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NUCLEAR DETERRENCE IN SOUTH ASIA

Civil-Military Relations and Decision-Making

Kotera M. Bhimaya

With the demise of the Soviet Union, the U.S. and its allies hope that the nuclear arms race, with its attendant risks of accident, terrorism, and environmental pollution, will be reversed and ultimately eliminated. However, the developed nations are seriously concerned about a different kind of proliferation in South Asia: the possibility of a nuclear arms race between India and Pakistan. The U.S. and its allies argue that the deeply ingrained, traditional hostility between India and Pakistan accentuates the dangers inherent in a South Asian nuclear proliferation. In addition, they worry about the inadequacy of safeguards against accidents, the lack of circumspect behavior in decision-making, and whether command and control arrangements are sufficient to prevent a possible nuclear conflagration because of misperception, miscalculation, or both.

In India, civilian control over the production and deployment of nuclear weapons appears absolute. Although it is inconceivable that the military will not have a role in integrating nuclear weapons into the overall war fighting strategy, the extent of its involvement in the design and deployment of nuclear weapons is not known. In Pakistan, however, the military has had a substantial role in politics. In 1958 the martial law regime under Ayub Khan sought and obtained the full cooperation of the bureaucracy, which benefited from the military rule. Again in 1970, Yahya Khan was chiefly guided by military advisers, although he had some civilian members in his cabinet. Although civilians were the initiators of the nuclear program, the Pakistan

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military have had a significant say not only in the direction of the country's nuclear program but also in the strategic and tactical deployment of its nuclear weapons. In sum, the state of civil-military relations in these countries will define the scope and character of the nuclear weapons program in peace and the employment of these weapons in war.

In this article, we first summarize the concerns and apprehensions of the five nuclear powers about the grave implications of nuclear proliferation in South Asia; then we examine the national security decision-making mechanisms in India and Pakistan, with particular attention to how these mechanisms responded to crises situations in the past, and discuss whether the empirical evidence on these responses supports or controverts the apprehensions of the five nuclear powers. Finally, we identify certain warning signposts that could affect the character of the pre-existing nuclear stability between the two countries, and explore some of the incentives that could dissuade them from deploying nuclear weapons in the short run.

Our approach is to examine past behavioral patterns of India and Pakistan in peaceful and crisis periods to draw some inferences as to how they might respond to future crises in the nuclear context. The conclusions, therefore, are speculative at best, but not at all likely to be trivial. Although both countries have officially declared that they have no nuclear weapon programs, it is assumed that both have the capability to put together nuclear weapons and, if necessary, use them at short notice. This article does not deal with long term solutions to the problems of proliferation in South Asia, that is, it does not cover the implications of economic and political pressures that might be considered by the five nuclear powers to compel India and Pakistan to sign the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

Most of the concerns of the nuclear powers are premised on an unequivocal rejection of the main argument in Kenneth Waltz's provocative work.¹ They highlight the "irrationality" and the size of the nuclear arsenals of certain regimes and the regimes' involvement in acute conflicts. Included in the analysis of the proliferation threat is the behavior pattern of these regimes: the strengths and weaknesses of their command and control systems, particularly during a crisis, and the day-to-day handling of their respective nuclear arsenals. More specifically, the proliferation threat refers to the unwanted use of nuclear weapons, that is, the accidental or unauthorized use. The nuclear powers also fear that once new countries acquire a nuclear weapons capability, a nuclear arms race is inevitable. Without the option to test them,

1. Waltz criticized the West for regarding the new nuclear powers as nations of lesser breed, and asserted that they will be able to solve the incipient problems attendant on nuclear stability as did the U.S. and the Soviet Union in the late 1940s. Kenneth N. Waltz, *The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: More May be Better* (London: IISS, Adelphi Paper no. 171, 1981).

nuclear weapons are bound to be unreliable and much more accident-prone than they would be under a rigorous testing regime.

