

The Making of US Foreign Policy for South Asia

Offshore Balancing in Historical Perspective

This article on the making of US foreign policy for south Asia examines the US strategy of “offshore balancing” in historical perspective. It spans the cold war period when the US supported Pakistan against India in checking the rise of the latter, the post-cold war period when the Clinton administration seemed to be willing to accord recognition to India’s overwhelming military, economic and diplomatic preponderance in the region, and the post-September 11, 2001 period during which India is inclined to “bandwagon” with the world’s sole superpower.

LLOYD I RUDOLPH,
SUSANNE HOEBER RUDOLPH

How has the making of US foreign policy for south Asia changed in the 30 years since the era of the cold war? The first thing to notice is how much has changed with respect to the context of “governmental pluralism” that conditions the making of US foreign policy for south Asia. In the case of the making of foreign policy, governmental pluralism is organised around the state department’s construction of the geo-strategic world into regional bureaus. They mark the significance of regions in the making of foreign policy.

In the mid-1970s there were departmental bureaus for Africa, east Asia, Europe, the near east and south Asia, and Latin America. Each region, we argue, can be profitably dealt with as a separate policy arena with a distinguishable “government”.¹ Each has a distinctive constellation of salient bureaus and agencies, congressional committees, interest groups, policy NGOs, attentive publics, and security, economic and cultural determinants. The constellations wax and wane depending on the changing universe of economic and security issues. For example, the geopolitical exigencies of the cold war elevated the European bureau to a pre-eminent position for almost six decades. The near east and south Asia bureau also

attracted a great deal of attention because of the strategic value of oil resources located in and around the Persian gulf and the US’ special relationship with Israel. Near east Asia’s south Asia appendage appeared only rarely on US policy-makers’ radar screen.

Enormous changes have occurred since 1975 in the context and parameters of the south Asia “regional government”. In the mid-1970s south Asia as a region and India and Pakistan as countries were on the back burner. In 1998 they moved to the front burner after India and Pakistan tested nuclear weapons in May and June 1998. Since then, in 1999 in connection with Pakistan’s military occupation of the Kargil salient in Kashmir, and in early 2002 following a terrorist attack in December 2001 on the Indian Parliament by a Pakistan-based group, the nuclear rivals have engaged in conventional and (near) nuclear military confrontations.²

Like the dramatic changes in India’s strategic significance, changes in its economic performance and condition have also made India globally more visible. In the years since 1991, when India launched its economic liberalisation policy, its economy has grown rapidly reaching as high as 8 per cent of GDP per annum; its middle class consumers are estimated at 250 million; it has attracted high levels of foreign direct and portfolio investment; its rapidly growing information technology

firms are setting world standards; and jobs in India’s business process outsourcing (BPO) firms became an issue in America’s 2004 presidential election.³

Major changes in the Indian diaspora also have enhanced India’s visibility in the US. In the intervening years, it has grown from half a million to almost two million. The Indian-American community not only has the highest proportion of college and advanced degrees and the highest median family income of any ethnic group in the US,⁴ it also has one of the most effective foreign policy lobbying groups, the US-India Political Action Committee (US-INPAC) and the largest country caucus in the US House of Representatives (155 members).⁵ Indo-Americans are now visible and effective players in US politics and in the making of US foreign policy.

Since 1975, the state department has been reorganised in ways that take into account the increased significance of India and the south Asia region in US foreign policy concerns. The 1975 report to the National Commission on the Organisation of the Government for the Conduct of Foreign Policy recommended separating south Asia from the near east and locating the region in a separate south Asia bureau. On August 24, 1992 a bureau of south Asia affairs was created as a result of congressional legislation.⁶ We note too that the south Asian affairs bureau as well as the near eastern affairs bureau has created an office of regional affairs that, hopefully, tries to promote intra-regional coordination. Another arena of change has been America’s relation with south Asian states since the September 11, 2001 attacks on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon. As we have noted, during the cold war, US administrations pursued a global policy of containment. Starting in 1952, containment in south Asia meant Pakistan’s participation in the Middle East Treaty Organisation or Baghdad Pact, later Central Treaty Organisation (CENTO). India meanwhile took a leading role in organising the non-aligned movement. Starting with Dwight Eisenhower’s secretary of state, John Foster Dulles, US administrations, particularly Republican administrations, followed Dulles’ view that if a country isn’t with us, it is against us. That made India as a practitioner of non-alignment suspect.

In rationalising its de facto support for Pakistan in south Asia during the cold war the US often spoke of parity of treatment for Pakistan and India. Parity and beyond parity, tilting toward Pakistan denied India the possibility of becoming the regional hegemon, a role which India's size, population, endowments and capabilities made possible. In effect the US acted as an "offshore balancer" for the south Asia region. Selig Harrison put it this way: "During the cold war...American policy assigned a clear priority to relations with Pakistan by providing a total of \$3.8 billion in military aid to Pakistani military rulers that was nominally directed against the communist powers but was in practice used to strengthen Pakistan relative to India."⁷ Weighing in support of Pakistan had the effect of destabilising the region. Parity and the military support to Pakistan that it entailed bear a good deal of the responsibility for regional instability in south Asia, including three of the four wars that destabilised the region between 1948 and 1999.

