

SUPERPOWER RIVALRY IN THE INDIAN OCEAN AND FOREIGN POLICY CHOICES IN INDIA AND PAKISTAN

- A Review of Recent Literature* -

DAVID C POTTER

This is one of those papers that must cover a great deal of ground very quickly. Inevitably, perhaps, such papers tend to restrict themselves to sketching a terrain of inquiry and noting some of the mine fields in the area. That is certainly my primary intention here. The area of inquiry is superpower rivalry and foreign policy choice. Superpower rivalry is a global phenomenon involving both military power and ideological conflict. As a global phenomenon it can be said to have both horizontal and vertical dimensions: it may spread out horizontally into all parts of the globe; it may also reach down vertically into regional and domestic levels of society and limit their freedom of policy choice. This rivalry clearly does spread horizontally into the area of the Indian Ocean, although why the superpowers are there is a matter of lively debate.¹ The main question in this paper relates to the vertical dimensions: to what extent have the states of India and Pakistan had the freedom to choose their own foreign policies without being limited by the military and ideological power of the USA or the USSR?

Models of superpower rivalry

Any answer to the main question is going to be shaped by the particular model of global political relations being used -- realist, pluralist, Marxist. The literature of international relations is full of comparative evaluations of these and other models. I cannot go into these debates in detail here. The importance of models for the question being asked here can be illustrated, however, by comparing what I would call a 'tight' model with a 'loose' one.

* Paper presented to the 10th European Conference on Modern South Asian Studies, Venice, 1988

1 Rais, R. B., *The Indian Ocean and the Superpowers* (London, Croom Helm, 1986), esp. pp 1-12

An example of a comparatively 'tight' model is used in a recent book by Halliday.² It is not easy to 'locate' the book in a particular model, it seems to combine both realist and Marxist features. However, if one must, then it is probably most useful to identify it as closest to some form of neo-Marxism. Marxists tend to start their analyses with modes of production (the general way that people produce the goods and services they require for survival) and the class formations that result from such modes; realists by contrast tend to start with sovereign states. Halliday may be said to be closest to the former position because his characterization of the international political system is framed fundamentally by the military and ideological struggle between the capitalist 'West' led by the USA and the communist 'East' led by the USSR, with these two domains resting (at least implicitly for Halliday) on contrasting economic bases or modes of production (i.e. capitalism and communism). My own summary sketch of Halliday's model singles out six main propositions as characterizing the present international political system:

1. The present system is unique. It was 'born' in 1945-6 and there was nothing like it previously.
2. The present system is *dominated* by the *capitalist-communist rivalry* and the *arms race*.
3. That rivalry is *bipolar*. It is essentially a conflict between the capitalist domain led by the USA and the communist domain led by the USSR. The USA and the USSR emerged as dominant forces in their respective domains at the end of World War Two.
4. The rivalry is *systemic*. The rivalry is between two fundamentally opposed and interdependent socio-economic orders such that the rivalry between them cannot be permanently resolved.
5. The rivalry is *globalized*. As Halliday emphasizes, 'it involves the whole world in its political and military dynamics' and, whilst the superpowers are 'unable to control or programme much of world events', they 'nonetheless tend to impose their own competitive logic upon them' (p.31).
6. The rivalry is *dynamic*. Its intensity has changed through time. There have so far been four phases: 'The first cold war' (1946-53), 'Oscillatory antagonism' (1953-1969), 'Detente' (1969-1979), 'The second cold war' (1979 onwards).

Halliday's model of the present international political system strikes me as fairly 'tight' in conception, in that the whole system is *dominated* (his word)

2 Halliday, F., *The Making of the Second Cold War*, 2nd ed. (London, Verso, 1986).

by the superpower rivalry and the arms race which involves the whole world in its political and military dynamics and imposes the 'logic' of the superpower conflict upon world events. Halliday is not entirely consistent about the 'global reach' of this system. He can say sensibly that 'there are many factors in world affairs which are beyond the control of Moscow and Washington' (p.27) and yet later on refer to 'the bipolar dynamic that grips the third world' (p.260). On the whole, however, the 'global reach' of this system can be fairly long. The system can move in 'tight' on political events and processes around the world, then move back. Its reach will vary over time. For example, when the superpower rivalry is more intense, the reach can be longer. Using this model, one might be drawn to the conclusion that the superpower rivalry has been a major determinant of political relations around the world, especially during 'the first cold war' (1946-53) and 'the second cold war' (1979 onwards). That general position has an effect on any answer to the main question here. Thus, using this model, it looks like the superpowers are able (particularly during periods of intense superpower antagonism) to limit generally the capacity of states to pursue their own policies.