Decision-making Mechanisms of India and Pakistan

India. As shown in the outline organization (Figure 1), the service headquarters are not integrated with the Ministry of Defence. The bureaucrats play a dominant middle role and insulate professional men in uniform from political leadership. For example, important policy recommendations forwarded by the service chiefs are processed by the lowest officers in the Ministry, who have neither the knowledge nor the perspective to assume such responsibility. Although there has been a growing public debate about the inadequacy of the existing organization, the Indian government has accepted only minimal changes to it.²

Lieutenant General Eric Vas, a reputable military analyst, deplores the gap in India's security decision-making process and control-of-events procedures. He says that India needs to develop an efficient Command, Control, Communications and Intelligence (C3I) System.³ The combined pressure of external threats and internal disorder prompted the government to constitute an apex committee, the Inter-disciplinary Group (IDG), in the early 1980s. In May 1986 the IDG was replaced by a Policy Advisory Group (PAG) headed by the prime minister, but this group was suddenly disbanded the following January and an informal expert advisory commission set up by the prime minister to review India's nuclear policy in light of post-Cold War developments. Apart from the fact that it comprises the former heads of the Indian Atomic Energy Commission, no details are known.

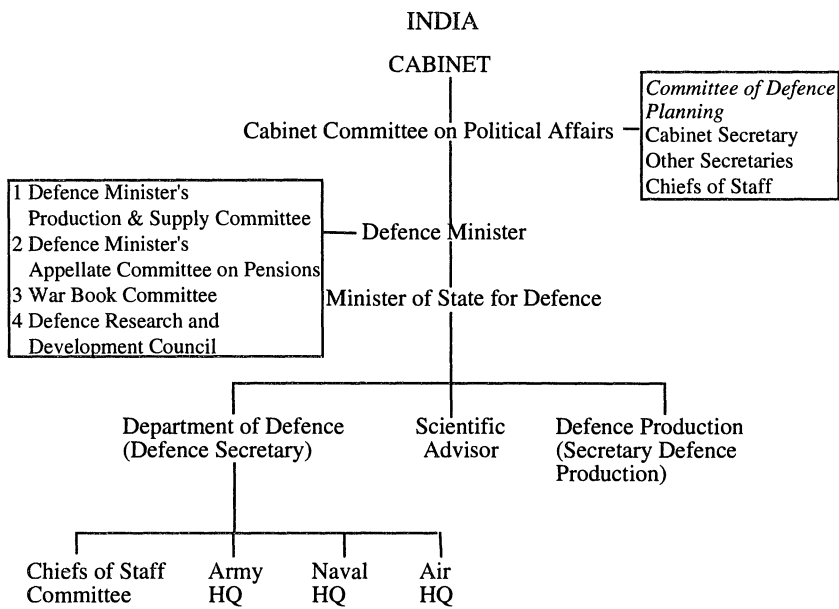
In sum, it appears that India is continuing with the old chiefs-of-staff committee setup to coordinate military plans. There is no evidence of the existence of elaborate C3I machinery, nor of plans to integrate nuclear-weapon

2. The proposal to establish a permanent chief of the Defence Staff (CDS) has met with opposition from officers of the Air Force and Navy, who feel that the proposed CDS would not rise above his loyalty to his individual service. Civilian bureaucrats have uniformly opposed it on the ground that the present system has stood the test of time, and particularly did so in 1971. However, according to reliable sources, Field Marshal S.H.F.J. Manekshaw, chief architect of the Indian victory in the 1971 war, has strongly recommended the introduction of the CDS system. His main argument is that the service chiefs were able to achieve a high degree of joint service integration in 1971 because of the rapport that existed among them and not because of any pre-existing, institutionalized organizational structure. A brilliant analysis of the inadequacy of the existing defense organization in India is by S. K. Sinha, "Higher Defence Organization in India," USI Papers, no. 7, United Services Institution of India, 1980.

3. Eric A. Vas, *The Search for Security: Controlling Conflict and Terrorism* (Dehra Dun: Natraj Publishers, 1989), pp. 51-54.

