pages 1 and 5 - October 25, 1988 -

and national level. The immunity and protection he enjoys is quite evident. Besides the BBC programme, Baig was named when the Pakistan press in October 1986 published a list of 30 known drug smugglers which had been drawn up by the country's Narcotics Control Board and presented to the Interior Minister, Aslam Khathak.

The Islamabad newspaper, The Muslim, quoted a custom's intelligence agent describing Baig as the "most active dope dealer in the country." Many of the names cited by The Muslim from the PNCB report were read out in the National Assembly by the Interior Minister. However, no arrests were made.

The position and brazen quality of men like Iqbal Baig in Pakistan has to be seen to be believed. Twelve days after General Zia's recent death in an air crash, the government-owned Pakistan Times in its Lahore edition, published a prominent front page advertisement signed by Iqbal Baig extending his personal greetings to the new President and the commanders of the Armed Forces.

A senior Pakistani narcotics officer when asked during an interview why Baig had not been arrested, stated that the hands of the police were "tied" in the case by higher authorities. Another police officer confirmed that Baig was a major target of both American and European narcotics police, and that the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency had attempted several ruses to lure him abroad in order to make an arrest. When asked why the Drug Enforcement Agency had not been able to secure Baig's arrest within Pakistan, as the Norwegians had secured Hasnain's, the police officer noted an apparent American policy not to press for arrests within Pakistan which could lead to embarrassing revelations at the highest levels of a government so closely allied with the

United States.

Much more serious allegations exist concerning the operation of one or more major heroin syndicates functioning within the Pakistan Army itself. This suspicion has caused severe tension between elements in Pakistani police services who are responsible for suppressing the narcotics trade and a small but powerful element within the Army which appears determined to keep the police completely out of military affairs, especially where it concerns narcotics.

The affair which has sparked the tension between the two forces concerns the arrest of military personnel by police, on two separate occasions. The first was in July 1986 when an Army major, Zahoor-uddin-Afridi, was arrested while driving to Karachi from Peshawar. Major Afridi was captured with 220 kilos of high-grade heroin. It was the largest consignment ever intercepted in Pakistan. Exactly two months later, police arrested an Air Force officer, Flight Lieutenant Kariur Rahman. This officer was also intercepted with a consignment of 220 kilos of high-grade heroin. Rahman confessed to police that it was his fifth "mission."

Between the two of them. Afridi and Rahman were carrying heroin worth nearly \$800 million dollars on arrival in Europe. Once 'cut' or diluted for sale, it would ultimately be worth up to \$4 (four) billion, or more than the total merchandise exports of Pakistan in a single year. The sum was absolutely staggering for those who bothered with the arithmetic. Just one shipment equalled the entire covert budget for the Afghan war for eight years.

Both officers were taken from police custody and detained under reputedly high-security conditions at the Army's Malir Cantonment outside Karachi.

An investigation was to be conducted and both officers were to face court martial proceedings. However, before an inquiry even began, both men escaped under what Pakistan's Defence Journal (August 1988) has generously termed "mystifying circumstances". The police service which made the arrest was furious and set out to trap its prey once again. European police sources allege the escape was arranged for nearly \$100,000 per head, considered small change to protect a major network.

Allegations involving the Pakistan Army have come closer and closer to that select cadre which had been most intimately involved in the "covert effort" in support of the Afghan war and the arms pipeline which has supplied the resistance in their brave fight against the Soviets. But around the war has grown up an enormous illicit trade in arms and narcotics. The Pakistan press, led by a remarkably courageous English language monthly called The Herald, had repeatedly noted the widely held belief that the principal conduit by which weapons reach the Afghan resistance in the north is in fact one of the main organised routes by which heroin reaches Karachi for trans-shipment to Europe and the United States. "It is really very simple", wrote The Herald January 1987. "If you control the poppy fields, Karachi, and the road which links the two; you will be so rich that you will control Pakistan."

The American Central Intelligence Agency's pipeline for the weapons to the Afghan Mujahidin is organized and coordinated by Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI). It is under ISI direction that weapons and supplies move north by two principal means. One route utilises Pakistan Air Force transports. But, the main carrier of supplies is an organization called the National Logistic Cell (NLC). It is the largest transport organization in the country and is wholly owned by the Pakistan

Army. All drivers and loaders are Pakistan Army personnel and security is tight at its main installations.

According to reports which have appeared in The Herald and other newspapers, NLC trucks have been used repeatedly in the shipment of heroin from the frontier province to Karachi port. In its September 1985 issue The Herald gave the following eyewitness report: "The drug is carried in NLC trucks, which come sealed from the NWFP and are never checked by the police. They come down from Peshawar where they deliver their cargo, sacks of grain, to government godown. Some of these sacks contain packets of heroin... This has been going on for about three and a half years."

The Herald went on to describe an incident, again quoting an eyewitness in support of the allegations against the WLC. According to the report, "A few months ago, an NLC truck was involved in an accident near Thana Bula Khan. The driver was thrown out of the cab and lost consciousness. When he became conscious and found a number of people gathered around him, he became anxious. Not surprisingly – because when the trailer had overturned, a white powder spilled out all over the road".

The figure identified most frequently in the country's press and referred to most often by European police sources as having fostered an environment in the Northwest Frontier Province within which the heroin trade could flourish is the former Governor and current Chief Minister of the Province, Lt. General Fazle Huq. The General, however, has categorically denied the allegations against him. "Would the U.S. have tolerated for eight years a governor involved in drug trafficking?" asked General Huq in an interview last June in the Pakistan press. The Herald, June 1988, General Huq's Pakistani critics, nevertheless, refer to him as

'our own Noriega', and argue that precisely because of his crucial and highly effective role as Governor of the Province from which the main Afghan mujahidin operations were staged, a blind eye was turned to other activities.

General Huq claims that during his tenure opium production dropped dramatically. According to official statistics, opium output in Pakistan has fallen from 800 metric tons in 1979 to 165 tons in 1987. But, during precisely the same period, the output of opium increased from an estimated 270 tons to 800 tons across the border in Afghanistan. From an overall perspective of opium and heroin production, the Afghan and Pakistan border regions must be considered as a single confederal unit. Almost the entire production of opium in Afghanistan is now controlled by Pakistan-based syndicates with powerful links to liberated areas of the Afghan countryside,

European police sources estimate that, despite several dramatic seizures, only between 5 and 10 of the heroin shipped from Pakistan is actually intercepted.

PATRONAGE , PROTECTION

Of course, the real question is why "the shield of patronage and protection" has not been even dented in Pakistan. "The government which could arrest 20,000 political workers overnight, is unable to lay hands on 100 drug smugglers who are playing with the lives of millions in the world" says Benazir Bhutto of the Pakistan Peoples Party. Similarly, Asghar Khan, the leader of the opposition Tehrik Istiqlal, said in September that Pakistan's new drug mafia was threatening to dominate the country's next elections, if precautions were not taken.

According to European police sources who have worked closely with the

American Drug Enforcement Agency, U.S. narcotics agents have identified nearly 40 significant syndicates functioning in Pakistan. The DEA, when recently approached, declined to be interviewed on the subject. Yet, by all accounts, the DEA has had a number of highly qualified and Intelligent individuals working in its operation in Pakistan. A careful scrutiny of its unsanitised reports reveals a team interested in facts, not propaganda. The question, however, for several of their European and Pakistani colleagues, is why the Americans have not effectively utilized their narcotics intelligence to destroy the syndicates?

"It is very strange that the Americans, with the size of their staff, the scale of their resources, and the political power they possess in Pakistan, have failed to break a single major narcotics case," says a European police officer, a five-year veteran of Pakistan's heroin wars. "The explanation cannot be found in a lack of adequate police work. They have had some excellent men working in Pakistan." *

Serious allegations concerning the ISI, the CIA's principal counterpart in Pakistan, were made before the United States Congress in 1987. The Far Eastern Economic Review (5 March 1987) reported that in testimony before the U.S. Senate, Andrew Elva, an American adviser to Afghan Mujahidin groups and an official of the Federation for American Afghan Action (FAAA), had claimed that "Pakistani Inter Services Intelligence, run by Major General Akhtar Abdul Rahman, which oversees the transfer of money and arms to the rebels, is responsible for the theft of millions of dollars in funds and military equipment."

Elva alleged that U.S. \$700 million, out of \$1.09 billion in aid earmarked by the U.S. Congress for the Afghan rebels between 1980-84, had disappeared.

* In January 3, 1989 at 10:25 pm, CNN television showed an AIR AMERICA Pilot (with face blackened out) admitting to flying cocaine flights out of South Asia.

Eiva claimed that some of these resources were clandestinely diverted to the Nicaraguan Contras, but he also alleged that several Pakistani military officers had "become overnight millionaires... and made their money off U.S. aid to the Afghans."

A number of prominent figures in the Afghan resistance have for many years been highly critical of the links which have arisen between the heroin trade, senior figures in the Pakistan government, and the use of Afghan exiles as intermediaries in the narcotics smuggling nexus that exists between Afghanistan, the Frontier Province, and Karachi. The most articulate critic was Dr. Sayd Majroo, Director of the Afghan Information Centre in Peshawar, who was assassinated last February 1988.