For purposes of comparison, it is worth looking at another model which is comparatively 'loose'. One such was recently outlined by Hoffmann.³ It has a number of pluralist features. My own summary sketch of Hoffmann's model includes five features as characterizing the present international political system. According to Hoffmann:

1. The present international political system is *original* (unique). It differs from previous bipolar and balance-of-power systems.
2. The present system is *structurally heterogeneous* in terms of *power*. There are different kinds of power relations in the system: diplomatic-strategic, military, monetary, industrial etc. In classic bipolar systems, the strategic-diplomatic power game is by far the most important in determining inter-state relations; in the current system, however, 'there are other important games, and they are not bipolar'.
3. The present system is *fragmented vertically* into partly separate arenas, each with its own *separate hierarchy of persons* (actors). The different power games within the system have different sets of players.

3 Hoffmann, S., 'The future of the International Political System: a Sketch', Chapter 12 in Huntington, S. and Nye, S. (eds.), *Global Dilemmas* (London, University Press of America) 280-307.

4. The present system is *fragmented horizontally* into a variety of regional subsystems, *together with one 'core contest'* involving the superpowers which is truly global. Thus, in the present system there is both 'one world-wide contest, the superpowers' rivalry, *and* tenacious local rivalries or configurations that can be used by the superpowers for their competition (and whose actors call in the superpowers for their own purposes) but which also have a life of their own and their own rules'. The system as a whole can also be said to contain a *core* and a *periphery* of distinct regions containing legally independent actors, and 'the relative autonomy of regional concerns dampens the superpowers' contest, or divides it into reasonably separate compartments'.
5. The present system is *dynamic*. The intensity of core confrontations as they affect the various subsystems of the periphery keep changing, e.g. the two tense periods in Central America have been the early 1960s and the mid 1980s. There is also now the possibility of major changes in the system in that the 'core contest' may 'spill over into the peripheries and become truly global; i.e. that in each subsystem there would be a struggle for dominance, so to speak, between the truly local (internal and interstate) factors of conflict and the Soviet-American "relation of major tension", which the latter would win'.

Hoffmann's model of the present international political system strikes me as fairly 'loose' in conception, in that it is marked by structural differentiation and by vertical and horizontal fragmentations. There is a 'core confrontation' in the strategic-military arena that ties nearly all actors in that arena within the system to that central core. But there are additional arenas of importance in the system played by other actors according to rather different rules, and the 'core confrontation' may only barely affect them. Using a model like this, one might be drawn to the conclusion that the bipolar, superpower rivalry has been less significant in shaping patterns of politics in South Asia. The model suggests instead that a variety of factors may jointly be at work -- international, regional, domestic, and that the relative importance of these factors might vary depending on the arena of international relations being examined. Hoffman's answers to the main question in this paper would tend to look rather different from Halliday's answer. Are the superpowers able to limit the capacity of states to pursue autonomous policies? Hoffmann's answer: it depends on the policies (there are different policy arenas) and regional or local configurations at the time. In many policy arenas, most of the time, the superpowers do not effectively limit the autonomy of state policy making. Broadly, for Hoffmann,

states tend to have a lot of autonomy outside the 'core confrontation'.

One of the things that stands out in Hoffmann's model, as distinct from Halliday's, is the importance of regions. There is, says Hoffmann, 'one worldwide contest' involving the superpowers, but there are also regional rivalries that 'have a life of their own and their own rules'. The importance of regions has recently been emphasized by Buzan.⁴ Three points deserve emphasis.

First, according to Buzan, there are a number of regional security complexes in the world making up a 'level' of global politics between the 'supercomplex' involving the superpowers and the level of individual nation-states, and Buzan gives us a way of distinguishing one such region from another. South Asia is a regional security complex because there is a set of contiguous states linked closely together by patterns of intense enmity and amity as regards their perceptions of their own security. The Middle East is another regional security complex for the same reason. What distinguishes the South Asia complex from the Middle East complex is that, whereas the interdependencies are intense within each region, there is comparatively little interaction between the two regions as regards the security perceptions of the states involved. The wars of the Middle East have not had repercussions in South Asia, nor have the wars in South Asia spilled over into the Middle East.