FIGURE 1

EXISTING HIGHER DEFENCE ORGANISATION



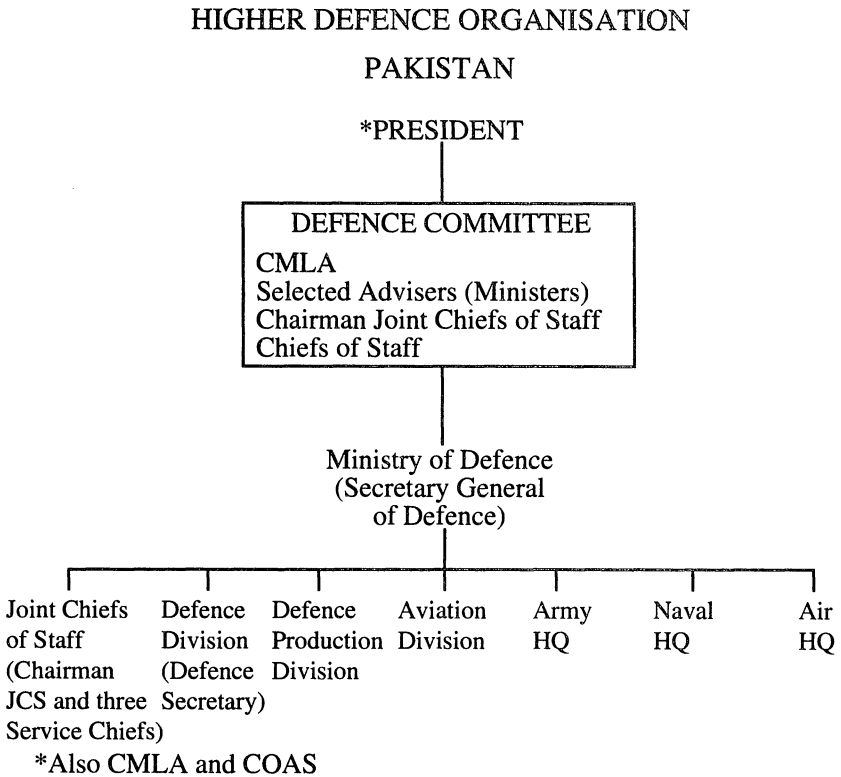
application to military doctrine.⁴ The informal advisory commission apparently does not include any service (Army, Navy, or Air Force) member.

Pakistan. The outline organization shown in Figure 2 was the end product of a major reorganization carried out in 1976. The main innovation was the creation of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (JCS), designed to integrate the planning for, and direction of war. This committee forwards its recommendations to the Defence Council, which includes the external affairs minister, the finance minister, and an unspecified number of military men.

The striking feature of this higher defense organization is the high visibility of military men. Even Pakistan's ambitious Project 706, which built an unsafeguarded nuclear plant at Kahuta near Islamabad for enriching uranium, was headed by Brigadier Anis Ali Said, an American-trained engineer. The military-bureaucratic nexus has appeared to be very strong and interventionist, even when a civilian government was formed. For example, during the 1988 meeting between Prime Ministers Rajiv Gandhi and Benazir Bhutto, the

4. K. Sundarji, *Indian Express*, 20 December 1992, p. 1.

FIGURE 2



army-backed Foreign Minister Yaqub Khan often contradicted Bhutto by snapping, "No, this is our policy, Prime Minister."⁵ The intervention of the army in securing the resignations of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and President Ghulam Ishaq Khan points to its continued role in politics.⁶

In sum, the JCS system adopted by Pakistan gives its decision-makers an integrated joint services view of security problems and possible solutions thereto. Unlike in India, the armed forces in Pakistan will have a say in

5. Christina Lamb, *Waiting for Allah: Pakistan's Struggle for Democracy* (New Delhi: Viking, Penguin, 1991), p. 264.

6. There is overwhelming evidence of the army's continued intervention in politics. A recent statement by the former army chief, General Mirza Aslam Beg, who sees a continuing role for the army in politics, corroborates this point. (*Pakistan Link*, August 27, 1993, p. 14.)

critical decisions pertaining to the nuclear weapons program, but one must not underrate the civilian role in it. Former President Ghulam Ishaq asserted that Pakistan did not give in to U.S. pressure to dismantle its nuclear program, and that India did not attack Pakistan on the Kashmir issue for fear of nuclear retaliation. In 1990, Dr. A. Q. Khan, the prime mover of Pakistan's nuclear weapons program, stated that "Pakistan could destroy India with five bombs while Pakistan could be destroyed by India with three bombs."⁷

The above analysis of the higher defense organizations of India and Pakistan seems to confirm most of the concerns of the nuclear powers: inadequate command and control systems, absence of rigorous testing regimes, and the lingering, conflict-prone environment that increases the probability of "irrational decisions." In India the military is out of the nuclear decision-making loop; hence, Indian planners might not be able to achieve the crucial "fit" between strategic doctrine and tactics. An integrated decision-making mechanism, the JCS, is available in Pakistan. The strategy of ambiguity followed by both countries, however, deprives them of the experience and knowledge necessary to improve the reliability and accuracy of their respective weapons systems through a rigorous testing regime. This increases the degree of nuclear instability. With these tentative conclusions, we now turn to the empirical evidence of how Indian and Pakistani decision-makers managed past crises.