On a number of occasions before his death, Dr. Majroo spoke with this correspondent and expressed his dismay over the identification that Afghans were gaining in relation to narcotics smuggling. According to this year's American DEA report, "Much of the opium and heroin originating in Afghanistan is transported to Peshawar via the tribal areas adjacent to the Afghan border... large amounts of opium and heroin are smuggled into Pakistan across the Afghan border... Some Afghan refugees are involved in the heroin trade as opium poppy growers, opium stockists, manufacturers, middlemen or international traffickers."

The U.S. vice president George Bush has repeatedly asserted that he would never bargain with drug dealers on U.S. or foreign soil. But, in Pakistan in 1984, he did make a bargain with men who were the guardians of Pakistan's heroin kingdom. "I want a drug-free America and this will not be easy to achieve," said Bush on the night of his nomination.

"Tonight I challenge the young people of our country to shut down the drug dealers around the world... My administration will be telling the dealers: "Whatever we have to do, we'll do, but your day is over, you are history."

The evening before, in commenting upon the sudden death of Pakistan's President, Zia-ul-Haq, Mr. George Bush spoke of the "special relationship" between Zia and the United States. Indeed, it was a most "special relationship." But until such relations are honestly scrutinized and genuinely relegated to history's graveyard, representatives of the American government will undoubtedly continue to exacerbate the international narcotics problem, rather than inspiring its demise.*

The role of the CIA in Afghanistan is today well-known. Those who have listened or read my contribution to the ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM know that I usually had a direct, friendly link with the Director of the C.I.A. which was essential for me to carry out effectively U.S. foreign policy abroad. But as I also explained in the ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM, at times I found CIA and State Department policy at odds with each other. At other posts, it was CIA and the Pentagon who had conflicting policies toward the country where I was supposed to be the coordinator of U.S. foreign policy in my capacity as ambassador. In CIA and DEA confrontation in the field, I knew that CIA usually had the ear of the President, regardless of party affiliation, because CIA was supposed to act in the overall U.S. national interests abroad, while DEA was a specialized agency devoted to a specific, upright task, but nonetheless had to follow directives from those who spoke for overall U.S. objectives. Perhaps, it was also a question of who had the ear of the President,

*The above article was published in the TIMES OF INDIA in its October issue. The gist of this article was also reported by Embassy New Delhi in its October 26, 1988 telegram to the Department of States [Message 0130] .

rather than the righteousness of the cause.

But the drug and arms trade was also used to control foreign officials or advance U.S. overall objectives in certain countries. In the 1980s, the Israeli Intelligence agency -- MOSSAD -- worked closely with, or at times against, the U.S. government, as described in earlier parts of this testimony. The Iran - Contras deal certainly had a significant MOSSAD involvement. U.S. policy toward Colombia and our efforts to reduce the flow of heroin and cocaine toward the United States came up against Israeli agents protecting the Colombian drug barons. According to Israel Shahak, a retired professor of chemistry at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, and a survivor of the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp, Israeli agents were involved in the laundering of U.S. drug money back to the drug bosses of Colombia and Panama, despite all the well-publicized efforts of U.S. authorities to intercept it. According to Israel Shahak, the single most important source of Israeli income in the 1980s was the export of weapons and so-called "security knowledge" (including, for example, the efficient training of death squads.) The value of such exports amounted officially to \$1.5 billion in 1988 - (6). I made the reference to Israeli involvement in the drug trade and providing arms for anybody who wanted them, regardless of political persuasion, because I tried to understand the role of the American Israeli Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) in U.S. policy toward Afghanistan. You may recall what I said earlier about efforts made to prevent Pakistan from becoming an atomic power. Was MOSSAD or Israel somehow involved in the U.S. clandestine support of Afghans committed to the anti-Soviet and

- (6) "What Israelis know and Americans don't about the Drug Triangle Colombia, the United States, and Israel" by Israel Shahak, in the October 1989 issue of the Washington Report on Middle East Affairs. Similar articles appeared in the International Herald Tribune.

anti-communist struggle in Afghanistan? In the 1980s, MOSSAD had agents in many countries around the world, especially in those areas where Israeli politicians could show to American political leaders in Washington that Israel was helpful in supporting important U.S. foreign policy objectives. And none was more important in those days than opposing Soviet communist expansion into areas heretofore friendly to the West. This was the case of Afghanistan, after the Soviet invasion of 1979. This question became important in my analysis of who killed the President of Pakistan, Zia-ul-Haq on August 12, 1988.

The problem of arms to Pakistan and Soviet military withdrawal from Afghanistan were very much major subjects in the three-year exchange of letters between President Reagan and Prime Minister Gandhi.

I do not believe that I need to present here the historic details of the Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan in 1979. As is well known today, the United States supported efforts to defeat the Soviet military in Afghanistan in a ten-year war which lasted from 1979 to 1989. Specifically, the U.S. supported volunteer fighters from numerous Countries, including from many Arab countries, to defeat the Soviet invaders and their Afghan allies.

Initially, the volunteer fighters were trained as guerilla fighters by U.S. Green Berets and Pakistani ISI (Military Intelligence) personnel under over-all CIA management, with weapons and funding provided by various sources, including the U.S., Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia. (After the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, these well-trained veterans, in turn, trained guerilla recruits for insurgency movements in countries such as Algeria, Egypt, Indonesia, Lebanon, the Philippines, Tajikistan, and Yemen.)

But according to Steve Coll writing in the Washington Post, (7.) secret U.S. support for those fighting the communist regime in Kabul and the Soviet invaders was escalated in 1985. It was CIA Director Casey who saw in the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan a chance to weaken the Soviet Union. As a result of Mr. Casey's trip to Pakistan in October 1984, the Reagan Administration, in a secret decision in March 1985, reflected in National Security Decision Directive 166,

(7.) See International Herald Tribune, July 21, 1992 edition.

approved the escalation of U.S. covert action in Afghanistan by providing to the Afghan resistance U.S. high technology and military expertise (for example Stinger anti-aircraft missiles). That National Security Directive augmented the original intelligence funding approved by President Carter in 1980. It authorized stepped up covert military aid to the mujahidin and it made it clear that the secret Afghan war had a new goal to defeat Soviet troops in Afghanistan through covert action and bring about Soviet withdrawal. (8)

I would now wish to focus on how the very active correspondence between President Reagan and Prime Minister Gandhi contributed to bringing about the desired result of the U.S. intervention in Afghanistan: the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan. It also brings out how the two leaders differed at the end on who should govern Afghanistan.

While the Soviets did withdraw in 1988-89, it did not lead to the collapse of the communist regime of Najibbullah in Afghanistan until a few years later. All during the 1980s, India maintained normal relations with the rulers in Afghanistan. The U.S. supported opposition elements to the communist regime in Kabul during my tenure in India. My messages made it clear that both the United States and India agreed on the need for the Soviet military to withdraw from Afghanistan. But in 1988, Prime Minister Gandhi repeatedly explained to President Reagan that India was not involved in deciding who should govern in Kabul after the Soviet withdrawal. This was not the position of Pakistan or

- (8) One detailed explanation on how the Reagan Administration decided to go for victory in the Afghan war between 1984 and 1988 is General Yousaf's book entitled the "Bear Trap" published in June 1992. General Yousaf was a Pakistani General supervising the covert war between 1983 and 1987. - John K. Cooley's book "Band of Brothers" is a basic work to understand the U.S. involvement in the Afghan conflict and its impact on the training of terrorists in many countries of the world.

the United States who wanted a "friendly" government. A neutral or non-aligned government, acceptable to New Delhi, was not good enough.

As early as December 1985, hence shortly after my arrival in New Delhi, President Reagan wrote to Prime Minister Gandhi about the deep American desire to see an early negotiated settlement of the tragic conflict in Afghanistan. He stressed that the central issue remained Soviet troop withdrawal and hoped that progress could be made in this direction.

Prime Minister Gandhi did indeed make a public statement in Harare to the effect that he wished an end to intervention and interference in Afghanistan "by all parties". On November 21, 1986, in a message, President Reagan called Prime Minister Gandhi's attention to the need to set a realistic timetable for Soviet troop withdrawal. He exposed the opinion that a political settlement is within reach, if only Moscow will agree to such a timetable. The current proposal of a three to four-year time frame is "untenable" and appears designed to "legitimize" a prolonged occupation and to achieve a thinly cloaked military solution. President Reagan added that the U.N. sponsored negotiations are stalemated over the length of the Soviet withdrawal timetable, which made Mr. Gandhi's intervention with Secretary General Gorbachev so much more timely.

I was not sure then, nor now, that the following paragraph in the same November 1986 message reflected the unanimous view of the U.S. foreign affairs establishment, nor of the U.S. Congress. "We (the U.S.) do not seek to "bleed" the Soviets in Afghanistan by prolonging the war. We have no designs on Afghan territory and recognize Soviet

interests in a secure southern border, just as we recognize Afghan desires for self-determination... Our objective is clear, namely to restore Afghans' non alignment, independence and territorial Integrity through the prompt and complete withdrawal of Soviet forces." Pakistan, and certainly not its President at the time, Zia-al-Huq, would have agreed with this goal. As pointed out later in this chapter. President Zia-al-Huq wanted a government in Kabul closely linked to Islamabad, and considered a non-aligned government in Afghanistan completely unacceptable.

The difference between Pakistan and India over the kind of Afghanistan that should emerge after the Soviet troop withdrawal became clearer by the day. And basically, the United States had more sympathy for the Pakistani vision than the Indian viewpoint.