CENTO's collapse in early 1979 after the Khomeini-led Iranian revolution and the flight of Shah Reza Pahlavi was soon followed by the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Overnight, Pakistan became a "front line state". Once again, as in the heyday of CENTO in the 1950s, billions of dollars of military and economic aid became available to Pakistan, ostensibly for supporting the resistance movement to the Soviet invasion and occupation of Afghanistan. Ten years later, after the Soviet defeat and withdrawal from Afghanistan in 1989, Pakistan for a short time moved to the back burner, away from presidential attention and largesse. Then came the attacks of September 11, 2001 and president Bush's call for a war on terrorism. Pakistan turned on a dime.⁸ From the sponsor, mentor and patron (with US money and weapons) of a Taliban regime in Afghanistan that provided Pakistan with "strategic depth" and harboured and protected Al Qaida leader, Osama bin Laden, Pakistan again became a frontline state for the US in an American-led war against terrorism, a war that included Pakistan's erstwhile ally, Afghanistan's Taliban government. Again the US was "tilting" towards Pakistan in the south Asian region by supplying it with military and economic aid. In the name of a presidential global strategy, the US was again poised to destabilise the south Asia region by challenging India's potential hegemonic role. Pakistan again became

the vehicle for the US to engage in offshore balancing in the south Asia region.⁹ But there was a difference; this time the US was trying to enlist India as well as Pakistan in a common cause, the "war against terrorism".

Sir Olaf Caroe Invents Offshore Balancing in South Asia

Why and how did offshore balancing come to the south Asia region? Its origin can be found in the geo-strategic ideas of Sir Olaf Caroe, the last foreign secretary for the British raj in India (1939-45). Winston Churchill thought India was the heart of the British empire and that Britain's capacity to be a world power depended on its rule in India. He succeeded in blocking the viceroy, Lord Irwin's, and the leader of the Conservative Party, Stanley Baldwin's efforts in 1930-31 to grant dominion status to India.¹⁰ The power and influence of British India reached into central, south-east and west Asia, not least into the Persian gulf and the Arabian peninsula; Burma, Sri Lanka and Singapore; Afghanistan and Tibet; and into east Africa and the eastern Mediterranean. The raj's political service¹¹ made foreign and security policy for this vast trans-regional space and the British Indian army backed it up.

In the dying days of the raj at the close of the second world war, Caroe began to worry about what he came to call, in a prescient phrase, "the wells of power", the oil resources of the middle east in general and of the Gulf and the Arabian peninsula in particular. For a variety of reasons he facilitated, then welcomed the partition of India into successor states, India and Pakistan. Indian independence was expected to bring the anti-imperialist Jawaharlal Nehru to power, an eventuality that Caroe feared not least because Nehru couldn't be trusted¹² to use the diplomatic and military resources of an independent India to secure middle east oil for British use and, more broadly, for the use of the Atlanticist world of America and Europe.

Caroe was attracted to Jinnah's theory of two nations and to his plan to Partition the subcontinent into a Muslim Pakistan and a Hindu India. Like Kipling before him, Caroe was attracted to Muslim character and culture¹³ and sympathised with Mohammed Ali Jinnah's call for a Muslim state on the subcontinent. A Jinnah-led Pakistan would be a more suitable vehicle

to help secure the "wells of power". He would understand the importance of the spheres of influence, buffer states and protectorates that Caroe and raj foreign secretaries before him had developed into a fine art of imperial security policy. Although the last viceroy, Lord Louis Mountbatten, was an admirer of Jawaharlal Nehru's political ideas and leadership, he, like his principal, Britain's Labour government, was bent on extricating Britain from India at as early a date as possible, a result that could best be realised by agreeing to India's Partition. By creating an independent Muslim state of Pakistan, Partition favoured Caroe's evolving geo-political ideas about how to secure "the wells of power".

At about this time there were those in Washington, looking for ways to secure the oil resources and practice containment in the middle east. The formulations of Sir Olaf Caroe attracted attention and soon found favour in official circles.¹⁴ His article in the March 1949 number of *Round Table* and his 1951 book, *Wells of Power*, led to invitations from the state and defence departments to visit Washington. In his *Round Table* article he argued that military operations in Mesopotamia (Iraq) and Persia (Iran) during the first world war and second world war "were made possible from the Indian base" (i.e., by the use of the Indian army). The Partition of India into independent India and Pakistan "entails a new approach to old problems". His new approach substituted Pakistan for Imperial India. "Pakistan", he argued, "has succeeded to much of [undivided British] India's responsibility "for the Indian peninsula" [!] "the North-west Frontier" (e.g. Afghanistan and its surround) and "the Gulf" (i.e., the Arabian Sea as well as the Persian gulf). Karachi commands the Gulf, a "Muslim lake" whose "littoral states control the fuel on which European powers increasingly depend". Defending the wells of power merged with George Kennan's recently articulated containment policy in Caroe's formulation – the littoral states' security is threatened as "shadows lengthen from the north".