Crisis Behavior and Decision-Making Mechanisms

India. After achieving independence in 1947, India faced its first crisis in Kashmir when it was confronted with a tribal invasion. Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru was very sensitive to international opinion, and he restrained local commanders from clearing the entire Jammu and Kashmir state of intruders from Pakistan. Nehru accepted a U.N.-sponsored ceasefire, even though the Indian Army had turned the tide and was poised for a significant military victory.⁸ The next crisis developed in 1962 when, following a few border skirmishes with Chinese troops in Tibet, the ill-prepared Indian troops hastily deployed along some stretches of the disputed Indo-Tibetan border and were attacked and decisively defeated by the Chinese. After a stunning victory, the latter declared a unilateral ceasefire, which was respected by the Indians. During the course of this conflict, many options were considered by the Indian government, including tactical strikes by the Air Force—decided

7. Nazir Kamal, "Nuclear and Missile Proliferation Issues," *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, 13:4 (March 1992), p. 390. Nazir Kamal does not explain why, or in what context Dr. Khan made this statement, and thus it is not possible to assess its significance.

8. S.P.P. Thorat, *From Reveille to Retreat*, p. 101, cited in Eric Vas, *Search For Security*, p. 239. Also see M.J. Akbar, *Kashmir: Behind the Vale* (Calcutta: Penguin Books, 1991), p. 117.

against lest civilian targets in India be vulnerable. However, after the defeat in the northeastern Himalayas, the gateway to the plains of Brahmaputra, Nehru personally requested U.S. air cover for Indian cities. This arrangement would have released the Indian Air Force to strike at designated Chinese targets but the war ended before this was done.

The conduct of tactical battles on what were two widely separated Indian fronts was considerably influenced by the personalities of the two commanders. In the Northeastern theater, Lieutenant General B. M. Kaul, whose appointment had been influenced by political considerations, tried in vain to follow political directives to the letter; he interfered with troop deployments and the conduct of battles by his subordinate commanders, suffering grievous losses in men and materiel without being able to halt the advancing Chinese. But the Western theater army commander, Lieutenant General Daulet Singh, firmly disagreed with the government's directive to adopt a forward posture, reinforced his existing forces with additional troops, artillery, and light armor, and let his forward units fight as tactical groups. Consequently, some of the units fought to the last man, and the Chinese advance to the vital ground, Leh, was halted with heavy casualties to the Chinese invaders.⁹

In April 1965 India faced a minor crisis in the Rann of Kutch, a border region north of Bombay. A skirmish with Pakistani forces provoked a major attack by the Pakistan Army in which the outnumbered Indians were driven back and a ceasefire agreed upon. Five months later, a major shooting war broke out, initially in Jammu and Kashmir and later all along the Indo-Pakistani border. After about three weeks of fighting, both India and Pakistan complied with a U.N. resolution calling for a ceasefire. Both countries signed a treaty at Tashkent brokered by the Soviet Union. The decision of the Western nations, notably the United States, to cut off military aid to India and Pakistan was one of the factors that drove Delhi to accede to the resolution. However, India's intention to terminate the war, particularly in view of the Soviet pressure, was the most important factor in its decision to accept the ceasefire.¹⁰

9. Steven A. Hoffman, *India and the China Crisis* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1989), pp. 141, 180, 206–7.

10. Following the Sino-Indian war of 1962, Pakistan developed very cordial relations with the PRC. The latter changed its earlier pro-Indian stand on Kashmir, and supported Pakistan's plea in various international fora for the right of self-determination for the Kashmiri people. In the third week of the war of September 1965, when India pulled out a division facing the Chinese and redeployed it along the Pakistan border, China, presumably at the instance of Pakistan, served an ultimatum on India to stop all war-like activities along its border or face a full-scale war. The silliness of this ultimatum was obvious but its effect was instant. Retrospectively, some analysts argue that the Chinese ultimatum was a token support to Pakistan and that the Indian decision-makers never took it seriously. However, the effect of the threat, at least on

We see a dramatic change in civilian control in the 1965 war. Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri was quick and decisive in enlarging the war, in giving the respective service chiefs complete autonomy on tactical decision-making, and in cooperating with the United Nations on terminating the war. After the humiliation of 1962, India's military posture vis-à-vis Pakistan had been timid. The 1965 conflict restored in some measure the confidence of the military in their political bosses. Concurrently, the organizational pressure for better weapon systems, more rapid expansion, and larger budgets also gained momentum.