Secondly, however, according to Buzan there are roughly two types of regional security complex. One is the sort just indicated, involving basically a set of local states only. The other type also contains great powers like the USA, the Soviet Union, or China. In this second type, the relation between the set of local states and the great power (or powers) may be 'lopsided'; Buzan gives the example of China being a major security concern for India but India not being a security concern for China.

That example leads to the third point. Great powers, including the superpowers, can 'limit' substantially the security perceptions and foreign policies of states in some regional complexes, whereas in other cases they can have comparatively little effect on policy. Similarly, Buzan tells us that the security relations between the superpowers are intense and they 'penetrate in varying degrees into the affairs of the local (regional) complexes'. All this is useful as a framework within which to explore the main question here, but the phrase 'penetrate in varying degrees' is rather vacuous as it stands, and needs sharpening on specific cases.

4 Buzan, B. et al, *South Asian Insecurity and the Great Powers* (London, Macmillan, 1986), esp. ch. 1.

India, Pakistan and Superpower Rivalry: a thumbnail sketch

In 1987, I had a look at some of the international relations literature on the superpower rivalry in South Asia. I tried to find a few analyses which together threw light on the main question from different perspectives. Six studies particularly attracted my attention. One was by Anita Inder Singh.⁵ She was at the time a research scholar at the Institute of International Affairs in Stockholm. Her essay appeared in a book edited by Buzan about regional security complexes. Three papers indicated views on the subject from within the foreign policy establishments of the two superpowers. One was by Alexander Chicherov.⁶ He was at the time Head of the International Research Department, Institute of Oriental Studies, Moscow. Two others suggested the kinds of views that circulated in Washington in the mid-1980s: one by Robert Wirsing,⁷ the other by Selig Harrison.⁸

Wirsing was a visiting Professor at the School of International Studies, US Army Special Warfare Center; Harrison was a senior associate of the Carnegie Endowment Fund. The last two studies were from work by left-wing scholars: one by Lawrence Lifschultz,⁹ the other by Srikant Dutt.¹⁰ Lifschultz was an American academic, Dutt a young Indian academic tragically killed in a motor accident while his book was being published.

Amongst other things, these six studies provide a basis for a 'thumbnail sketch' of the history of superpower relations vis-à-vis South Asia since the 1940s. The history is interesting because it suggests that the 'looser' model may be more helpful in the case of South Asia than the 'tighter one'.

When superpower rivalry commenced in the 1940s, the Indian Empire was breaking up. As is well known, India and Pakistan were almost immediately at war over Kashmir. Ever since that traumatic time, serious instability in the

5 Inder Singh, A., 'The Superpower Global Complex and South Asia', Ch. 8 in Buzan, B. et al, *South Asian Security and the Great Powers* (London, Macmillan, 1986), 207- 231.

6 Chicherov, A.I. (1984) 'South Asia and the Indian ocean in the 1980s: Some trends towards changes in International Relations', *Asian Survey*, XXIV,11 (Nov.), 1117-30.

7 Wirsing, Robert G. (1985), 'The Arms Race in South Asia: Implications for the United States', *Asian Survey*, XXV,3 (March), 265-291.

8 Harrison, Selig S. (1986), 'South Asia: Avoiding disaster: cut a regional deal', *Foreign Policy*, 62 (Spring), 126-147.

9 Lifschultz, Lawrence (1986), 'From the U-2 to the P-3: the US- Pakistan Relationship', *New Left Review* 159 (Sept-Oct), 71-80.

10 Dutt, S., *India and the Third World: Altruism or Hegemony* (London, Zed Books, 1984), Chapter 1.

South Asian region has mostly concerned India-Pakistan relations. It is important to appreciate that the origins of this conflict had nothing to do with superpower rivalry.

India, the largest new state in the region, received early Western encouragement in the latter part of the 1940s to play a 'key-nation' role in South Asia as a sort of global sub-imperialist there. Kuomintang China and Brazil were encouraged to play similar roles in their regions. But this loose Western conception disintegrated by the end of the 1940s as India opted for non-alignment and 'was steered into a more equidistant position between the superpowers'. This more balanced position 'helped India to gain a measure of autonomy in its foreign policies and (later) increased assistance for its ambitious industrial projects' (Dutt, p.10). At the same time, initiatives by Pakistan and India to obtain arms took their conflict outside the region, and these initiatives were met by initiatives from the USA attempting to contain world communism. Washington began to supply Pakistan with military assistance in 1954, with the signing of the Mutual Defence Assistance Agreement. Military assistance continued to flow to Pakistan throughout the 1950s, much to the irritation of the Indian government. However, considerable economic aid flowed into India from the West during this period.