Prime Minister Gandhi's reply to President Reagan's 21 November message was delivered in Washington by the Indian Ambassador on January 28, 1987. Perhaps no message points up more clearly the emerging differences between the U.S. and India, as far as Afghanistan's future was concerned. One should also keep in mind the covert activities which were taking place at the same time from Pakistan into Afghanistan which certainly were designed to bring about a different denouement from that envisioned by the Prime Minister of India.

Thus, in Mr. Gandhi's reply delivered to Washington on January 28, 1987, the Prime Minister wrote:

"Our position in Afghanistan is, as you know, that the country should be allowed to chart an independent, non-aligned course, free from intervention and interference. I reiterated this to

General Secretary Gorbachev. I also conveyed to him the gist of what you had written to me. The General Secretary left me with the impression that the Soviet Union would like to withdraw its forces in a realistic time-frame from an Afghanistan which would be non-aligned and not unfriendly to the Soviet Union. I hope that a peaceful resolution will not elude us for long. Quite apart from other factors, an early settlement would be in India's interest.

Pakistan has been exploiting the situation in Afghanistan to acquire higher levels and types of arms. Most of these have little or no bearing on any possible conflict on the Afghan border. I am glad that you have agreed to keep our concerns in mind on Pakistan's perceived requirement of enhanced early warning capability on its mountainous western border. There were disconcerting reports on the possible supply of AWACs aircraft to Pakistan. This would trigger a qualitative new phase in the arms race in our area and enhance tensions to dangerous levels.

In our letter which Secretary Weinberger carried during his visit to India, you had rightly pointed out that peace required true nuclear restraints. We remain very seriously concerned at Pakistan's nuclear weapon programme. Pakistan's military controlled and clandestinely acquired nuclear weapons capability cannot be seen in a bilateral context with India. The risk of nuclear weapons proliferation in our region is posed by Pakistan and that is where it must be addressed.

We (India) attach great importance to our relations with the United States. We would like to strengthen our ties by expanding our existing cooperation and moving into new areas of cooperation in high technology and also in defence. After discussions which Secretary Weinberger had in India, it may be possible for us to move further and establish greater linkages in the areas of defence cooperation and technology transfers."

President Reagan's reply hand-delivered to Prime Minister Gandhi on March 25, 1987 focused on bilateral issues designed to foster the improving relationship between the United States and India. The President stated that the state of the art Cray Super-computer requested by the Indian authorities for their meteorology program had been approved. This sale was characterized by Mr. Reagan as a step that will lay a strong foundation for a new era of collaboration, utilizing some of the more modern technology available for advancing

India's development. (9) Other actions responsive to Indian requests included the early launching by a U.S. company of an Indian satellite and the possibility of participation by American companies in the construction of the light combat aircraft which India was developing. (The latter project was dropped after the assassination of the Pakistani President Zia-ul-Haq in August 1988.) But the letter also repeated a theme on Afghanistan which implied a difference with the Indian position on the future of Afghanistan. According to President Reagan, in 1987, "Peace will come only when there is a government in Kabul that enjoys the authentic support and confidence of the Afghan people." Mr. Reagan continues: "Our skepticism about Soviet intentions is based on the disparity between their actions and their words. The current Soviet scheme for national reconciliation seems to have as its chief purpose the preservation of the Najibullah regime." In short, what the U.S. wants is regime change, and that means a non-aligned coalition government including the communist leader Najibullah, as favored by the Indians, was not acceptable.

On October 20, 1987, Prime Minister Gandhi was the official guest of President Reagan at the White House. I had the honor to be part of the American delegation. The luncheon and the discussions clearly indicated that the two countries had a mutually beneficial dialogue, even if there were significant differences on some basic issues. But the bilateral relationship had improved. As President Reagan

- (9) President Reagan Senior Advisor on Science & Technology at the time was my name-sake: Robert Dean. Most of the credit of making this high technology item available to India goes to him. He realized already at that time that U.S.-Indian cooperation was a two-way street and the U.S. needed to be responsive to Indian science and high technology aspirations if we had certain political aims which we wanted endorsed by New Delhi.

put it: "It was encouraging to note the substantive progress that has been made on issues concerning relations between India and the United over the past several years," (10)

But differences between official U.S. and Indian policies persisted on Afghanistan and nuclear issues. Covertly, we supported the Islamic fundamentalist Gulbuddin Hekmatyar who received the lion share of the arms and funds provided to the Afghan resistance. He was at the time "America's man". He continued in that position until April 29, 1992 when Commandant Massoud, another Afghan resistance fighter, entered Kabul with 10,000 men. Massoud had been a fierce opponent of the Afghan fundamentalist Hekmatyar, who heretofore had been the favorite of the Pakistani military. (11)

Prime Minister Gandhi's reply to President Reagan's letter of November 2, 1987, which I forwarded to Washington on December 4, 1987, highlighted the real differences between the Indian and American positions.

Mr. Gandhi pointed out that Afghanistan is India's close neighbor and that India has a "vital interest in future developments in that country". He also informed President Reagan that the Indian authorities had consulted several concerned parties, including the Afghan leaders in the "present government" (December 1987). The visit of Soviet Prime Minister Ryzhkov to India gave the Indian authorities an opportunity to discuss the Afghanistan problem with him. According to Mr. Gandhi, Premier Ryzhkov was keen to find a way to enable an

(10) President Reagan's letter to Prime Minister Gandhi dated Nov. 2, 1987.

(11) In the late 1990s and in the first years of the 21st century, Hekmatyar became America's No. 1 enemy. But that is another story.

early withdrawal of Soviet troops. More Importantly, Mr. Gandhi informed President Reagan that "the Soviet Union had shared the Indian assessment that only a realistically balanced and representative coalition government in Afghanistan would contribute to stability in the region." Rajiv Gandhi appeared "optimistic" about progress on the Afghan problem. But the Indian Prime Minister apparently misinterpreted American real intentions when he wrote in that same November 2, 1987 message that : "there is common ground between the United States and the Soviet Union in that both desire an independent, non-aligned, and stable government in Afghanistan." Was Mr. Gandhi sincere when he wrote in that message that "both (the U.S, and the Soviet Union) wish to avoid a situation which would lead to large-scale bloodshed and civil strife". Mr. Gandhi also stated that the Indians were in the process of contacting various Afghan groups and individuals (within and outside Afghanistan) with the hope of working for the formation of a "broad-based coalition government in Afghanistan which reflects the realities on the ground." Knowing how the situation evolved in the years following the writing of this letter, the following sentences appear to reflect a misunderstanding, or perhaps a mis-interpretation, of the American position at that time. "We have to look for an arrangement in which the liberal, moderate and democratic forces are in an influential position. We also think that it is in our interest, as well as yours (American), to avoid a situation where the Fundamentalist elements gain an upper hand in Afghanistan". Well, who was supporting surreptitiously at that time the most ardent Afghan Fundamentalist like Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, if not the United States! Misunderstanding, or a diplomatic way for the Indians to make known their differences over

Afghanistan to the United States?

Reading these messages today, years later, exchanged between the top leaders of the two countries, one can only ask whether there were two policies toward Afghanistan: One overt, trying to get Mr. Gorbachev to withdraw his troops from Afghanistan as quickly as possible, and one covert, designed to place a pro-Pakistani and pro-American government in Kabul, which would be, above all, anti-communist. Apparently, U.S. policy makers at the time did not worry about placing Afghan Islamic Fundamentalists in control of Kabul.

The Indian leader's message received a swift reply from President Reagan. It further emphasized that the U.S. and Pakistan on the one side, and the Soviet Union and India on the other, had opposing views on who would govern Afghanistan after the withdrawal of Soviet troops. In the President's message I conveyed to Mr. Gandhi on December 23, 1987 (12), he expressed appreciation for having received the Indian leader's reports just before his meetings with Soviet General Secretary Gorbachev, particularly the comments about Gandhi's discussion of the Afghanistan problem with Soviet Prime Minister Ryzhkov.

Mr. Reagan informed Mr. Gandhi in this letter that Mr. Gorbachev reiterated the Soviet intention to withdraw, but avoided a specific commitment beyond mentioning with favor Najibullah's recent publicized proposal for the withdrawal of Russian troops in no more

(12) Set forth in detail in the State Department message 39X049

than 12 months. According to Gandhi, Gorbachev stressed the linkage between the beginning of withdrawal and the end of outside interference. While the U.S. continued to agree that future political arrangements should be left to the Afghans, Mr. Gorbachev seemed wedded to Najibullah's "unrealistic" coalition approach, rather than accept the need for a fresh start which would have the full support of the Afghan people.

President Reagan's letter handed to Prime Minister Gandhi on December 23 received an immediate reply. The next day, December 24, I received from the Prime Ministers office two letters: One for President Reagan, and a second one addressed to Vice-President Bush. Both were from the Indian Prime Minister. The second letter was in Rajiv Gandhi's own handwriting and reflected the very warm personal relationship which existed between Rajiv and George Bush Sr. This relationship between the two leaders went back several years and continued until the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi in 1991.

I had been a beneficiary of George Bush's personal and close links with Rajiv Gandhi, as the letter of introduction from Vice-president Bush to the Indian leader reflects which I cited earlier in this chapter. It certainly made my work much easier in India and I remain grateful to George Bush Sr. for his assistance and friendship.