By 1951, when Caroe published *Wells of Power* he was disillusioned with Nehru's anti-colonialism and non-alignment. India, he announced, "is no longer an obvious base for Middle East defence. It stands on the fringe of the defence periphery. Pakistan on the other hand lies well within the grouping of south-western Asia."¹⁵

Caroe wrote *The Wells of Power* for American consumption. It encouraged the US to step forward as an offshore balancer. The book was an attempt, he said, “to catch and save a way of thought known to many who saw these things from the East (a euphemism for the British empire in India) but now in danger of being lost”. “New workers in the vineyard”, he wrote, “may find [his perspective]... something worth regard” as they face “the imminence of Soviet Russia towering over these lands.”¹⁶ The great game in Asia was being re-defined: The British game with Russia in (central, west and south) Asia was now to be played with substitutes, America and Pakistan, as a weary and weakened Britain benched itself and Nehru’s India fouled out.

Caroe’s hopes were soon richly rewarded. Among his early important disciples was Henry Byroade. In December 1951, he had become assistant secretary of state for the near east, south Asia and Africa. A West Point graduate with a military career behind him,¹⁷ he knew very little about the regions and states for which he was responsible. In May 1952 Byroade met Caroe in Washington, and as Caroe tells it, he persuaded not only Byroade but also the new US secretary of state, John Foster Dulles, of the soundness of his views about the role Pakistan should play in the geo-politics of west, central and south Asia.

My Pakistani friends regard me as the inventor of the Baghdad Pact! I went on a tour of the US for the British FO (Foreign Office) in 1952 and had talks with state department officials and others on these lines, and perhaps some of the exchanges we had were not without effect. Indeed I have more than once ventured to flatter myself that J F Dulles’ phrase “The Northern Tier” and his association of the US with the “Baghdad” countries in Asia were influenced by the thinking in *Wells of Power*. In that book I called those countries “The Northern Screen” – the same idea really.

It is in this context that we can say that Sir Olaf Caroe used the circumstance of India’s Partition to help launch Pakistan on a 50-year career as the vehicle of America’s practice of offshore balancing against Indian hegemony in the south Asia region. While this outcome was not necessarily Caroe’s overt objective, he did mean to make Pakistan the fulcrum of his strategy to protect the “wells of power” and to contain Soviet Russia and he did mean to sideline Jawaharlal Nehru’s India.

India as Regional Hegemon and US Ally?

For roughly 50 years, the US destabilised the south Asia region by acting as an offshore balancer. Its actions allowed Pakistan to realise its goal of “parity” with its much bigger neighbour and to try to best that neighbour in several wars. With the end of the cold war (1989), the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan (1989) and the collapse of the Soviet Union (1991), little was left to justify the US acting as an offshore balancer in south Asia. By president Clinton’s second term the US saw no need for a special relationship with Pakistan. As Strobe Talbott, Clinton’s deputy secretary of state, makes clear in his account of his protracted negotiations with India’s then external affairs minister, Jaswant Singh, US diplomacy with India during the Clinton years was deliberately coordinated by knowledgeable professionals. “It was”, he says, “an extraordinarily collegial process, and it helped keep to a minimum the personal backbiting, bureaucratic warfare, and mischievous leaks that too often accompany policy-making”.¹⁸

Because Talbott’s procedure and attitude capture the essence of deliberative coordination – coordination based on collegiality and persuasion and executed by foreign policy professionals attuned to the long run and knowledgeable about the regional and bilateral as well as the global dimensions of the national interest – they merit being presented in his voice. In preparation for extended discussions with Jaswant Singh about nuclear proliferation Talbott tells us that he “...convened a series of meetings with the team that had been working on India and Pakistan the past several years, a mixture of regionalists and functionalists from the key departments and agencies of the US government. The core members from State were Bob Einhorn and Rick Inderfurth, along with Rick’s senior adviser, Matt Daley; Walter Andersen, a career south Asia analyst in the Bureau of Intelligence and Research; and Phil Goldberg, a versatile foreign service officer on my staff who had the unenviable job of meshing the many moving parts of the process and managing my role in it. ... These gatherings became a regular, often daily feature of our lives for the next two years....”¹⁹

We see a new era in Indo-US relations beginning with president Clinton’s very successful visit to India in March 2000.

Notoriously, the president spent five days in India and five hours in Pakistan. His visit to India was widely acclaimed and much celebrated, his visit to Pakistan, tense and censorious. Strobe Talbott, deputy secretary of state for most of the Clinton years, put it this way: “Clinton’s visit to India – the first by an American president in 22 years – was, by any standard and in almost every respect, one of the most successful trips ever, not just because of the rhapsodic reception he received, but because it marked a pivotal moment in an important and vexed relationship.”²⁰ The pivotal moment was marked by prime minister Atal Behari Vajpayee when, in his reply to Clinton’s widely acclaimed speech to the Indian Parliament and nation, he referred to the US and India as “natural allies”.²¹

The president’s trip to Pakistan stands in stark contrast. Although September 11, 2001 was 18 months in the future, Al Qaida attacks on US embassies in east Africa and the presumed presence of Osama bin Laden in Taliban-ruled Afghanistan, led to secret service concern about a threat to the president’s safety. As a result, Air Force One leapfrogged ahead to Muscat, Oman. Clinton travelled into Islamabad aboard an unmarked Gulfstream executive jet with another Gulfstream executive jet painted with Air Force One’s colours and the words “United States of America”, leading the way. The idea was to deceive terrorists armed with surface-to-air missiles. In a 15 minute speech to Pakistan’s parliament broadcast live Clinton told his national audience that Pakistan “can fulfil its destiny as a beacon of democracy in the Muslim world...” His message in private to general Pervez Musharraf, who had recently overthrown Nawaz Sharif’s democratically elected government, was different: return to democracy; show restraint in Kashmir; exert pressure on terrorist groups; and help in capturing bin Laden.²² The events of Clinton’s visit to south Asia in March 2000 signalled that the US now recognised Indian hegemony in the region.