The Soviet Union began to 'promote India' after the Sino-Soviet split in the late 1950s. This support continued through the period of the China-India war in 1962 when severe economic dislocations occurred and India 'became temporarily even more dependent (economically) on the West' (Dutt, pp.10-11). By 1964, American strategic dominance in the Indian Ocean area (including Iran) was such that the Soviet Union was led to attempt to have the area declared a 'nuclear free zone'. This proposal was rejected by the USA, and since then Soviet naval buildup in the area has been substantial. As part of this strategic buildup, Soviet support for India's need for an improved defence capability began in earnest. By the late 1960s, the Soviet Union had become India's primary arms supplier (Wirsing, p.266).

The most serious regional security crisis during the entire period occurred in 1971 with the India-Pakistan war, when East Pakistan became the independent state of Bangladesh. The superpowers had no direct bearing on these actions. The USA sent the warship *Enterprise* to the Bay of Bengal at the time, but this was 'largely to impress China, not to save Pakistan by getting involved in what it saw as a local conflict' (Inder Singh, p.222). The war not only diminished Pakistan. It also strengthened India, gave back to the Indian ruling classes 'some of the old self-confidence'. Their aspirations for world influence revived

during the 1970s; 'nuclear power, missiles, satellites, aircraft, electronics, and an indigenous arms industry are all there to back up the ruling class' image of itself as an important world power' (Dutt, p.10). During the same period, Washington's interest in South Asia declined, as measured by the 'virtual termination of its own arms assistance program in the region' (Wirsing, p.266). The view from Washington was that India 'is rapidly emerging as a major industrial and military power' and 'is determined to achieve a dominant position in South Asia commensurate with its overwhelming preponderance of population, resources, and economic strength' (Harrison, p.126, p.129).

By the beginning of the 1980s, superpower rivalry in South Asia had entered a new phase. Two events in 1979 triggered it. One was the overthrow of the Pahlavi regime in Iran, with the result that the USA lost its closest ally in the Middle East along with its bases there. The second was the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. These two events were immediately followed by the election of Ronald Reagan. This led to more 'aggressive militarist trends in US foreign policy', any 'local processes' in South Asia or elsewhere unfavourable to the US were 'now viewed only through the prism of global military confrontation with world socialism' (Chicherov, p.1121). The USA and the Soviet Union immediately became 'engaged for the first time in simultaneous, massive and directly competitive arms supply activity with their respective South Asian clients' (Wirsing, p.266).

American support for Pakistan took a quantum leap forward. With the 'loss' of Iran, Pakistan was a favourable alternative. There was its 'strategically suitable coastline in Baluchistan'. Its political regime was able to crush any opposition in the country. Pakistan was also the perfect place from which to supply military aid for the Afghan resistance movement fighting Soviet armed forces in Afghanistan. There was a huge and unparalleled increase (of at least 500 per cent over previous decades) of US military and economic assistance to Pakistan (Lifschultz, p.75). When the US Central Command (CENTCOM) was set up in January 1983, Pakistan became involved. CENTCOM began trying 'to draw Pakistan into a network of understandings' regarding use of bases, overflight rights, support agreements, and so on. Soon, US P-3 Orion aircraft were using Pakistan airbases as 'part of the global US network' tracking Soviet nuclear submarines, and construction of additional base facilities in Baluchistan and elsewhere was apparently underway (Lifschultz, p.71, p.73, p.75). In exchange, Pakistan became the recipient of 'huge supplies of modern offensive weapons' and enough economic aid to bail Zia-ul-Haq out of potential economic crises and stabilize his regime (Chicherov, p.1128). The

strengthening of Pakistan-USA military relations, however, did not offer Pakistan any guarantee of US support in the event of a Soviet threat to its territorial integrity', and Pakistan's main arms supplier continued to be China, not the USA (Inder Singh, p. 217).

India was affected by this USA-Pakistan escalation, and started buying new weapons from the Soviet Union. As the arms race between India and Pakistan escalated, Indian distrust of American intentions increased (Harrison, p. 127). Indira Gandhi expressed 'disappointment' with Reagan's foreign policy because it 'nurtures dictatorships in many parts of the world while displaying "indifference and hypocrisy" towards India -- "the greatest democracy in the world"'. Nevertheless, the Reagan administration did try to improve relations with India 'at the expense of Soviet-Indian relations', and the volume of trade between the two countries grew substantially (Chicherov, pp. 1126-7). When Indira Gandhi was assassinated in 1984 and her son Rajiv came to power, he initially preferred closer links with the USA, but that was 'eroded by a series of irritations, notably Washington's lavish arms aid to Pakistan', the incredibly swift buildup, with huge budgets, of CENTCOM as a whole, which by 1986 was 'considered to be on a par with NATO in Europe' (Lifschultz, p. 72). For India, Pakistan being centrally implicated in CENTCOM posed a threat to their position as the regional superpower in South Asia.