While previous letters had been addressed to "Dear Mr,President", for the first time this letter was addressed to "Dear Ronald" in Mr. Gandhi's own handwriting. It also included a very personal and long handwritten ending. After congratulating President Reagan on the agreement signed with Mr. Gorbachev on the elimination of

short and medium-range nuclear weapons, the Indian Prime Minister reported on his meeting in New Delhi with Najibullah, the communist Afghan Prime Minister who had made a transit halt on his way to Vietnam. According to Mr. Gandhi, Najibullah explained that the commitment made by the Soviet Union on the withdrawal of their troops had created conditions for a peaceful settlement of the problem. In his view, processes should now be set in motion for ensuring that the forthcoming talks in Geneva result in a settlement that can ensure a non-aligned and independent Afghanistan. Mr. Gandhi gave Najibullah the Indian assessment of the overall situation in Afghanistan and the region, indicating that a broad-based government embracing all sections of opinion was needed for stability and orderly political evolution. Mr. Gandhi opined that Najibullah and his government were showing greater flexibility in approaching the political issues involved. Rajiv also informed that the Indians had contacted King Zahir Shah in Rome and proposed continued discussions with him.

This last information was not well-received by Washington and this was also made known to the Indians. From other diplomatic messages it was also apparent to me that Pakistan differed with the Indian role on the Afghan problem. I also have some doubt that all political players in Washington were happy with what may appear to some as India's close relationship with the Soviet Union and what may be interpreted by some as Indian endorsement of the Gorbachev position on Afghanistan-

One of the major irritants in the U.S.-Indian discussions on Afghanistan was the U.S. agreement to provide sophisticated weapons

to Pakistan which clearly were not linked to Pakistan's concerns over Afghanistan. The Indians chose to interpret these weapon purchases by Pakistan as the U.S. making available to Pakistan arms which could only be used by Pakistan against India. Thus, in the late 1987, we received at the Embassy in New Delhi an aide-memoire on this subject. It was a rather aggressive document which might suggest that it did not originate with the Prime Minister's office but was drafted by those sections of the Indian bureaucracy which opposed Rajiv Gandhi's rather pro-American policies. Here is the text of the Aide-Memoire:

"

AIDE MEMOIRE

Government of India have had several occasions to convey its concerns on certain aspects of the current US-Pakistan Security Assistance Programme. A point often reiterated before has concerned the introduction of increasing levels of sophistication of the technology/weapons system being provided to Pakistan.

In the above context, Government of India is deeply concerned to learn about the recent decision of the U.S. Government to supply Copperhead Short-range 155 mm laser-guided anti-armour projectiles to Pakistan.

The induction of Cooperhead missiles would act as a force-multiplier introducing a new type of technology into the region.

The Government of India would like to point out that this weapon system is not as suitable for deployment on the Pakistan/Afghan Border as it would be in the plains and that if supplied to Pakistan, it is most likely to be directed against India.

Government of India view this development as detrimental to the regional security balance which would only compel India into taking suitable counter measures.

Government of India would like to impress upon the Government of USA the need for an urgent review of the decision."

Obviously, while I was receiving these blunt messages from the Indians, my colleagues and friends at the American Embassy in Islamabad were receiving appeals from the Pakistani authorities for the approval of even more sophisticated U.S. arms.

But the blowing of hot and cold from the Indians was also duplicated by the U.S. authorities. Sometimes I wondered whether two different government departments in Washington were drafting messages to me without any coordination by the National Security Adviser or the White House. Thus, in February 1988, I received instructions to inform the Prime Minister that the U.S. felt that the Soviets seemed serious about withdrawing, but important questions regarding the withdrawal needed to be resolved." The United States repeated that it had no plan regarding the shape that the Afghan Government should take after the complete withdrawal of the Soviet military from Afghanistan. Nonetheless, the U.S. Government stated that it was convinced that the Najibullah regime could not hold power without the Soviet Army. The American message went on to make a

(§§) State 46565 delivered to Prime Minister Gandhi on February 18, 1988.

statement which time proved to be completely erroneous. It said that the U.S. understands the Indian concern that no Khomeini-like fundamentalist regime takes over in Kabul. "Afghan historical and cultural experience, along with the fact of a small Shia minority, argue strongly against such a development. The moderate political orientation of the Afghan resistance, as well as its strong ties to conservative Islamic governments and movements should be reassuring. The sooner the Soviets withdraw and a new regime with genuine popular support (including that of the resistance) assumes power in Kabul, the less will be the Influence of extremist elements". (Footnote).

Were such statements out of Washington pure hypocrisy or just a wrong analysis of the problem? The orientation of the Afghan Government after the withdrawal of the Soviet military forces was about to become a major bone of contention between the U.S./Pakistan on one hand, and Russia and India on the other. This major cleavage was to have an important impact on U.S. relations with the Asian sub-continent, but also more important with the U.S.-Moslem relations as the fundamentalists became more powerful in Afghanistan and in other countries of the Moslem world.

The American Embassy in New Delhi exchanged significant messages with its counterpart in Islamabad. Both embassies analyzed the problem the same way. Both American embassies saw the orientation of the future Kabul Government of importance to both Pakistan and India,

Footnote: From State message 46565 delivered to Prime Minister Gandhi on February 18, 1988.

but also to the U.S. and the Soviet Union. Since this difference was never overcome by any one of the parties concerned, it contributed, over time, to the clash between the United States and the Moslem world.

On April 27, 1988, Embassy New Delhi alerted the State Department to India's determination to begin reinserting its traditional role in Afghanistan. This meant that: "in the long run India will not permit exclusive Pakistani influence in Kabul." The Embassy reported that: "the Government of India was deeply concerned over the emergence of Islamic fundamentalism of the Gulbuddin variety and what impact this may have on India's Muslims, on the Pakistani regime and the rest of the region." Therefore, India seeks a more balanced government in Kabul. (Footnote). A similar assessment appeared in the respected TIMES OF INDIA in its April 26, 1988 issue signed by S.Nihal Singh: "India is doing its bit to ensure that the future government of Afghanistan is secular, rather than fundamentalist, in its orientation. Apparently, New Delhi believes that Washington, for its own reasons, is inclined to share Pakistan's desire to see a fundamentalist dispensation in Afghanistan."

Unfortunately, the conclusion of Mr. Singh's article that the U.S. supported the Islamic fundamentalists to take power in Kabul was based on fact. Gulbuddin Hekmatyar was "our man" and our covert support for the Afghan resistance based in Peshawar benefitted in the first place the fundamentalists. For those who are interested in the Afghan problem and its impact on Indian-Pakistan relations, and by extension on U.S.-Soviet relations, I urge them to read a

Footnote: New Delhi's 10698 dated April 27, 1988.

message I sent to Washington on June 3, 1988 after an hour-long meeting with Prime Minister Gandhi. It explains in part India's problem with the American policies of Foster Dulles and President Bush, Sr. Both men had little taste for the policies of non-alignment or neutrality exercised by other countries of the world.

My good friend and colleague, Arnie Raphael, the American Ambassador to Pakistan in 1988, agreed with us, in New Delhi, that the question of the future of Afghanistan was of great strategic importance for both India and Pakistan. In his message, two months before his death in President Zia's plane, he wrote that we in the States, too often tend to think of Afghanistan mainly in terms of the Soviet withdrawal. Both Islamabad and New Delhi see the possibility of a major strategic reshuffling with a strong Islamic bloc stretching from Turkey to Pakistan, with Afghanistan a full and supportive member, confronting a Hindu India with a large Muslim minority. "(Footnote No. 1.)"

In Ambassador Raphael's analysis, President Zia and other Pakistanis see the chance for a friendly Afghanistan, for the first time in 40 years. Pakistan can have, as President Zia says, "strategic depth so India will know it can never threaten us again while we have to be worried about our back". Ambassador Raphael concludes: "For most Americans, the Soviet withdrawal is the victory. For our South-Asian friends, it is only the first act in a much larger drama. "(Footnote No.2.)"

Footnote No.1 : See Islamabad's message to the Department of State 12246 dated June 8, 1988.

Footnote No.2 : See Islamabad's message to the Department of State 12246 dated June 8, 1988.

On July 19, 1988, President Reagan wrote to President Zia of Pakistan. The message ends with a ringing endorsement of Zia's regime and praises Zia for the progress Pakistan made under his leadership "In developing durable broad-based democratic institutions". I am referring to this Presidential letter because it was written only one month before Zia was killed in a plane crash and it reflected the excellent relationship between the White House and the President of Pakistan. I therefore find it difficult to believe that the American Executive Branch was somehow involved in the assassination of Zia four weeks later, as some foreign personalities claimed. But don't let me get ahead of myself.

Just 4 days before his assassination. President Zia gave a lengthy interview to the National Press Trust published on August 13, 1988 in which he touched on the major issues confronting Pakistan. He denied, among other points, that Pakistan had violated the Geneva Accords on Afghanistan by supporting Afghan resistance raids into Afghanistan, from Pakistani soil. Zia claimed that the Soviets had acquiesced at Geneva in the continued resistance of the Mujahidin and therefore their forays into Afghanistan were not against the Geneva agreements. At the same time, President Zia accused India of trying to jump on the Afghanistan bandwagon to secure a leader in Afghanistan who would cooperate with India and the Soviet Union. Zia complained about Indian slogans against a fundamentalist regime in Kabul. (Footnote).

Footnote: See Islamabad No.17288 dated August 16, hence written one day before Zia's demise. It may have been one of Ambassador Raphael's last message sent before his tragic death in Zia's plane on August 17, 1988.