The events of September 11, 2001, by restoring Pakistan to front line status in a “war against terrorism”, challenged the Clinton administration’s policy of treating Pakistan as a failing and an incipient pariah state²³ and recognising India as the hegemonic state in south Asia. September 11, 2001 also challenged the corollary of these policies, the Vajpayee government’s decision to recognise the US as a “natural ally”.

Soon after September 11, 2001, in anticipation of waging war in Afghanistan, the Bush administration restored Pakistan to its role as a frontline state. As we have seen, Pakistan responded overnight to an American ultimatum to abandon its support for the Taliban regime in Afghanistan and its accommodation of Osama bin Laden's Al Qaida in Afghanistan and to join America's "war on terrorism". The US rewarded the Musharraf government with large-scale military and economic assistance.²⁴ Because the amount and quality of the military equipment went well beyond what was needed for the war on terrorism, many analysts in India, the US and elsewhere saw the massive military aid to Pakistan as rekindling an arms race with India. It looked as though the US was resuming its role as an offshore balancer in south Asia.

But there was a difference; this time the US was trying to enlist India as well as Pakistan in a common cause, the "war against terrorism".²⁵ The US, in the words of Ashley Tellis, a quasi-official voice located somewhere between the world of career professionals and president's men,²⁶

"would invest the energy and resources to enable India – the *pre-eminent regional state*...to secure as trouble free an ascent to *great power status* as possible (emphasis added)."²⁷

Tellis was trying to persuade India to join Pakistan as an ally of the US, the world's only superpower.²⁸ In the language of Stephen Walt, India was being asked to bandwagon²⁹ with the US, i.e., to gain the benefits and prestige that go with joining the most powerful and, putatively, the winning side. Another grand strategy that many Indian policy-makers are considering is for India to balance against what they perceive to be a unilateralist and imperial US. Whether India should bandwagon with the US or balance against the US depends in part on the answer to another question. Should India regard China as more of a threat than the US? If so, to bandwagon with the US is not only to join what appears to be the winning side but also to balance against an increasingly powerful and allegedly dangerous Asian neighbour, China.³⁰ A third grand strategy for India to consider is to work with like-minded actors (such

as the EU generally and France and Germany in particular; the six nation China, Russia and central Asia states in the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation; Brazil and South Africa) to promote a multipolar balance of power. Such a strategy would be consistent with India's non-alignment policy during the cold war era and with the Clinton administration's orientation to the south Asia region.

New Delhi seemed to be taking with a grain of salt Washington's blandishments about being a "pre-eminent regional state" and a "great power"³¹ and its offers of access to what the US labelled "advanced defence equipment".³² Sometimes India seemed inclined to bandwagon with the US, sometimes to balance against it and sometimes to act on its own in a multipolar world.

Acting on its own hasn't always suited the Bush administration's global agenda. When secretary of state Condoleezza Rice visited New Delhi on March 16, 2005, she made it clear that America's global security interests took priority over India's efforts to become more energy independent and to do so in ways that encouraged

regional cooperation. According to the April 2005 number of *India Review*, a publication of the embassy of India, Washington DC: "The two sides differed over their approach to Iran, with secretary Rice expressing her country's 'concern over India's move to source natural gas from Iran through a proposed \$ 5 billion pipeline that would run through Pakistan' ". Not only would the gas pipeline project help India meet its increasingly severe need for additional sources of energy³³ but also it would break with five decades of Indian and Pakistani intransigence about regional economic and security cooperation. Indian and Pakistani interdependence and mutual benefit on the gas pipeline project would require cooperation and reduce the risk of regional war between the nuclear-armed neighbours.³⁴

Since its inception in 1985, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) has belied its name and fallen short of its purpose, regional cooperation. As India's foreign secretary, Shyam Saran, put it in March 2005 on the eve of the pipeline agreement, "...SAARC is still largely a consultative body.... [it] has shied away from undertaking even a single collaborative project in its 20 years of existence. In fact there is a deep resistance to doing anything that could be collaborative." The Iran-Pakistan-India pipeline project and other planned pipeline projects such as those linking India to Turkestan through Afghanistan and Pakistan and to Myanmar through Bangladesh give promise of widening circles of mutual benefit and regional interdependence.

But there is a fly in the ointment. According to some of the president's men in the Bush administration, Iran is a hostile country, an "axis of evil" country, a country that kept US citizens hostage for 79 days, a country that seeks nuclear weapons³⁵ and to enhance its power in the middle east and central Asia, a country that threatens our close ally, Israel, a country that is home for Muslim extremists and state sponsored terrorism, a country that is against "us" in a global war against terrorism.³⁶ The goal of US policy for some of the president's men in Bush's second term, and that seems to include secretary of state, Condoleezza Rice as well as UN representative John Bolton, appears to be to punish Iran, perhaps to change its regime. Professionals read the situation quite differently. They see a pipeline agreement as not only contributing

to regional stability in south Asia but also to strengthening democracy and reform in Iran.