Furthermore, the arms race in South Asia had a distinctly nuclear flavour by the mid 1980s. India made it clear it had a 'workable nuclear device' in the 1970s when it was reported that tests had been carried out. By the mid 1980s Pakistan was apparently 'two screw-driver turns away' from also having such a device. The Pakistanis had been careful to stop there and not go on to complete the job and test it because 'all the aid packages offered to Pakistan by the US have had one condition attached to them -- thou shalt no make the bomb'. The reason?

The main opposition by the US to Pakistan's making a nuclear bomb is precisely because it is the Islamic Bomb, i.e. Pakistan will become the first Muslim nation to have such a device. Furthermore, when Libya and Pakistan were friends, the Libyans had plans to "buy" the bomb and use it against Israel. This is something the Americans will never permit, come what may. They will use all possible means to stop Pakistan making the bomb, although Pakistan has in a sense already made it. The most likely scenario is that Pakistan will not publicly test the device as long as aid comes in, but will only test it in case of war with India.¹¹

11 Babar Ali, 'Pakistan-US Military Relationships in 1980s', *Economic and Political Weekly*, XXII, 14 (April 4, 1987), 590.

The extent of India's nuclear arsenal by the mid-1980s was not known, although presumably it had gone beyond one or two nuclear 'devices'. By 1988, India had acquired a nuclear submarine -- christened the INS *Chakra* -- from the Soviet Union.

One of the striking things revealed by this thumbnail sketch is the apparent mismatch between the intensity of superpower rivalry and the intensity of India-Pakistan conflict during the period. According to Halliday, the most intense periods of superpower conflict have been during the 'first cold war' (1945-1953) and the 'second cold war' (1979 onwards). We might expect, using Halliday's model, that the 'global reach' of the superpowers would be longest during those periods, in the sense of being able to reach a long way into South Asia and profoundly 'limit' the policy making there. Similarly, when superpower rivalry was less intense, they would have a less important effect on policy. This would be particularly so during the period of 'Detente' (1969-1979). Clearly, however, the most severe conflict in South Asia occurred in 1971 during the India-Pakistan war, leading to the dismemberment of Pakistan and the creation of Bangladesh. But this was the period of superpower 'Detente'. Provisionally, then, the evidence suggests that Halliday's 'tight' model may be less useful as a framework for examining the effect of superpower rivalry on the foreign policy choices of India and Pakistan than Hoffmann's 'looser' model.

Thoughts on the main question

To what extent have the states of India and Pakistan had the freedom to choose their own foreign policies without being limited by the military or ideological power of the USA or the USSR? There are a number of generalizations suggested by the international relations literature on South Asia.

For one thing, it is clear that the military aspect of superpower rivalry does extend into the South Asian region and has an influence there. That it exists is undeniable, despite the fact that 'South Asia is not a major bone of contention between the superpowers' (Inder Singh, p.218). There has been in the 1980s an immense buildup of strategic weapons in the area, involving particularly Soviet nuclear submarines and American armaments involved in the setting up of CENTCOM. At this level, there is what General Kingston (for CENTCOM) referred to as 'the military conception of a *free standing* "area of operations"' (Lifschultz, p.78). Superpower relations in South Asia, when considered in

relation only to this 'free standing area of operations', are dominated by military competition.

Such free standing relations, however, are unreal. The world isn't organized politically that way. As General Kingston pointed out in his testimony before a Congressional Committee in February 1984, there is an essential conflict 'between the military conception of a free standing "area of operations" and the actual existence of local populations with their own political institutions and nationalist sentiments' (Lifschultz, p.78). He informed the Committee that he required facilities in Pakistan and elsewhere to 'facilitate attainment of my power projection objectives' (pp.76-7) (does he really talk that way?!) but that he had not so far approached Pakistan for a 'forward headquarters' for CENT-COM because 'it's very touchy' (p.78). One sees here how, for a superpower, it is not enough to have a 'free standing' presence above South Asia; the superpower is drawn down into South Asian politics in pursuit of their strategic objectives. For the USA, reaching *down* into Pakistan politics was 'touchy'. Why?