This brings us to the fateful day of August 17, 1988, the day Zia's plane crashed at the Pakistani air base outside of Bahawalpur. Before we get into this explosive subject, I would like to describe my personal relationship with our Embassy in Islamabad. While I personally never visited Pakistan during my tenure in New Delhi, the two embassies exchanged many messages of mutual interest and other members of my Embassy visited their counterparts in Islamabad. Finding ways of working together between the two American embassies, in the interest of helping Washington to chart a course in the long-term interest of our country, was a tradition. After all, Pakistan had been an ally of the United States, going back to 1950, when Pakistan was part of CENTO. As for India, U.S.-Indian links were forged by men like Pandit Nehru who worked with confidence with all American Presidents in the early post-World War II era. This did not mean that India and Pakistan saw the problem the same way. As the Director of Intelligence at the State Department wrote in January 1987: "Both India and Pakistan tend to believe the worst of each other. We (the U.S.) seek to be perceived by both India and Pakistan as pursuing an "even-handed" policy. Obviously, extraordinary events and concerns may intrude on the fundamental goal." (Footnote).

In late June or the first part of July 1988, Ambassador Raphael, accompanied by his charming wife and mother-in-law, were our guests in New Delhi. Their visit was primarily devoted to sightseeing. Since they stayed at our residence, we had ample opportunity to discuss subjects of mutual interest such as the relationship between

Footnote: Message from Ambassador Abramowitz, Director of Intelligence at the State Department in Washington, to Ambassador Dean in New Delhi, on January 7, 1987.

India and Pakistan, the shape of the future Afghan Government, and the supplying by the U.S. of sophisticated arms to Pakistan. Arnie Raphael enjoyed a close, personal relationship with President Zia. I enjoyed an excellent relationship with Prime Minister Gandhi. Perhaps some scholars will disagree with me, but I thought Zia and Gandhi had a better personal relationship than the press and politicians in these two countries acknowledged. Raphael and I agreed that U.S. policy toward South Asia was driven first and foremost by our relationship with the Soviet Union. The Cold War was still very much part of our world in the mid-nineteen eighties and Afghanistan was seen through the eyes of the containment policy. Raphael and I tried to do our best to make us look even-handed in our policies toward Pakistan and India, although this was not easy. The increasingly important role of Islamic fundamentalism in the policies of Zia in Pakistan, and the determination of India to stick with non-alignment did not make our task any easier. It must be recalled that America's desire to sell American arms and advanced weapons to Pakistan came up against India's reliance on Russian arms and technology, an orientation staunchly opposed by the United States. Both Raphael and I were professional diplomats who knew that perhaps the only objective we could achieve through diplomacy was to avoid a major tragedy in South Asia and overt U.S.-Soviet confrontations.

The question of selling American arms to Pakistan became an ever more divisive issue between India and Pakistan. Congressman Wilson who visited South Asia in those days quite often was active in promoting the sale of M-1 tanks to Pakistan. But President Zia preferred spending his money on AWACs rather than tanks. On the other hand, India claimed publicly and privately that both weapons

-- AWACs and tanks – were primarily purchased for use by Pakistan against India rather than for opposing the Soviet threat from Afghanistan.

When Ambassador Raphael reported on June 6, 1988 from Islamabad that President Zia had decided against the purchase of the M-1 tank, it came as quite a surprise to us in New Delhi. The news was not well received in Washington. It was at a small dinner for Congressman Wilson, on June 5, 1988, at Zia's residence, that the Pakistani President told the Congressman that he had decided that the price of the tank had moved beyond Pakistanis means. So the Government of Pakistan would not purchase the M-1. The Government of Pakistan would focus its efforts on the decision to move ahead with the AWACs sale. (Footnote).

But the advocates for the sale of the American M-1 tank to Pakistan had their supporters, both in Washington and in Islamabad. They organized a demonstration of the tank's capabilities in Pakistan in August 1988. It was attendance at that demonstration of the fire-power of the M-1 tank on August 17, 1988 that cost President Zia and most of his Senior Generals their lives.

Zia had reluctantly agreed to fly to Bahawalpur that fateful morning of August 17 to see a lone tank fire off its cannon in the desert because Major General Mahmood Durrani, the Commander of the Pakistani Armored Corps, and his former Military Secretary, was extraordinarily insistent on his attendance. General Durrani argued that the entire army command would be there that day, and implied that if Zia were

Footnote: Islamabad's message Number 3776 dated June 6, 1988 addressed to the Department of State.

absent. It might be taken as a slight. As it turned out, the demonstration was a fiasco. The much vaunted M-I tank missed its target.

Before going into detail on the assassination of Zia, I must get slightly ahead of myself to bring out the importance some quarters attached to the acquisition by Pakistan of the M-I tank -- and of American weapons in general. One of the few Pakistani generals who survived the August 17 plane crash was Lieutenant General Mirza Aslam Beg, the army's Vice-Chief of Staff. After the crash. General Beg took over on all military questions.

My friend and colleague, Ambassador Robert Oakley, had been dispatched to Islamabad to replace Arnie Raphael shortly after August 17, and on August 31, 1988, two weeks after Zia's demise, reported on his August 29 meeting with the newly made Chief Army Staff, General Beg. (Footnote 1). The entire message is a good example of the close relationship existing at the time between the United States and Pakistan. If one reads the quotations set forth below with the eyes of observers of the Asian sub-continent in 2003, one realizes how key players have changed their position as the political and international situation evolved. Thus, General Beg affirmed two weeks after Zia's death that "Pakistan and Afghanistan are now one", two nations but one people. Ambassador Oakley reported that: "General Beg denied the importance of the upsurge in Islamic fundamentalism and said that there would be no fundamentalist government in Afghanistan". (Footnote 2).

Footnote 1: See Islamabad No.7535 to the Department dated 31 Aug.1988.

Footnote 2: Idem above.

Did General Beg's views coincide with those of the American Administration in Washington in the summer of 1988? Perhaps the late Foster Dulles might have agreed with General Beg when the latter told Ambassador Oakley; "Iran was another emerging reality. Closer relations between Iran and Pakistan would help dilute Iranian fundamentalism. Beg looked forward to a "strategic consensus" of Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran, and Turkey, which he called a 'grand design'. No formal pact would be necessary, but such a consensus would create a new regional power equation and provide the United States with new options for dealing with India, the Soviet Union, and the Mid-East." Ambassador Oakley, very wisely, questioned some of the statements made by General Beg. (Footnote 1).

At the same meeting. Ambassador Oakley's military advisors urged General Beg to make up his mind on the M-1 tank purchase. The U.S. wanted to show its support for Pakistan by action and not mere words, and providing weapons for Pakistan was a concrete way of showing this support. My reading of the message under reference implies that Beg agreed to proceed with the tank purchase. Ambassador Oakley's Military Aide, General Pfister, pointed out that there were a number of other systems, e.g.. Cobra helicopters, tow missiles and launchers, that would demonstrate U.S. support for Pakistan and "would probably not encounter Congressional opposition". (Footnote 2).

But who was part of that Congressional opposition that might oppose the shipment of American arms to Pakistan? Some Pakistanis blamed

Footnote 1: See Islamabad No. 7535 dated 31 August 1988.

Footnote 2: Idem above.

"pro-Indian lobbies" in the United States. In my opinion, there were Senators and Congressmen in Washington who were concerned over strengthening Pakistan's military potential, including Pakistan's quest for obtaining a nuclear capability. Specifically, all those politicians and legislators who were behind the Pressler Amendment of cutting off aid to Pakistan, if it could be demonstrated that Pakistan was trying to obtain a nuclear bomb, were against the arms offers put forward by the Pentagon representatives. This included some of the active supporters of Israel in Congress, and in Washington in general. I doubt that our legislators were very worried about India's reaction to the sale of American arms to Pakistan, since they knew that India relied exclusively on Russian weapons. Furthermore, India already had exploded its first nuclear bomb in 1974 and used its own know-how and industrial capacity for its nuclear capability. But Pakistan's quest for a nuclear deterrent was seen by some as an effort to build an "Islamic bomb" and hence, not only opposed in the U.S. but also by Israel.

Some of the weaponry we supplied to Pakistan, or via Pakistan to the Afghan resistance, came home to haunt us later. Thus, the very effective Stinger missiles which we provided to the Afghan resistance to shoot down Soviet aircraft in Afghanistan became a political danger to American civilian aircraft in the hands of terrorists. after the Soviet military withdrawal from Afghanistan. Even during my days in South Asia, the American embassies in Islamabad and New Delhi kept close watch on how many Stingers were in the hands of the Afghan resistance, what shape were they in, and what groups actually held them. As long as the Stingers were used against the Soviet

military, nobody appeared to have any qualms. But what if the Afghans sold them to others for cold cash once the Soviets had left Afghanistan? This explains an interesting article by two journalists in the LOS ANGELES TIMES Service published in the July 24-25, 1993 edition of the International Herald Tribune. (Footnote). According to this article, the Central Intelligence Agency had requested 55 million dollars to buy back hundreds of Stinger anti-aircraft missiles that the United States had given to Afghan rebels in the 1980s. The sum, which is more than five times a previous allocation for a covert Stinger repurchase program, was sought by the Clinton Administration because of the fierce competition for the missiles on the international black market. U.S. agents have been finding themselves outbid for the shoulder-launched rockets that now fetch as much as 100,000 dollars a piece in the black market. The article goes on to link anti-American terrorist activities to the Afghan resistance movement and concludes that "even if the United States can recover many of the missiles, new versions from other countries are likely to flood into the market."