The 1971 war represented the high water mark of the higher direction of war in India. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, a strong leader, had to exercise control over an equally strong army chief, General Manekshaw. Even though the organizational structure did not provide for an integrated decision-making mechanism, Manekshaw made sure that he enlisted the support of the other two service chiefs and some civilian bureaucrats. He enjoyed total autonomy in the timing of the operations in 1971, and in the formulation and execution of military plans. Here again, the victorious Indian prime minister, who could have unleashed India's entire military might on West Pakistan with impunity, opted for a unilateral ceasefire.

In sum, one can see the emergence of an increasingly assertive Indian military high command. Although the degree of assertion has depended upon the personality of the commanders, the civilian leadership is now less inclined to interfere with matters on which it has no expertise. There is also a clear pattern of willingness, even desire, to terminate war at the earliest opportunity, which is partly explained by the nature of the wars that India and Pakistan have fought—and may fight in the future. The objectives are limited, and are seized primarily to check aggression or to use them as a bargaining lever to improve overall political gains and the general military posture. Contrary to the Pakistani myth, there were never any Indian plans (nor will there be in the future) to destroy the state of Pakistan.

Pakistan. At the outset, it must be noted that the only war Pakistan has ever fought under civilian direction was the Kashmir war of 1948 when its army had a British commander-in-chief. Civilians seemed to have had some say in the overall direction of the war, evidenced by the part played by the civilian leadership in the U.N. deliberations, and later in the conclusion of the Karachi agreement that laid the broad framework for implementation of the ceasefire resolution.

The 1965 war was conceived, planned, and executed by the military under the leadership of President Ayub Khan, who was also a field marshal in the

Indian military planners, was significant because contingency military planning is predicated more on an adversary's capability than on its intention.

Pakistan Army. What was intended as a limited action to “liberate” Kashmir developed into a major war with India. Once India enlarged the area of hostilities, Ayub Khan desperately sought U.S. intervention and also asked for Chinese support. He decided to order a ceasefire without deliberating with the army brass,¹¹ which explains the dismay expressed by the Army chief, Mohammad Musa, when the ceasefire was declared on September 23, 1965. Musa claimed that the strategic situation at the time of ceasefire was in Pakistan’s favor, and that the Pakistan Army was poised for a decisive breakthrough in the Sialkot sector. The important point, however, is not the validity of Musa’s claim, but that he faithfully carried out the orders to implement a ceasefire.¹²

In the 1971 war, the decision-making machinery was solely under the military’s control. Although President Yahya Khan was cautious at the initial stages of the crisis in East Pakistan (now Bangladesh), he could not resist the organizational pressure, particularly after India’s probing attacks (November 20–22) along the East Pakistan border. After Pakistani forces surrendered in East Pakistan, India offered a unilateral ceasefire, which was at first rejected by Pakistan. According to Fazal Muqeem Khan, even at that late stage, Lieutenant General Tikka Khan was poised with his offensive corps for a deep thrust toward New Delhi, and when orders to “freeze Tikka” came from general headquarters, he was sorely disappointed.¹³

Military leaders at the helm of affairs in 1965 and 1971 seemed to have made reasonable calculations of the costs and benefits before declaring hostilities. Decision-makers were anxious to limit the scope and duration of conflict, and were amenable to external pressures enjoining them to accept ceasefire resolutions. They were able to enforce their will on subordinate commanders, and despite the disaster that befell Pakistan in 1971, there was no instance of willful insubordination of junior officers; the command system worked smoothly even in defeat. Communication with wartime adversaries was possible through intermediaries and responses on both sides were prompt.

Decision-Making Mechanisms: General Conclusions

An examination of the past crisis-behavior of India and Pakistan reveals that the leaders of both the countries were rational and calculated the costs and benefits of a war before waging it. Both countries avoided hitting civilian

11. Tariq Ali, *Pakistan: Military Rule or People’s Power* (New York: William Morrow, 1970), pp. 132–33.

12. See Kotera M. Bhimaya, “September 1965: Professional Debate on the Other Side of the Hill,” *Strategic Digest* (New Delhi), May 1986, p. 118.