At the end of June 2005, the Indian and US defence ministers, Pranab Mukherjee and Donald Rumsfeld, signed "a new framework for the US-India defence relationship for the next 10 years". The agreement was designed to strengthen "our countries' security, reinforce our strategic partnership, and build greater understanding between our defence establishments".³⁷ And at the end of July, prime minister Manmohan Singh and president George W Bush issued a joint statement resolving "to transform the relationship between the countries and establish a global partnership".³⁸

Did these acts of "bandwagoning" with the world's sole superpower preclude India from moving ahead with the Iran – and other – gas pipeline projects? Nothing was said or implied about India's pipeline negotiations. Pranab Mukherjee, India's minister of defence, went out of his way in the context of signing the 10-year defence relationship with Washington to remind the US that India would continue its long-standing arms purchase relationship with Russia. And the Indo-US joint statement was silent on the energy front – except for "the two leaders [discussing] India's plans to develop its civilian nuclear energy programme".

It became clear at the end of August 2005 that India was still able to practise a grand strategy of balancing in a multipolar world when prime minister Manmohan Singh visited Afghan president Hamid Karzai in Kabul. It was the first visit by an Indian prime minister in 29 years. The president and the prime minister not only agreed to implement both the Iran and the Turkmenistan gas pipeline projects but also that Afghanistan, a country closely tied to the US and the EU, should join the SAARC. At a joint press conference Karzai said he was "glad to have had the same positive response from president Musharraf of Pakistan" as he had from prime minister Manmohan Singh of India.³⁹ India and Pakistan seemed to be poised to cooperate on the economic and security future of Afghanistan.

By late summer 2005 there seemed to be a good prospect that Indian petroleum minister Mani Shankar Aiyar's policy of using "pipelines of power" to promote interdependence and cooperation in south Asia might successfully challenge Sir Olaf Caroe's "wells of power" as the dominant

geopolitical strategy in south Asia. If "pipelines of power" could displace "wells of power" as Pakistan's as well as India's orienting strategy there was a good prospect that the 50-year reign of "offshore balancing" by the US and its consequence, regional instability, could be brought to a close.⁴⁰ **FRW**

Email: lrudolph@uchicago.edu

srudolph@midway.uchicago.edu

Notes

- 1 For our concept of "governmental pluralism" see pp ix-xx and for our analysis of "regional governments" as policy arenas see pp 8-10 of Lloyd I Rudolph and Susanne Hoeber Rudolph (eds), *The Regional Imperative: The Conduct of US Foreign Policy under Presidents Johnson and Nixon*, Concept Publishers, New Delhi, 1980.
- 2 For a detailed account of the Kargil crisis and president Clinton's role in defusing it, see Strobe Talbott's intimate and insightful account in chapter 8, 'From Kargil to Blair House', in his *Engaging India: Democracy, Diplomacy and the Bomb*, Viking/Penguin, New Delhi, 2004. At the height of the Kargil crisis, Pakistan's prime minister, Nawaz Shariff, initiated a visit to Washington in July 1999. The conversations, Talbott says, convinced Clinton that "the world was closer even than during the Cuban missile crisis to a nuclear war. Unlike Kennedy and Khrushchev in 1962, Vajpayee and Shariff did not realise how close they were to the brink, so there was an even greater risk that they would blindly stumble across it" (p 167).
- 3 See Matthew C J Rudolph et al, 'Kerry's Not Scary', *The Hindu*, Chennai, October 27, 2004.
- 4 <http://www.asian-nation.org/demographics.html>.
- 5 The Indian community is not always in agreement. It split in March 2005 over the proposed visit of Gujarat chief minister, Narendra Modi. Modi had been invited to address the Asian-American hotel owner associations (many of whom are Patels from Gujarat) in Fort Lauderdale, Florida and the Association of Indian-Americans of North America in Madison Square Garden, New York city. Secularists, who held Modi responsible for the deaths of as many as 2,000 Muslims in 2002 following the event at Godhra, waged an e-mail and lobbying campaign against his visit that eventuated in the US government denying him a visa under US Immigration and Nationality Act. The act prohibits anybody who was "responsible for, or directly carried out, at any time, particularly severe violations of religious freedom from entering the US".
- 6 The "country desk" offices in the bureau of south Asian affairs as of August 2005 were: Afghanistan; India, Nepal and Sri Lanka; and Pakistan and Bangladesh. In addition to the office of regional affairs there is also a fifth office of public diplomacy.
- 7 Selig Harrison, 'The United States and South Asia: Trapped by the Past?', *Current History*, December 1997, pp 401-06.