Perhaps the preceding pages will help the reader to understand my reaction to the assassination of General Zia, why I took the unusual step of flying back to Washington to brief top U.S. authorities on my findings, and why I differed with nearly all parties in apportioning blame for the killing. Who did it? What could have been their motives?

Footnote: "Fearing Attacks, U.S. Acts to Rebuy Afghan Missiles" by Robin Wright and John M. Broder in the International Herald Tribune - Page 5 - July 24-25, 1993.

The day before August 17, I had received the visit of Ambassador Patricia Burns, an active American Ambassador, who had flown from Islamabad to New Delhi. Pat and I had known each other ever since 1953 when we served together with the American Mission to Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. She informed me that an American General had just arrived in Islamabad to brief the Pakistani military on the American military assistance program to Pakistan.

At 4:00 p.m. on August 17, 1988, I received the first of several phone calls from Prime Minister Gandhi's Personal Secretary, Ronen Sen, informing me that apparently the C-130 Hercules transport plane in which President Zia was travelling had crashed on take-off from the military air base, outside of Bahawalpur. Every 15-20 minutes I received update reports from Ronen Sen on the situation in Pakistan. When I alerted my C.I.A. staff and the Intelligence Agencies represented on my staff to the news received from the Indian Prime Ministers Office on events in Bahawalpur, they were completely uninformed. It was the first news of the tragedy for all of them. As for Ambassador Patricia Burns, she wondered who was the American General in Zia's plane who was killed, since on that day two American generals were in Pakistan. Was it the resident Head of the Military Assistance Section of the American Embassy in Islamabad, or the visiting General from Washington? After the second or third phone call from Ronen Sen, it was clear that American Ambassador Arnold L. Raphael and General Herbert M. Wassom, the Head of the U.S. military aid Mission to Pakistan also were on the Zia's plane which had crashed. But why were they on Zia's plane? Both officials from the American Embassy had flown up to Bahawalpur on the embassy

plane to witness the M-1 tank demonstration. Why had they not returned on their own aircraft to Islamabad? Didn't they travel with body guards? If so, what happened to them ?

From 4:00 p.m. until about 10:00 p.m. that same evening of August 17, I received reports from Ronen Sen on what happened at Bahawalpur. After the completion of the demonstration of the American Abrams Tank, President Zia invited both Ambassador Raphael and General Wassom to fly back with him in his specially-equipped C-130 Hercules transport plane. Zia and his two top generals sat in the front, the V.I.P. section of an air-conditioned passenger "capsule" that had been rolled into the body of the C-130. The remaining two seats in the section were given to Zia's American guests: Ambassador Raphael and General Wassom. Behind the V.I.P.s, eight Pakistani generals packed the two benches in the rear section of the capsule. In the cockpit, which was separated from the capsule by a door and three steps, was the four-man flight crew.

After Zia's plane --Pak 1 -- was airborne, a controller in the tower of Bahawalpur asked the Commander of the plane - Mash'hood Hassan - his position. Mash'hood radioed back: "Pak one, stand by" but then, there was no further response. Those on the ground became alarmed, and efforts to contact Mash'hood quickly grew desperate. Pak One was missing only minutes after it had taken off. Meanwhile, at the river, about nine miles away from the airport, villagers looking up saw a plane lurching in the sky, as if it were on an invisible roller coaster. After its third loop, it plunged directly toward the desert, burying itself in the soil. It exploded and, as its fuel burned, became a ball of fire. All thirty-one people on board Pak One were

dead. (Footnote 1). This version was also transmitted to me by phone by Ronen Sen. (Footnote 2) In the course of that evening of August 17, 1988, Ronen Sen also mentioned that one of the satellites in space had observed, and perhaps even filmed, the way Zia's plane took off, lurched like on a roller coaster, and then crashed as described above.

I do not think anything is gained by citing every article or classified cable on why certain investigations did not take place, why the FBI did not get involved right away, the differences between the American and Pakistani investigative reports, and the accusations of Zia's son that his father was "assassinated" and that the crash was not an accident nor a mechanical failure of the plane, as originally reported in the media. For those who are addicted to mystery movies or novels and who like to read John Le Carré's thrillers, I suggest you turn to the appendix of this book and read the lengthy investigating report of Mr. Epstein referred to above. Mr. Epstein tried to explain what caused the mysterious crash of Zia's plane, who could have done it, and why there was a cover up. Based on my conversations with the Indian Prime Minister's personal Secretary, Ronen Sen, I give a lot of credence to Mr. Epstein's article. One of the most credible explanations for the way Zia's plane went down was suggested by Mr. Epstein in his highly documented article: a gas bomb planted in the air vent in the C-130, triggered to go off when pressurized air was fed into the cockpit. This type of gas,

Footnote 1: The above descriptions are based, and reprinted, from the article by Edward Jay Epstein in his article "How General Zia went down" in the June 1989 issue of VANITY FAIR.

Footnote 2: Ronen Sen went on to a brilliant career in India's Diplomatic Service and served as Ambassador to Russia, Germany, and the United Kingdom.

manufactured in the U.S.S.R., would have done the trick. But so would a host of other nerve gases. According to a technical expert at the U.S. Army chemical-warfare center In Aberdeen, Maryland, the American-manufactured Vx nerve gas is odorless, easily transportable in liquid form and a tiny quantity would be enough, when dispersed by a small explosion and inhaled, to cause paralysis and loss of speech within 30 seconds. According to the scientific expert, the residue it would leave behind would be phosphorous. And, as it turned out, the chemical analysis of debris from the cockpit of Zia's plane showed heavy traces of phosphorous. (Footnote).

The article by Mr. Epstein was published 9 months after the crash of Zia's plane. When I telephoned Mr. Epstein after my retirement from the Foreign Service in order to obtain more details on his investigation, he urged me not to pursue it further. He said that since his article appeared in VANITY FAIR, his career had been completely ruined. He was black-listed by his publishers in the United States and neither his books nor articles found any more takers. He advised me not to pursue the matter further. He reiterated, however, that the assassination of the President of Pakistan had given rise to a cover-up, and "one casualty in the crash of Pak One was the truth." Most articles that appeared in the American, Indian, and Pakistani press agreed –sooner or later – that there was a cover-up but as Epstein wrote: "It was not unlike Agatha Christie's thriller 'Murder on the Orient Express' in which everyone aboard the train had a motive for murder." The diplomatic cable traffic of the time did not explain who was behind the assassination.

Footnote: All the above is taken from the VANITY FAIR article in the June 1989 issue.

Until my departure from New Delhi in November, Afghanistan continued to keep my attention. The Soviet Ambassador to Kabul at the time was Mr. Yegorychev with whom I had served together in Denmark in the 1970s. In Kabul, he protested to our Charge in Kabul – Mr. Glassman - that the reports of Soviet/Afghan air incursions in Pakistan were a "Hollywood production". (Footnote 1). By that he meant to imply that the reports and evidence were manufactured by the CIA or the ISI to support vocal accusations by the Pakistani or Americans to that effect. In a couple of personal messages Mr. Nikolai Yegorychev sent to me via the American Charge, he repeated the accusations that the Pakistanis were not living up to the agreement of not harassing Soviet forces withdrawing from Afghanistan, while the Soviets adhered to the agreements. "Manufactured evidence" by the CIA or ISI for the purpose of proving spurious accusations of Soviet bad faith were very much a theme of his brief notes. Soviet Ambassador Yegorychev made the same claims in his meetings with Charge Glassman. (Footnote 2).

Accusations and counter-accusations on who was doing what to whom were much in the air in those days. Who killed Zia? The Indians? The dissatisfied Pakistani military? The Afghan Secret Service? The Russians? The American CIA? When I saw Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi on that subject, he first opined that an explosive device had been placed in a fruit basket which was put on board of Zia's plane. This device could have triggered another reaction within the plane, which accounted for the silence of the crew in answering the calls

Footnote 1 : See Kabul Number 0025 dated 7 September 1988.

Footnote 2 : See Kabul Number 0022 dated 7 September 1988.

from the control tower and the "rudderless plane falling to the ground."

I also discussed the crash of Zia's plane, and who could have been behind the accident, with General K. Sundarji, who was Chief of Staff of the Indian Army during my tour in India. Sundarji was a very likeable man. He was also a graduate of the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, which gave him a very good understanding of the United States. In his long and distinguished career, he also commanded Indian troops in a U.N. operation in what used to be the Belgian Congo. He served in all the wars and skirmishes between India and Pakistan. Sundarji was known as the "scholar warrior" among his friends. He died in February 1999.

When I first discussed the August 17, 1988 assassination of Zia with him, he linked the event to the situation in Afghanistan. He did not think that the Soviets were behind it. Nor did the Afghan Intelligence Service have the means to orchestrate such an event. In 1986 and 1987, Sundarji had a run-in with Israeli Intelligence when he ordered Indian troops to Sri Lanka to oppose the cession movement of the Tamils in northern Sri Lanka. Indian troops were sent to Sri Lanka in reply to a call for assistance by the President of Sri Lanka. Rajiv Gandhi had been responsive to the Sri Lankan request. In Sri Lanka, Sundarji told me the Indian Intelligence Service came across dozens of MOSSAD officers working with the Sri Lankan forces. Sundarji had a healthy respect for MOSSAD. He felt that the primary function of MOSSAD was to oppose Pakistan, and for that matter any Islamic nation increasing its military potential. Israel was "aligned" with the United States. India was "non-aligned".