13. Fazal Muqeem Khan, *Pakistan’s Crisis in Leadership* (Rawalpindi: National Book Foundation, 1973), p. 217.

targets indiscriminately. The political decisions were characterized by caution and circumspection, and war was terminated at the earliest opportunity both as a response to international pressure and because of both countries' sincere desire to minimize costs. More important, the field commanders in both countries faithfully implemented the orders of their respective political chiefs to comply with ceasefire resolutions. In Pakistan, the military leadership was aggressive, not irrational. While it was keen to initiate action, its foreign policy was not well integrated with its defense policy. The leadership was relying on moral as well as material support from the United States and China and thus was amenable to pressure from them, particularly from the U.S. An aggressive leadership in Pakistan is quite consistent with a leadership amenable to international pressures, as rational decision-makers, realizing the extent of their miscalculation, would usually seek to cut their losses.

General K. Sundarji, the former Indian Army chief, argues that unimaginative application of superpower nuclear doctrines to the Indo-Pakistani situation has created some myths.¹⁴ He argues that when the aim is minimum deterrence in the second-strike mode and cities are targeted, it does not really matter whether the weapon has undergone a rigorous test regime because lack of accuracy will not detract from the threat of damage. Similarly, minimum deterrence requires neither well-integrated nuclear doctrines nor a state of hair-trigger readiness, as long as it is ensured that a second-strike capability survives. When new nations acquire nuclear weapons, it need not trigger a nuclear arms race because as long as the second-strike capability is available, less is enough. Finally, for minimal deterrence in the combat zone, unique tactical weapons are not required; a second-strike capability to attack targets in the tactical area would do.

The preceding arguments have some serious flaws. First, testing is required to maintain the required confidence level in command detonation. Cold-testing in laboratory conditions, however sophisticated, may not be a good substitute for actual testing, particularly if the second strike is intended to be credible in terms of guaranteed detonation in the desired mode: air burst or ground burst.¹⁵ Second, unique tactical weapons do confer unique tactical, exploitable opportunities that would minimize collateral damage to nonmilitary targets; in this event, it might not be prudent to resort to a retaliatory second strike of higher yield than the adversary had used. For example, if Pakistan strikes the Indian troop concentration in the Rajasthan desert with a tactical weapon of one KT, would India retaliate against a counterforce target with a weapon of 20KT? We think not. The concept of minimum

14. K. Sundarji, "Leashing the Nuclear Menace," *Foreign Service Journal*, vol. 69, (June 1992), pp. 35-37.

15. *Indian Express*, January 23, 1994, p. 7.

deterrence applicable to third world countries answers some of the concerns of the nuclear powers. However, in the past foreign policy goals and commercial interests more than proliferation concerns have driven the actions of some of the nuclear powers, including the United States.

It is naive to expect India and Pakistan to settle for a minimum deterrence posture vis-à-vis each other. The momentum of "weapon dialectics" will simply drive these countries inexorably toward expanding their nuclear arsenals. The Indian race toward missile technology and the Pakistani intent to develop the Hatf1 and Hatf2 missiles and supplement them with Chinese missiles (S-11) are some indicators of where these countries are heading. Before examining the possibility of arresting such a drift toward nuclear proliferation, we need to consider whether the latter might establish some kind of strategic stability between India and Pakistan.

Decades of hostile relations between the two countries have engendered a degree of mutual cognitive rigidity in which each side takes for granted the aggressive designs of the other. This creates a situation in which both the public and the intelligentsia in each country firmly believe that while their country is peaceful and generous, the other nation's selfishness and malice causes the conflict. The familiar refrain from the Pakistani side is that India will never reconcile itself to the existence of Pakistan as a sovereign state and will try its best to destroy it. The dismemberment of Pakistan in 1971 is often cited as evidence of India's sinister designs. India, on the other hand, accuses Pakistan of perpetually fomenting disaffection in Kashmir, Punjab, and Assam to engineer their secession from India.

The Indo-Pakistani conflicts of 1948 and 1965 arose on account of miscalculations by Pakistan, and because of miscalculation, India suffered a humiliating defeat in the 1962 war with China. The 1971 war, however, provides many interesting insights into the classical theory of deterrence and the assumption of rationality embedded therein. First, at least in the initial months of the crackdown by the Pakistani Army (March–July 1971), the final Indian objective in dealing with the crisis in East Pakistan was not clear. Second, even when the Indian designs grew more aggressive (August–October 1971), General Yahya Khan seemed to have estimated that at the most India would try to seize some territories in East Pakistan to help settle the refugees, who would then declare independence in those enclaves. In addition, Yahya Khan hoped that the U.S. and the Chinese would intervene if the war went unfavorably for Pakistan. For these reasons, Yahya Khan was not deterred from launching his counterattack on December 3, 1971. Third, when his army in East Pakistan surrendered, his initial bravado notwithstanding, Yahya made a rational decision in accepting India's offer of an unconditional ceasefire.