Part of the answer is the one given by General Kingston: the existence of sentiments of national determination over which the USA cannot just ride roughshod. Also important is another factor: China. China, as a major power but not a superpower, is a major supplier of arms for Pakistan. If the USA pushes too hard, Pakistan can turn increasingly to China. That is another reason why, for the USA, Pakistan is 'touchy'. The China factor enters in because of the Sino-Soviet regional rivalry in Asia. So we have three levels of strategic-military conflict in South Asia:

- 1) the 'free-standing' superpower military rivalry;
- 2) the military rivalry between USA-Pakistan-China and USSR-India;
- 3) the regional rivalry between India and Pakistan.

That is why Inder Singh can say, following Buzan, that 'Sino-Soviet regional rivalry in Asia and the Soviet-American global conflict are therefore too separate, if parallel, dynamics' affecting South Asian security (p.227). In short, superpower rivalry is not the (only) global phenomenon affecting the security of regions of the world; there are also *other major rivalries involving non-superpowers* like China that can have an affect on the security of particular regions.

It is worth noting in passing *non-military* aspects of superpower rivalry in South Asia. Inder Singh summarizes the position: 'Superpower penetration of the subcontinent has taken economic, cultural, political and military forms' but

'the effect of non-military penetration has been limited in the sense that it has not affected or altered the internal structure of either country' (India or Pakistan) (p.216). Both superpowers have tried to draw the South Asian states into their orbit economically. Chicherov's article illustrates this multi-faceted nature of Soviet activity in South Asia (especially pp.1121-5). Neither superpower has had much success. It does seem to be the case that the military aspect of superpower rivalry is the predominant one. In particular, it is the superpower contribution to the arms race between India and Pakistan that has 'exacerbated the dynamics of the local rivalry'. It aggravates a conflict already in existence. The India-Pakistan conflict was already in existence before there was superpower rivalry, and the history of that conflict is best explained with reference to regional dynamics, not superpower penetration. We noticed earlier, for example, that the superpowers did not set off the Indo-Pakistan war of 1971, nor did their presence have an effect on the outcome. But the superpower rivalry does exacerbate the conflict by stoking the arms race between India and Pakistan, which clearly makes their ongoing conflict more intense.

As for limits on policy making, the views from Moscow and Washington seem to be similar. Chicherov, for example, views Indian foreign policy as virtually independent of superpower restrictions. He identifies the 'positive thrust of India's foreign policy reflected in its basically anti-colonial and anti-imperialist stand'. There are 'profound differences and divergence between the foreign policies of India and US', and although Soviet and Indian 'foreign policy moves' are 'close', the basic position is that 'India's foreign policy is neither pro-western, nor pro-Soviet, but pro-Indian' (p.1126). Harrison's view implicitly is that Indian policy-making is not restricted by the USA. India 'is rapidly emerging as a major industrial and military power' and is 'determined to achieve a dominant position in South Asia' (p.126, p.129). At the same time, as the possibility of American military involvement in South Asia grows, resentment of the USA 'is building up among key military and political figures who are shaping India's regional military role in the decades ahead' (p.130). There is no indication in Harrison's and Chicherov's articles that either superpower can restrict the capacity of India's military and political policy makers to shape India's military role in the region.

Inder Singh's view is somewhat different from those of the policy advisors in Moscow and Washington. She concentrates more on the structure of power, the overall effect on India's foreign policy of Indian perceptions of what the superpowers *could do*. She concentrates primarily on the *potential* power of the USA. 'Today,' she says, 'the US seventh fleet can reach Bombay in three days

from Diego Garcia, at a time when the Americans are arming both India's antagonists' (Pakistan and China). She goes on (p. 221):

The Indians cannot discount the possibility of coercive diplomacy by the US in the future. India does not have the resources to challenge superpowers or to halt the arms race in the region, so Soviet naval deployments have a deterrent value against the US capabilities in the Indian Ocean. With India and Pakistan unable to resolve their local disputes, superpower naval competition in the Indian ocean will, in the whole, reinforce the existing structure of the South Asian (security) complex.