I met with General Sundarji and his wife Vani in Paris, after our respective retirement. On June 25, 1993 Sundarji and Vani were our guests at our apartment in Paris. Naturally, the conversation turned to the assassination of President Zia five years earlier. In the meantime, there had been many investigations by intelligence and investigating services from many countries, all trying to prove who was behind the assassination and why there was a cover-up. In front of my wife, Sundarji said to me (on June 25, 1993), in a solemn voice: "You (the Americans) did it". I am not sure that he meant that we had actually been directly involved in carrying out the deed but that the U.S. had somehow been involved behind the scenes in getting Zia's plane sabotaged. Sundarji pointed out that neither the American Ambassador nor the American General were supposed to be on Zia's plane, and their presence was only due to the last-minute invitation by Zia to the two Americans to join him on his plane. Both Americans had flown up to the demonstration at Bahawalpur on the American Embassy plane.

Only about one year ago, I tried to reestablish contact with Mrs. Vani Sundarji. I located her after considerable difficulty in India, but she was unable to shed any additional light on the fate of Zia's plane crash. Perhaps I am reading something into it, but she said that she had visited Israel a couple of times since her husband's death.

Let me return to late August 1988 when I was trying to make some sense from all the data I was receiving from the Indians, from our Mission in Kabul, from my own staff at the Embassy, from Washington, and from my ambassadorial colleagues in New Delhi. I first went to see my

colleague, the British Ambassador, Ambassador Allgood. Prior to his posting in India, he had served in the British cabinet responsible for MI6. We enjoyed a close and personal relationship but when I asked him to help me untangle the different information's on Zia's assassination, he became very silent and offered no help whatsoever. My Canadian colleague was also not helpful. Our New Zealand colleague, the conqueror of Mount Everest, Edmund Hillary, was not sufficiently clued in to be of assistance. Ambassador Hillary was a wonderful colleague and a great human being, but on the issue at stake, he had not been sufficiently informed to be helpful. My French colleague, Ambassador Andre Levin listened to all I had to say but only said he would pass on my concern that there was a serious cover-up in order to avoid finding proof of who was behind Zia's assassination. Yes, I already used the word "assassination" and did not confine myself to neutral words such as "crash". I should add that Andre Levin and his erudite and able wife, Catherine Clement, remained our friends until today.

Brooding over the information at hand, and on the basis of what key personalities had told me in New Delhi, I cabled Washington on September 10 asking authorization to return to Washington on consultation. I also had requested appointments with American political leaders, both in the White House and in the State Department, in order to apprise them of my evaluation which indicated that our good relationship with India risked being reversed by what appeared to be a U.S. tilt toward Pakistan and U.S. determination to support the Afghan fundamentalist resistance movement in an effort to install them in Kabul. Authorization was granted and I returned to Washington for what I thought would be a week of consultations. It turned out

that I would be absent from New Delhi for more than 6 weeks.

I left New Delhi, accompanied by a CIA officer. My ticket was reserved by the CIA under the name of John Gunther and CIA helped me to clear police and customs formalities under that name, both in New Delhi and in Washington. D.C. Why all these precautions of hiding my identity? Frankly, I had concluded that Zia's assassination was a "contract" let by one of the more important intelligence agencies of the world, and having been twice the target of assassination attempts in my professional career, I did not know who might disapprove of the role I played in New Delhi. (See the chapter on my tenure in Lebanon).

It is important to situate the political atmosphere in which these events took place. Need I recall that the Summer and Autumn of 1988 were the last weeks before the November Presidential elections in the U.S. President Reagan was completing his second term and Vice-President Bush was running for the Presidency. His Democratic challenger was Mike Dukakis, former Governor of Massachusetts. Furthermore, I had been alerted that the Reagan Administration was planning to appoint Mr. Hubbard from California as Ambassador to India, as my replacement. Apparently, the Reagan Administration could not wait and had suggested a recess appointment for Mr. Hubbard, thereby circumventing Senate approval just weeks before the November elections. In numerous messages from New Delhi I had clearly indicated that it would be preferable to await the election in November, so that the new American Ambassador would come to India with the endorsement of the U.S. Senate. Especially after the

assassination of Zia, I thought nothing precipitous should be done which might appear as disapproval of our policy toward Pakistan or India. Certainly, I fully agreed in my messages that a new American Ambassador should be sent after the elections in order to deal with the changing situation in South Asia and in Afghanistan.

My reservations on our Afghan policy and our biased policy in the Near East were well known in Washington. I was fully aware that some groups in Washington did not appreciate my sympathy for India's policy of non-alignment for Afghanistan, nor what I perceived was Washington's true policy in South Asia: full support for the most fundamentalist of all Islamic movements to take over political control in Kabul. At the same time I noted that some of the Congressional visitors I had received in New Delhi, as Congressman Solarz and Congressman Lantos, were using the Pressler Amendment and American legislation to counter covert U.S. policies to help Pakistan obtain sophisticated weapons from the United States. These men used their visits to New Delhi to stimulate or endorse Indian opposition to U.S. arms programs for Pakistan. But what was the real motivation of their visits? Was it concern for U.S. long-term interests in South Asia, or preventing Pakistan to acquire military sophisticated weapons, and especially a nuclear capability which would also challenge in the long-run Israel's military superiority in the Moslem world? The "Islamic Bomb" appeared to me at times of greater concern to certain groups in the U.S. than to Mr. Gandhi and the Indians.

It was a combination of these facts which made me ask for authorization to return to Washington for consultation. I had made it clear in

numerous messages to the top leadership in the Department of State that I thought our policy toward Afghanistan could lead us into trouble in the long-run, not only toward South Asia, but toward the region, and even toward other major countries in the world. Perhaps I was ahead of my times. Not even a year after my retirement from the Foreign Service, the NEW YORK TIMES wrote a lead editorial in which it severely criticized U.S. policy toward Afghanistan. (Footnote). I am taking the liberty of reprinting in its entirety this editorial because it does confirm that my warnings to the Reagan Administration in the Autumn of 1988 were later confirmed by other independent sources.

WRONG ON AFGHANISTAN

America's policy triumph in Afghanistan a year ago has turned sour. Washington expected a swift rebel victory when the Soviet Union ended a decade of occupation last February 15. It did not happen. Now the onus for fueling a murderous war falls on the United States and Pakistan, the main supporters of a quarrelsome rebel coalition. And with the Russians gone. Major General Najib, the leader of the Soviet-installed Kabul regime, presents himself as champion of national sovereignty in a country long hostile to foreign meddling.

This is the essence of a report by John Burns in Sunday's New York Times Magazine. His account should be required reading in the Bush administration, which is finally reviewing its Afghan policy.

Footnote: "WRONG ON AFGHANISTAN" from the NEW YORK TIMES, reprinted as the lead editorial in the International Herald Tribune of February 6, 1990 - Page 4.

With little dissent, Washington has rebuffed Soviet proposals for a mutual arms cutoff and a political settlement, and continues to supply \$700 million annually to the Afghan resistance. Standing tough made sense when Russian troops occupied Afghanistan and when Pakistan felt genuinely threatened by an aggressive Soviet Union. These circumstances have changed; the policy hasn't. The results have distorted American purposes and principles.

Civilians by the thousands have been killed by rebels firing U.S.-supplied rockets into city centers. Now it is American reporters, not Russian troops, who are asking in anguish: "Why do you do this to us?" Peter Tomsen, a special envoy sent by President George Bush, told Mr. Burns that the carnage reminded him of atrocities in Vietnam.

Amid the disorders of war, Afghanistan has again become a major source of heroin, with guerilla leaders doubling as drug kingpins. At one point, the U.S. envoy to Pakistan authorized discussions with a rebel commander about poppies. The commander said he would suppress his own traffic for a fee: \$2 million a week. The offer was refused.

A year after the Soviet pullout, the 15 rebel groups seem able to unite only against compromise. They have

failed to seize a single city and have made Peshawar a by-word for corruption. Their most fiery leaders – notably Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, the protégé of Pakistan's military — would turn Afghanistan into a Khomeini-style fundamentalist state. Yet, lower-echelon American officials risk their careers if they send negative reports home.

None of this makes Kabul's Soviet-installed regime more attractive, or removes the stains from General Najib's hands. Instead, Moscow is already hinting that his departure is negotiable, if Washington shows some willingness to support a broad-based interim regime. In any case, the Bush administration is right to rethink its Afghan policy. That is the first vital step to peace. What conceivable U.S. interests are served by pouring more arms into this dubious battle?

-- THE NEW YORK TIMES --

When I arrived in Washington in September 1988 "on consultation", I was quickly abused of my impression that I had firm appointments with Secretary Schultz or Vice President Bush. Instead, I saw the Head of the Intelligence and Research Division at State, Ambassador Mort Abramowitz, and the Director General of the Foreign Service, George Vest. Both were good friends. Nonetheless, I was disappointed that nobody at the top level was interested to hear what my assessment was of the evolving situation in South Asia. Instead, I was asked

to see the medical unit of the State Department where my sanity was questioned. Why was I sent to the Medical Unit?