The above analysis might illustrate the complexity of Indo-Pak relations. The scenarios that might threaten the desired strategic stability are

(a) intensification of covert and overt efforts by Pakistan to bring about Kashmir's secession; (b) major breakthrough (by invention or acquisition) by either country in the field of tactical nuclear weapons, which are then deployed; and (c) major breakthrough by either country in the development of survivable second-strike capability, such as submarine-launched cruise missiles, breakthroughs that India can achieve and perhaps Pakistan could match a few years later.

For the past 45 years, India and Pakistan have been living in a security environment of mutual suspicion and hatred. The wars fought during this period have aggravated the hostility between them, and each country is sensitive to the disadvantages that a nuclear asymmetry might cause it vis-à-vis the other. To that extent, both are competing with each other in acquiring an advanced delivery system. As of now, there is very little evidence that either country is thinking in terms of the minimum deterrence alluded to by General Sundarji. If either of them is thinking of a preemptive or even preventive option, the situation is going to be highly unstable.¹⁶ In short, any nuclear doctrine that implies use of nuclear weapons as a deterrent against conventional attacks (emulation of the former NATO strategy in Europe) will be highly destabilizing in the South Asian context. What could be done to prevent such instability? Some Indians urge their government to declare its nuclear status lest its calculated ambiguity be mistaken for a bluff. They argue that once the Indian and Pakistani nuclear status is recognized, mutual arms reductions and confidence-building measures would be activated.

What Can the International Community Do?

The trends in South Asian nuclear proliferation have engaged serious scholarly attention. Recommendations range from military action to pressure of various kinds to force India and Pakistan to sign the NPT. Only a few scholars have addressed the basic problem, and prominent among them is Stephen Cohen, who in commenting on the policy to arrest proliferation in South Asia writes: "Policies which are merely self-serving are self-defeating when they do not address the enlightened self-interest of other states as well."¹⁷ Cohen understands that the nuclear powers' attempts to curb proliferation touch off highly emotional reactions in India and Pakistan. For example, Sundarji as-

16. In 1990 General Beg, the former Pakistan Army chief, is reported to have told Mark Siegal, a former Carter administration official, that "the only way for the Pakistanis to deal with the Indians is to be able to take out New Delhi." He added: "There's no way that sending ten F-16s with conventional bombs is going to do it. Only the nukes could strike back." (Seymour Hersh, "On the Nuclear Edge," *New Yorker*, March 29, 1993, p. 66.)

17. Stephen P. Cohen, *Nuclear Proliferation in South Asia: The Prospects of Arms Control* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1991), p. xiv.

serted that “the most intrepid planners must realize that India is not Iraq”; reacting in a similar vein, Nazir Kamal writes: “A punitive U.S. policy would only strengthen Pakistan’s defiance and increase the influence of pro-bomb advocates.”¹⁸ Cohen’s diagnosis of the Indian and Pakistani motivations for proliferation is apt. He argues that “proliferation is driven by more than an India-Pakistan arms race. India’s nuclear program has always been strongly influenced by the China factor, and Pakistani strategists have come to see broader gains from a nuclear program than mere deterrence of an Indian nuclear and conventional attack.”¹⁹ Against this background, we will examine some of the suggestions to end proliferation in South Asia.

Pakistan’s main concerns are about India’s extraregional ambitions and India’s consistent rejection of as many as six proposals requiring its acceptance of full-scope IAEA inspections. India, on the other hand, argues that it has much wider security concerns than those identified by Pakistan, and any proposal for nuclear nonproliferation in South Asia must include China, particularly because of the latter’s nuclear collusion with Pakistan. China’s signing of the NPT does not alter India’s concerns about the existing Chinese nuclear arsenal. Besides, India is also concerned about extraregional intervention in the Indian Ocean that continues to have importance in U.S. and French foreign policy, and hence it needs to develop some deterrence against such eventuality. The ghost of the alleged attempted intervention by the *USS Enterprise* in the 1971 war will continue to haunt India far into the future.²⁰ If the U.S. finds a way to deliver F-16s and other sophisticated weapon systems, such as the P-3C Orions, it might actually have the opposite effect of destabilizing the Indian subcontinent. Interestingly, in addition to Congressman Larry Pressler, other influential politicians—such as House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Lee Hamilton—are not enthusiastic about the delivery of F-16s to Pakistan.²¹