- 8 Here is how *The 9/11 Commission Report* put it: “[National Security Adviser] Rice chaired a Principals Committee meeting on September 13 [2001] ...to refine how the fight against Al Qaida would be conducted... The Principals also focused on Pakistan and what it could do to turn the Taliban against Al Qaida. *They concluded that if Pakistan decided not to help the United States, it too would be at risk* (our emphasis) ...The same day Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage met with the Pakistan Ambassador to the United States, Maheela Lodhi, and the visiting head of Pakistan’s military intelligence service, Mahmud Ahmed. Armitage said that the United States wanted Pakistan to take seven steps.” In effect Pakistan was asked to reverse course – to break relations with the Taliban government in Afghanistan and cooperate militarily with the US in hunting down bin Laden in Afghanistan. “Pakistan made its decision swiftly. That afternoon, Secretary of State Powell announced at the beginning of an NSA meeting that Musharraf had agreed to every US request for support in the war on terrorism” (*The 9/11 Commission Report*, W W Norton, New York, 2004, p 331).
- 9 We take the term “offshore balancer” from John Mearsheimer’s *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, W W Norton, New York, 2002. Peter Gowan in ‘A Calculus of Power’, *New Left Review*, July/August 2002, No 47, critiques the concept of offshore balancer as it appears in that book.
- 10 See William Manchester, *Winston Spencer Churchill: The Last Lion. Vol I: Visions of Glory, 1874-1932*, Delta, New York, 1983. The debate in the House of Commons on Irwin’s declaration (that India should be granted Dominion Status) began on Friday, November 8, 1929. Prime minister Ramsay MacDonald spoke for it. “... [Stanley] Baldwin announced that the Conservatives supported [MacDonald]... Davidson estimated that at least a third of the Tory MPs would vote against the declaration. They had listened glumly to their leader; their applause for him had been perfunctory... The diehards were much upset [and] violently opposed to it ... Winston was almost demented with fury...”. Churchill’s first attack came a week later in the columns of the *Daily Mail*. Britain, he said “‘had rescued India from ages of barbarism ... its slow but ceaseless march to civilisation [constituted] ... the finest achievement of our history... Self-government was unthinkable for a community that treats sixty million of its members... as Untouchables ... and it was absurd to contemplate [Dominion Status] while India is prey to fierce racial and religious dissension... If the vice regal proposal were adopted the British raj would be replaced by a Gandhi raj...’ ” (pp 845-46). In the end Churchill succeeded in blocking Dominion Status and paid the price for doing so by being sent into the political wilderness by his party leader, Stanley Baldwin.
- 11 See Terrence Creagh Coen, *The Indian Political Service: A Study in Indirect Rule*, Chatto and Windus, London, 1971.
- 12 Caroe served as governor of the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP) in 1946-47. Caroe wrote to Lord Wavell, the viceroy, that Jawaharlal Nehru, then the acting prime minister of an interim government, was lucky not to have been killed by Muslim League activists and the tribal followers of the Mullah of Manki when, as minister of tribal relations, he toured the NWFP. Caroe told the viceroy that he made no effort to restrain the Mullah and the League. Because Nehru’s tour “was obviously designed to push the Congress cause” and to have done so “would certainly have led to disturbances”. (Caroe to Wavell, October 23, 1946, as quoted and cited in Anita Inder Singh, *The Origins of the Partition of India, 1936-1947* in *The Partition Omnibus*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2002, p 204.)
- 13 Caroe’s admiration for Muslim India, particularly the Pathans of the NWFP, was expressed in his book, *The Pathans, 550 BC – AD 1957*.
- 14 We draw freely in what follows about Sir Olaf Caroe from Lloyd I Rudolph, ‘The Great Game in Asia: Revisited and Revised’, *Crossroads: An International Socio-Political Journal*, Crane Russak, New York, No 16, 1985. For an historical account of the great game see Peter Hopkirk, *The Great Game: The Struggle for Empire in Central Asia*, Kodansha America, New York, 1992. Sir Olaf’s career is documented in Peter John Probst, *The Future of the Great Game: Sir Olaf Caroe, India’s Independence, and the Defence of Asia*, University of Akron Press, Akron, OH, 2005.
- 15 Olaf Caroe, ‘The Persian Gulf – A Romance’, *Round Table*, Vol XXXIX, No 154, p 135, and Olaf Caroe, *Wells of Power: The Oilfields of South-western Asia – A Regional and Global Study*, Macmillan, London, 1951.
- 16 Caroe, *Wells of Power*, p ix.
- 17 Byroade had served with George Marshall in China.
- 18 Strobe Talbott, *Engaging India: Diplomacy, Democracy and the Bomb*, Penguin/Viking, New Delhi, 2004. Talbott got on well with his secretary, Madeleine Albright, the national security advisor, Sandy Berger, his assistant secretary of state for south Asia, Karl Inderfurth, and the state department’s non-proliferation specialist, Robert Einhorn. When Warren Christopher, president Clinton’s secretary of state in his first term, made Talbott his deputy secretary in early 1994, he inaugurated “morning senior staff meetings that brought all the assistant secretaries together in my conference room” (p 29).
- 19 Talbott, *Engaging India*, p 92.
- 20 Talbott, *Engaging India*, p 193. Clinton’s visit had been preceded by his resolution of the Kargil crisis in July 1999, i e, getting prime minister Nawaz Shariff to order the Pakistan army to withdraw unconditionally. His handling of the Kargil crisis had “‘greatly diminished’ Indian distrust of the United States’ strategic orientation in South Asia...” According to Indian external affairs minister Jaswant Singh, “There is more good will toward the United States of America in India today that I’ve ever known in my life” (Talbott, *Engaging India*, p 175).
- 21 Talbott, *Engaging India*, p 200.
- 22 Talbott, *Engaging India*, p 205.
- 23 Pakistan’s “sins” were numerous – A Q Khan’s sale of nuclear technology, including to North Korea and Iran; state sponsored cross-border terrorism in Kashmir; indirect responsibility for the terrorist attack on the Indian Parliament: continued if now underground support for the Taliban in Afghanistan; a military coup replacing democracy with authoritarian rule.
- 24 The Bush administration’s quid pro quo for Pakistan was a \$ 3 billion economic and military assistance package, support for international assistance in reforming education and health and increasing “state penetration in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas [where bin Laden might be hiding], and sale of an unlimited number of F-16 aircraft equipped with the AIM-120 AMRAAM, the best active radar missile in service anywhere in the world.” Also made available were P-3C Orions, TOW antitank missiles, and Phalanx terminal defence systems. The F-16 sale thus expanded the access to US weapons systems that Islamabad enjoyed since the beginning of counter terrorism operations in Afghanistan. Previous transfers included C-130 transport aircraft, helicopters, and communications and electronic equipment.
- 25 India had reasons to participate in the war against terrorism. It alleged that a terrorist attack on its Parliament in December 2001, just three months after the September 11, 2001 attacks in the US, originated in Pakistan and that Pakistan was supporting cross-border terrorism in Kashmir. Even before the September 11, 2001 attacks president Clinton in his March 2000 visits to India and Pakistan told Pakistan to stop supporting cross-border attacks in Kashmir. The Bush administration with even more leverage made the same demands on Pakistan. The reduction if not elimination of cross-border attacks contributed to the resumption of peace talks between India and Pakistan. See Strobe Talbott, *Engaging India*, Chapter 9, ‘A Guest in the Parliament’, and chapter 10, ‘Unfinished Business’, pp 170-232.
- 26 Ashley Tellis is a senior associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in Washington DC. Previously, he served as a senior adviser to Robert Blackwill, US ambassador to India and on the national security council staff. For eight years he was a senior policy analyst at RAND.