In trying to explain "within government channels" what happened to Zia's plane, I shared with my friends some thoughts which went contrary to the public posture of the U.S. government. Could it be that the real opponents of Islamic fundamentalism's efforts to gain political control of Afghanistan were the unconditional supporters of Israel? Certainly the Israeli lobby was the most active element in Washington in opposing Pakistan's efforts to obtain a nuclear capability – the "Islamic Bomb". (Footnote)

Was the determined effort to oppose nuclear proliferation by some politicians also a way of protecting Israel against Moslem states building "an Islamic Bomb"? In short, I suggested that pro-Israeli circles might have been in collusion with anti-Zia elements in Pakistan and disgruntled Indian Agents in bringing about the August 17, 1988 crash of Zia's plane. I was convinced that neither the Pentagon nor the State Department was involved in this tragedy.

Footnote: See article by Michael R. Gordon in the NEW YORK TIMES, reprinted in the September 25, 1990 issue of the N.Y. TIMES International - page A-8. It reports on Representative Stephen J. Solarz's letter of Sept. 19, 1990 to President Bush urging the cut-off of U.S. aid to Pakistan because Pakistan was trying to obtain a nuclear capability, contrary to the Pressler Amendment. The article cites Mr. Solarz: "For over a decade, there has been a growing temptation to look the other way" when it comes to Pakistani nuclear ambitions. Mr. Solarz was Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs and an influential lawmaker on the issue of aid to Pakistan. The article reports that Mr. Solarz's letter drew criticism from a Senior Administration official who said that "this is not a particularly good time to bash the Pakistanis" noting that "Pakistan is contributing troops to the multinational force in the Persian Gulf region". JGD's comment: There is no doubt that on Pakistan/Afghanistan/India there were differences between Republicans and Democrats. Steven Solarz appeared to have run afoul of the Republican political machine. In the early 1990s his Brooklyn district was "redistricted"; this meant that his predominately Jewish constituency was replaced by Hispanic-American electors. In his effort to maintain his seat within the new borders of his district, he failed. This put an end to the legislative career of one of the hardest working, intelligent lawmakers.

I also doubted that the CIA was directly involved. But the behaviour of the American establishment in covering up the crash and procrastinating on sending investigating teams to Pakistan appeared strange and worrisome to those who wanted America to stand for truth-and fairness.

The reaction to my concerns about our Afghan policy, the possible linkage of events in South Asia on the imbroglio in the Near East, and the confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union on the future of Afghanistan, was quite different from what I had expected from Washington. Perhaps I had forgotten to take into account that this was a crucial period before the November Presidential Election in the U.S., and that the last thing either political party wanted was a major international scandal which could be exploited by the contenders in T.V. debates. Hence, the decision of the American top authorities was to "get J.G.D. out of the way". By questioning my sanity, backed up by reports from psychiatrists and different medical doctors, (appointments made by the State Department Medical Unit), the Department of State was able to take away my medical clearance. Now it was a question of how to get J.G.D. out of the way until the November Presidential Election was over. By not sending me back to New Delhi, I could not write embarrassing messages. By keeping me out of Washington, I could not speak with inquisitive journalists trying to find issues to make the election debates more meaningful. In short, I was an embarrassment to the administration. At first, I thought I would be sent to an asylum. Fortunately, that idea was discarded and I was sent to Switzerland, to our house in the mountains, for "recuperation". I received orders to stay there until I received word to return to New Delhi to pack up our personal

belongings and leave post. In short, I was not allowed to return, from Washington, to my post because "my health" did not permit it! Then and perhaps still today, I equate these kind of procedures with the Stalinist regime in the Soviet Union. I could not imagine that these methods could be employed by an American administration to one of its Senior Foreign Service officers. Wouldn't it have been easier just to say to me that I was wrong, both in my analysis of the situation in Afghanistan and in my interpretation of the Zia plane crash?

I flew from Washington to Switzerland, where I reported to the Swiss police. My wife and one of our sons joined me for the "forced rest period". This strange "confinement to quarters" lasted until the end of October, about 6 weeks. Then, I was authorized by telephone to return to New Delhi, pack our personal belongings, and take leave from the Indian authorities. During the 6 weeks in the Swiss mountains, I received periodic phone calls to ascertain that I was still there. An Assistant Secretary of State, with a highly placed State Department Administrative Assistant, even came from Washington to our resort to ascertain that I was really at the chalet and that the house belonged to us. That is a real demonstration of confidence in your ambassador .

What more can I say? We returned to New Delhi in late October to pack up and take leave from the Indian authorities and my ambassadorial colleagues. My Indian contacts, from the President, Vice President and Prime Minister down were all very nice to us. The Indian President sent me as a farewell present an oil painting which I gifted to the American residence in New Delhi. It depicted

the five continents of our earth, and in front of each continent were grieving women in tears: Was this a gentle reminder of humanity's suffering, and the need for America to address the problems of the non-aligned world, or criticism of American policy toward Afghanistan? I also received a lovely small Indian silver box from Prime Minister Gandhi, with the following farewell letter:

New Delhi
November 1, 1988

Dear Ambassador Dean,

On the eve of your departure from India, I thought I should let you know how much we appreciate your contribution to Indo-American relations.

You represented your country with distinction. During your tenure as Ambassador in India there has been a welcome improvement in relations between India and the United States. There has been a steady and dynamic growth in our commercial and economic exchanges. The United States is our largest trading partner and promising beginnings have been made in our cooperation in advanced technology.

In recent years we initiated a most useful dialogue on international and regional issues. Our persistent joint efforts to combat the menace of drug trafficking has started showing results.

Your efforts, in the interests of both our countries, contributed in a large measure to these positive developments. We can look forward to building our relationship further on these foundations.

Dean - 415

We are glad that in you we will have a friend in the United States who will speak with understanding of the values and aspirations of both India and the United States.

My best wishes go with you and Mrs Dean. I wish you success in our future endeavours and hope that you will continue to build bridges of friendship and closer understanding between our countries and peoples.

Yours sincerely,
(Signed) Rajiv Gandhi

His Excellency
Mr. John Gunther Dean
Ambassador of the United States of America
New Delhi

Two years after my departure from New Delhi, I returned for a brief personal visit. The Cabinet Secretary (the highest ranking civil servant) with eight other Permanent Secretaries representing different parts of the Indian administration, gave me a very elegant luncheon. I then met Rajiv Gandhi for the last time in his office where he said: "I am your friend". I replied: "And I am your friend." A few months later he was assassinated (1991).

One year later I had the honor to meet with Rajiv's widow, Sonia Gandhi, in New Delhi. On that occasion, I was accompanied by a wealthy businessman from London who contributed several thousand

dollars to the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation. Rajiv Gandhi was a thoroughly modern man who was a worthy grandson of India's first Prime Minister: Pandit Nehru.

My wife and I left New Delhi after the November Presidential Election. After a long vacation with my family, I returned to Washington after New Year's where I was given a huge office in the State Department, near the Secretary's office. No secretarial assistance. No specific duties. But many medical appointments with psychiatrists, specialized laboratories to scan my brain, and above all, the State Department's Medical Unit. The latter asked me to take a number of "intelligence tests" as if I had suffered some kind of brain damage at my last posting. Fortunately, a few good Foreign Service friends stood by me. They hinted that perhaps nobody dared to tell me to my face, but the new Administration saw no role for me in the U.S. Foreign Service. Once I made known my desire to leave the Foreign Service, everything went smoothly. The Director General of the Foreign Service, George Vest, presided a small ceremony at which I was again honored with the highest award the State Department can offer its officers. He also mentioned my outstanding service as Ambassador to India. Telegrams and letters from the staff in India and from various American and foreign personalities honored me by their laudatory messages for my work on behalf of my country and America's good name. What a strange way to leave the Government....

After my resignation from the Foreign Service, my medical clearance and security clearance were restored to me. I was asked to participate in the summer of 1989 in the Global War Games at the Naval War College

in Rhode Island. My job during this four-week annual exercise was to act the role of Secretary of State. James Schlesinger and Robert Hunter (later Ambassador to NATO) acted the role of President. Some 400 people participated in this annual exercise, including many admirals, generals, congressmen, senators, and other persons involved in international affairs. The year I participated in this exercise was the 99th time these Global War Games were played. It was the first time in its history that it never came "to war". I suggested in these games that American decisions could not be taken unilaterally and that new personalities needed to be included, as for example the President of France, the Chancellor of Germany, the U.N. Secretary General, the Head of the European Commission, etc... Hence, American decisions would be taken after consultations with other power centers. Multi-lateral diplomacy, rather than taking position without the green light of other power brokers. My suggestions were accepted and the 1989 Global War Games did not lead to war.

Years later, some of my friends in the Foreign Service - now long retired - told me who was behind the machination to have me declared "mentally deranged" and thereby removed from the Diplomatic Service. Perhaps suffice to say that policies change over time. Perhaps I was ahead of my time, or perhaps different American administrations have different policies as the world changes.

It was an immense privilege to serve my country and the American people. I am grateful to all Presidents, Secretaries of State, Secretaries of Defense, CIA Directors, and all my Foreign Service

colleagues for having given me the opportunity to do so. I still see the earth as a very small planet where all humanity is in the same boat. America has been the most powerful country in the post-World War II era, but as I was taught by my parents and by my High School teachers in Kansas City, Missouri, and by my professors at Harvard: "Those who have a lot, owe a lot". I want America to live up to this motto and help our country and humanity to move forward. In looking after U.S. national interests, this calls for multi-lateral engagement by the United States. And for the Foreign Service? The motto of Harvard should also prevail : "V E R I T A S".