Dutt's approach is also rather different. He does not start with relationships between the superpowers and India as state actors. He starts with the structure of the world economy. India is 'tremendously dependent on the outside world for finance and technology', yet it also has built itself 'into a state with its own capital and technology' (p. 9). India's quest for great power status has been determined primarily by 'the ruling classes within India itself', and their aspirations and perceptions, which determine their policy making, 'occur against a background of economic forces, which are the very underpinnings of their position' (p.11). They work with a state-capitalist system, in which the public and private sectors of the economy are intertwined. Like other capitalisms, this one stagnates unless it expands. And there have been 'chronic problems' of underutilization of capacity, lack of internal demand, lack of new investment - all due in part to a huge impoverished peasantry not providing an outlet for India's industrial goods. The 'capitalist solution' inevitably has been 'to go abroad', 'open up new markets, exploit productive forces in other countries' (p.12). Dutt then goes on to describe India's economic expansion into other third world countries. India is therefore a second-tier imperialist power - a state which has 'some autonomy and whose foreign policies may sometimes even conflict with imperial centres although, at the same time, they remain basically dependent' within the world economy. Relative autonomy in policy making, 'not total subordination, has been the real position of India since 1947' (p.12). For example, 'the Indian state has some autonomy vis-à-vis the superpowers, Indian missiles are being built to enforce an *Indian*, not a Soviet or American, strategic policy' (p. 9).

As for Pakistan, Inder Singh and Chicherov clearly suggest that the USA propped up General Zia-ul-Haq's regime in the mid-1980s, and therefore had a major influence on the country's foreign policy and domestic politics. Inder Singh argues that 'the US alliances with Pakistan did not end that country's

search for security', nor did they serve her primary purpose in foreign policy -- security against disintegration through Indian intervention' (p. 217). In the circumstances, Pakistan opted to seek and obtain arms from China. It is American *and Chinese* arms that 'have made it possible for the Pakistan military to shore up its weak position in domestic politics as the only force capable of governing without a popular mandate'. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan also 'enabled General Zia-ul-Haq to continue martial law and has legitimized his political regime' (p. 217). Chicherov echoes these arguments in a general way when he says that US military aid is used by General Zia 'to stabilize his repressive military dictatorship and suppress the opposition' (p.1128). With these huge supplies of modern arms to Pakistan, the USA 'contributes to the "survival" of the antidemocratic military regime' and 'disrupts the emerging trend toward stability on the subcontinent' (p.1124).

Lifschultz agrees that this 'American patronage has been politically crucial in stabilizing Zia's own position within the Army's unsettled officer corps and in securing the junta's dominance over the body politic' (p. 75). It does not follow, however, that Pakistan's policy-makers are merely US puppets. Lifschultz reports General Kingston as saying 'it's very touchy' to even think about approaching the Pakistan government at this time (1984) for a policy decision to allow a CENTCOM forward headquarters on Pakistan soil. He also reports that the Pakistan Bar Association had passed resolutions calling upon the government not to enter into agreements granting access to US forces (p.77). The USA's CENTCOM is also described as *trying* 'to draw Pakistan into a network of understanding' regarding bases, overflight rights etc. (p. 73). All this conveys the impression that Pakistan's policy makers have some autonomy vis-à-vis the USA.

One other example: Harrison urges the USA to detach itself 'from all forms of direct involvement in a military rivalry' (between India and Pakistan) 'that it cannot control' (p.134). Cannot control? Pakistan policy makers, it seems, may be able to some extent to control the types of military equipment received. From the American point of view, the purpose of military assistance is to equip Pakistan for purposes of defence against a possible Russian advance across the Afghan frontier and more broadly to integrate Pakistan firmly into American military planning. The appropriate equipment would be things such as interceptor aircraft, light tanks, 105-milimeter howitzers useful in mountain terrain. Instead, Pakistan has arranged it so that the equipment supplied include, amongst other things, F-16s, long range fighter bombers, heavy tanks, 155-millimeter howitzers designed for plains warfare. In short, Pakistan policy-

makers in the armaments arena have prevailed at least to some extent: arms are obtained from the USA, then aimed at India.

Eight more general points strike me about this literature related to possible superpower limits on foreign policy choices. First, the foreign policies of India and Pakistan have been preoccupied with security issues vis-à-vis their opposite number. The origins of that conflict and the foreign policy positions adopted at that time had nothing to do with the superpowers. Furthermore, foreign policy decisions to go to war in 1971, or to ease the conflict in 1966, were not prompted or limited by the superpowers. It is clear that the superpowers did not want to 'get involved' in what they saw as a local dispute. So, in these ways, India and Pakistan to some extent have been free to choose. But their choices have been framed and shaped by the military capability of the adversary which the superpowers and China have helped to establish. Also, the superpowers by their sheer presence in the region virtually rule out certain foreign policy options that India or Pakistan might conceivably want to make. To put this vital structural point as bluntly as possible; for India or Pakistan to launch suddenly all-out war against the adversary is not a likely option because they anticipate that the USA or the USSR, or both, would then move in; and the outcome of that scenario is so uncertain that neither India nor Pakistan would want to risk the possible consequences.