- 27 Ashley J Tellis, 'South Asian Seesaw: A New US Policy on the Subcontinent', Carnegie Endowment for International Peace: Policy Brief, May 2005. <http://www.carnegieendowment.org/files/PB38.pdf>. The warrants for Tellis' assertion here is "senior officials" who "revealed through a background briefing on the day [March 25, 2005]... of the president's phone call [about the sale of F-16s to Pakistan] to [India's prime minister Manmohan] Singh, that the United States had in fact reached the decision to 'help India become a major power in the twenty-first century'" (our emphasis), p 1.
- 28 Here is how Ashley Tellis put the US position: The Bush administration believes it can preserve "good relations with both India and Pakistan simultaneously" despite its decision to resume the sale of F-16 fighter aircraft to Pakistan, "because of the conviction that both countries represent different kinds of strategic opportunities for the United States; as Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice put it, 'India...is looking to grow its influence into a global influence... and Pakistan...is looking to a settled neighbourhood so that it can deal with extremism inside its own border'" (Tellis, 'South Asian Seesaw', pp 1-2). Here, Tellis is presenting the scripts that the US expects India and Pakistan to follow.
- 29 For the concept of "bandwagoning" and its use see Stephen Walt, *Revolution and War*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, NY, 1996.
- 30 There continue to be voices asking for cooperation, even collaboration, between India and China. Visiting Chinese premier Wen Jiabao on Sunday, April 10, 2005, told executives of India's biggest software exporter, Tata Consultancy Services, in Bangalore that cooperation between India and China in the information technology industry will help the two nations lead the world in the sector and collaboration by the neighbours will signify the coming of the Asian century in the IT field (PTI, 'Wen in Bangalore', April 11, 2005). Mani Shankar Aiyar, then India's petroleum minister, was keen to persuade China to cooperate rather than to compete for oil and gas abroad (Somini Sengupta, 'Hunger for Energy Transforms How India Operates', *New York Times*, June 5, 2005). See also Zheng Bijian, "'Peacefully Rising' to Great-Power Status", *Foreign Affairs*, September/October 2005, for arguments why China is and will remain committed to cooperation rather than confrontation. Bijian, chair of the China Reform Forum, a Chinese "NGO", concludes: "China's development depends on world peace—a peace that its development will in turn reinforce" (p 24). Kishore Mahbubani, dean of the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy in Singapore, also takes a sanguine view of China's emergence as a world power in 'Understanding China', in the same issue of *Foreign Affairs*. David Zweig and Bi Jianhai of Hong Kong University of Science and Technology in 'China's Global Hunt for Energy' in the same issue of *Foreign Affairs* are less sanguine. Both access to energy resources and the need for secure sea lanes to bring those resources to China can bring China into conflict with a variety of countries, not least India. "...Beijing believes", they write, "that China would face an energy crisis if its oil supply lines were disrupted and whoever controls the Strait of Malacca and the Indian Ocean could block China's oil transport route" (p 33).
- 31 How should India interpret American talk about recognising India as a world power? Can American words make India a "great power"? Is the US prepared to back India's claim for a permanent seat on the UN's Security Council? What does it mean for US officials to call India a "strategic partner"? Can India expect tangible benefits from participating in succeeding rounds of the "Next Steps in Strategic Partnership (NSSP)", an initiative aimed at cooperation in the space and nuclear fields, hi-tech trade and missile defence, and if so, at what cost?
- 32 The heart of the offer of "advanced defence equipment" seems to have been access to F-16s, including possible co-production. *Outlook's* cover story on the offer was headlined "No thanks, Mr Bush". *Outlook* gave five reasons the Indian Air Force was "not keen on the US fighter: Setting up maintenance facilities for the F-16 could cost nearly Rs 10,000 crore [a crore = 10 million; \$1.00 = Rs 45]. This is above the Rs 13,500 crore that has to be budgeted to purchase the 126 multi-role aircraft; the US has low reliability on supply of spares and after sales support; the F-16 is a 30-year old design. The US air force no longer purchases the aircraft; there are better or comparable aircraft in the reckoning which could cost less to induct in the long run; the Mirage 2000-5, which the air force is keen on, comes with a modular design which can easily be upgraded. It can be put to use till 2015. The F-16 cannot be upgraded" (*Outlook: The Weekly Newsmagazine*, April 11, 2005, p 40).