Western analysts have come up with numerous suggestions concerning the nuclear problem: cap the unacknowledged nuclear arsenals of India, Israel, and Pakistan; reinforce U.N. Resolution 255 (to provide aid to any non-nuclear weapon signatory to the NPT who is threatened with nuclear aggres-

18. K. Sundarji, “Leashing the Nuclear Menace,” p. 37, and Nazir Kamal, “Nuclear and Missile Proliferation Issues,” p. 379.

19. S. Cohen, *Nuclear Proliferation*, p. 7.

20. Sisson and Rose argue convincingly that the dispatch of the *USS Enterprise* was but a symbolic gesture, designed to impress China and the Islamic states in Southwest Asia. The authors also posit that the *Enterprise* was dispatched to counter the reinforced Soviet fleet in the Indian Ocean. See Richard Sisson and Leo Rose, *War and Secession: Pakistan, India, and the Creation of Bangladesh* (New Delhi: Vistaar Publications, 1990), pp. 216–17. However, the majority of the Indian intelligentsia, let alone the lay public, does not share the authors’ conclusions.

21. *India-West*, May 6, 1994, p. 12.

sion) to exert more pressure on the new nuclear powers; offer economic assistance incentives to non-nuclear powers; provide guarantees against nuclear attack, including theater ballistic missile defense; implement the concept of "uniform deterrence" of nuclear first use (nations should use nuclear weapons only in response to nuclear use); and carry out a massive destruction of most of the existing nuclear arsenals by *all* nuclear powers and place the residual weapons under U.N. control.

All of the above proposals have serious problems of implementation, particularly when they compete with the foreign policy goals of the nuclear powers (for example U.S. policy toward Israel, and in the 1980s toward Pakistan in the context of the conflict in Afghanistan). India might continue to insist on a global approach to the problem, which has been its consistent stand over the years. India's security concerns have at last been recognized by some analysts, as evidenced by Washington's response to Prime Minister Rao's visit to the U.S. in May 1994. That India will reject any moves to introduce discriminatory regimes was evident during a recent workshop sponsored by the Centre for Policy Research, New Delhi; Fudan University, Shanghai; and the Federation of American Scientists.

Conclusions

We have recapitulated some of the major proliferation concerns of the nuclear powers, and examined the higher defense control organizations of India and Pakistan to see whether their structures have inherent weaknesses that justify those concerns. The civilian control in India is firm, although the military's influence in strategic decision-making has been increasing over time. Unlike India, Pakistan has a mechanism (joint chiefs-of-staff) on a permanent basis to make integrated decisions but the military has a greater say, even in political decision-making.

A survey of the behavioral pattern of the important actors during past crises reveals that Indian and Pakistani leaders have been rational in decision-making. During crisis periods, there has never been an instance of a rebellious local commander seizing power and defying the orders of duly constituted authority. However, the command, control, and intelligence setup is not adequate to meet the stringent standards of safety demanded by nuclear weapon systems. Although hair-trigger readiness is not required in the second-strike mode, particularly when cities are targeted, there is no evidence that India and Pakistan are heading toward a minimum deterrence posture. If anything, there is growing evidence of a steady drift toward a nuclear arms race. Besides, such factors as the development of tactical nuclear weapons and the reported nuclear collusion between China and Pakistan would endanger nuclear stability in South Asia.

Coercive measures against, and punitive policies toward nuclear proliferation tend to be counterproductive. Future conflict in South Asia should be managed with deterrence as well as reassurance. For example, the agreement signed between Rajiv Gandhi and Benazir Bhutto in 1988 not to attack each other's nuclear facilities is a step in this direction. A political settlement in Kashmir might mitigate the proliferation dilemma, although the motivations of India and Pakistan to go nuclear transcend the Kashmir issue. An agreement based on U.N. Resolution 255 might discourage new nuclear powers from the "first use option." However, any arrangement that does not include China will not be acceptable to India. India prefers a global approach to redress the "inherently discriminatory" character of the NPT. Finally, the nuclear powers, particularly the United States, should not let their foreign policy concerns compete with the overriding desideratum of global denuclearization.