Second, superpowers can limit foreign policy by affecting domestic politics. India and Pakistan appear to differ on this score. The Indian state has been centrally involved in efforts since 1947 to develop into a major economic power. One gains the impression from reading Harrison and Chicherov and other foreign policy advisors outside India that the superpowers are essentially onlookers in this domestic policy arena. As regards Pakistan, however, the USA through its military assistance and in other ways does appear to help to keep in power the present military regime in Pakistan. They may not control Pakistan's domestic policies directly, but they make it very clear to everyone that they would not like to see the present regime replaced by a revolutionary one. To that extent the USA is involved in domestic politics and thereby limits foreign policy choices by setting certain limits to political change in Pakistan. Certainly any political change in Pakistan would be of direct significance to the United States.

Third, the main question in this paper is worded in such a way that one might be led to assume that foreign and domestic policies are 'limited' either by superpowers or by internal domestic forces, or by a combination of both. The South Asia readings show clearly that this formulation is too narrow. There can

be important regional considerations involved. Buzan shows us how to identify a regional security complex, and Inder Singh employs that framework in her analysis of policy making in India and Pakistan. Without bringing in the regional dimension, the importance of the China factor in South Asian security and foreign policy could easily be missed.

Fourth, the question begins 'are the superpowers able to limit', and unless one is careful it would be easy to slip into assuming that the two superpowers are equally able to limit, or not able to limit, as the case may be. A moment's reflection makes one realize that one superpower may be more able to 'limit' than the other. The South Asia case suggest that the USA may be more able to limit Pakistan's policy making than the USSR. More generally, Chicherov suggests that the Soviet Union has tended to take a more relaxed attitude towards South Asian states than the USA.

Likewise, fifth, each local state in a region may not have an equivalent amount of policy-making autonomy vis-à-vis the superpowers. A superpower may be very influential in one state's policy making processes, much less so in another. For example, the superpowers may have been more influential in Pakistan's domestic politics (e.g. legitimating General Zia's regime) in the mid 1980s than was the case with India.

Sixth, the main question in this paper has been explored through literature which concentrates primarily on the superpowers and two South Asian states. The terrain is international relations. That literature does throw useful light on the question, as I have tried to suggest, but it does seem that a great deal of what we want to know in order to explain foreign policy making is left out. That is, the readings suggest on the whole that one cannot explain policy making very well by reference only to the 'limits' of superpowers. But this literature does not (except for Dutt) go much into what presumably *is* important in explaining South Asian policies -- that is, the constraints of domestic social and political forces. Analyses of bureaucratic politics within relevant ministries would also come in here.

Seventh, exploring this question on the basis of this literature on South Asia has raised questions about the possible *limitations of the question*. The question seems limited to possible restrictions imposed directly by superpower *states*. But there is more broadly an international economic environment, of international economic forces, that may well also 'restrict' them. Dutt in particular draws attention to such international economic constraints, arguing that India's policy makers 'have some autonomy' but remain 'basically dependent' on 'imperial centres' (p.12). Presumably one of the superpower states, the USA,

is a major force within such an 'imperial centre', which would include non-state agencies like multinational corporations, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank etc. But to speak of 'imperial centres' rather than superpower states takes us beyond the bounds of the question.

Finally, there has been what amounts to a general line taken on the usefulness of realism, pluralism and Marxism as frames of reference for exploring the impact of the superpowers on South Asian states. In sum, a Hoffmann-like, pluralist framework appears in the paper to have been more helpful than others. One reason for this is that the paper has given prominence to regions, à la Buzan and others, and regional considerations figure more importantly in pluralist analyses than in others. The paper has taken this pluralist-type focus because the South Asia literature does suggest that these regional considerations have an important bearing on explanations of the foreign policies of South Asian states. It is essential, however, to appreciate that this pluralist frame of analysis has been found useful in exploring this particular question regarding the impact of the two superpowers on South Asian states. Other paradigms may be more useful when exploring other questions. Indeed, I would argue that a particular form of neo-Marxist theory may be more useful than others when examining different questions about the relative autonomy of third world states within the global economy. But I cannot pursue that issue here.