- 33 In 2005 India was the world's fifth largest consumer of energy. It was importing 70 per cent of its rapidly mounting oil consumption. In another 20 years the Indian government estimates it will be importing 85 per cent ('Hunger for Energy...' *The New York Times*, June 5, 2005).
- 34 See George Perkovich and Revati Prasad, 'A Pipeline for Peace', Op-Ed in the *New York Times*, April 18, 2005. *The Hindu* (Chennai) editorialised on March 17, 2005, the day after secretary Rice's press conference in New Delhi, that India should "Stand Firm on the Iran Pipeline". Gas supplied by the pipeline, *The Hindu* argued, would be vital for India's search for energy security, "opens up a new and potentially exciting chapter in the bilateral relations between Islamabad and New Delhi" and "engenders stability and predictability in the political equation". On February 11, 2005 *The Hindu* reported that the GoI would not link the gas pipeline to other issues such as through transit of Indian goods to Iran and central Asia and on March 13, 2005 that Pakistan prime minister Shaukat Aziz said he was under no pressure from the US to go slow on the Iran-Pakistan-India pipeline project and that he was inviting the then Indian petroleum minister (Mani Shankar Aiyar) and the Iranian petroleum minister for talks. The pipeline had its risks and its opponents. Would Pakistan, for example, be able to insure the safety of the pipeline "across vast, restive Baluchistan province where disgruntled tribal armies routinely attack gas installations"? ('Hunger for Energy...', *The New York Times*, June 5, 2005). Nationalist voices in India and Pakistan spoke forcefully against the agreement. Here is the voice of Brahma Chellaney, whose distrust of the Pakistani other was echoed by his counterparts across the border: "The pipeline-through-Pakistan business makes little strategic or commercial sense, yet there is an unseemly rush to blunder. Seeking energy security by sourcing India's main gas imports through an adversarial state committed to this country's unravelling is a contradiction in itself" (*The Hindustan Times*, February 23, 2005).
- 35 There were ongoing negotiations with Iran by Britain, France and Germany on the question of whether Iran's nuclear programme is peaceful and can be relied upon to remain so. The Bush administration seemed to insist that it was not or would not remain peaceful. There is, the *New York Times* report, a "...widespread sense of national pride [that] complicates any attempt to persuade Iran's leaders to give up parts of the nuclear programme, as European negotiators have been trying to prevail upon them to do... Only a small group, mostly hardline revolutionaries, wants Iran to withdraw from the [NPT] treaty and try to develop nuclear weapons" ('Across Iran, Nuclear Power Is a Matter of Pride', *The New York Times*, May 29, 2005).
- 36 Ever since the 1979 Ayatollah Khomeini-led revolution the US has treated Iran as a threat to the US and to the middle east. The Bush administration does not accept Iran's claim that its nuclear programme is solely devoted to peaceful civilian uses. For a recent assessment critical of the Bush administration position see Christopher de Bellaigue, 'Think Again: Iran', *Foreign Policy*, May/June 2005, pp 18-24. Kenneth Pollack's, *The Persian Puzzle: The Conflict between Iran and America* (Random House, New York, 2005) shows, with few exceptions, how mistaken US policy in Iran has been since the CIA engineered the overthrow of Mohammed Mossadegh in 1953 down to the present day.
- 37 TV Parasuram, 'Bond in the USA: India, Uncle Sam Ink Defence Pact', *The Economic Times*, On Line, June 30, 2005.
- 38 *The Hindu*, Indo-US joint statement, July 31, 2005. <http://www.hindu.com.thehindu.nic.indous.joint.htm>. India was more or less recognised as a nuclear power on condition that it separate its civilian from its military nuclear facilities and open the former to IAEA inspection. Many in India believe India has given away too much on the grounds that nuclear facilities can't be separated.
- 39 *The Hindu*, August 29, 2005. <http://www.thehindu.com/2005/08/29/stories/2005082916590100.htm>
- 40 India will soon have to position itself with respect to the China led and Russia supported Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) for central Asian states. The SCO has called for the US to withdraw from military bases in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. A key member of the SCO, Russian president Vladimir Putin, strongly endorsed the SCO's call for the US to close its bases in Kyrgistan and Uzbekistan. It remains to be seen how India will relate to the SCO.