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Source: *Asian Survey*, Vol. 32, No. 12 (Dec., 1992), pp. 1078-1092

Published by: [University of California Press](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2645039>

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INFLUENCE THROUGH ARMS TRANSFERS

Lessons from the U.S.-Pakistani Relationship

===== T. V. Paul
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Arms transfer is a multidimensional process involving complex sets of relationships, interests, and outcomes. Political or diplomatic influence is one of the many motives behind arms transfers from supplier states to developing countries. During the Cold War era, arms supply was perceived by both the United States and the USSR as an important tool for creating dependencies, patron-client ties, and alliance relationships. The superpowers behaved under a generally held, though not yet fully tested belief that the supply of arms served as a major instrument for international influence, often benefiting the strategic and political interests of the supplier.

This article attempts to test the linkage between arms and influence by looking at the record of the U.S. arms transfer relationship with Pakistan during 1979–91. Two central questions are: did the U.S. succeed in building a patron-client relationship with Pakistan and to what extent did the arms supply provide the U.S. with tangible influence on outcomes in specific issue areas such as nuclear nonproliferation?

Structural and Decisional Influence

In international relations theory, the concepts of “power” and “influence” have received extensive treatment, especially in terms of interactions among weak and strong states. One key definition treats power as the capacity of a state to control the behavior of another state. If power is the capacity to influence, a question arises as to how power is translated into influence. Depending on how power is expressed, influence falls into two

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major conceptual categories. One can be called "decisional influence," that is, the ability of one actor to influence, by bargaining, the foreign and domestic policy decisions of another.

The second category may be termed "structural influence," which has three dimensions. The first arises from enduring interaction patterns among states of asymmetric power and resources. These asymmetries allow the supplier of those goods that are not easily replaceable at tolerable cost (in this context, arms) a degree of structural influence over the recipient. The structural influence of the supplier varies with the level of the recipient's desire for certain goods and the extent of its control over the goods. Furthermore, it is determined by the ability of the recipient to find a substitute supplier of the desired goods. The second dimension of structural influence is derived from the asymmetrical ordering of the international system. In the broader systemic context, influence patterns are determined by such structural factors as the distribution of power in the system as a whole and the role of a given state in that distribution. Outcomes in interstate relationships can be heavily affected by system structure and the behavior of great powers. Accordingly, great powers who are also major suppliers of arms to smaller powers would enjoy structural influence that is derived from their superior power position in the international system.¹

The multipolar supply pattern in the arms trade, even during the height of the bipolar era, brings forth a third dimension of structural influence—that is, the influence a recipient develops over a supplier through an arms transfer relationship. During the Cold War, this reverse influence arose from two major factors. First, although the international system during this period comprised two major blocs, there were other centers of power that supplied arms to the developing countries, and second, the U.S.-Soviet competition increased the strategic leverage of states that could offer something tangible to the superpowers who, in turn, cultivated these relationships for the continuation of their structural conflict.

Decisional influence is instrumental in nature. It is the tangible, direct, and short-term bargaining power that comes with arms supply. Decisional power may be reflected at the foreign policy-process level when the recipient makes specific decisions in tune with the wishes of the supplier as a result of the arms aid. In an ideal, one-way influence relationship of the

1. A discussion on structural and decisional power is in James A. Caporaso, "Dependence, Dependency, and Power in the Global System: A Structural and Behavioral Analysis," *International Organization*, 32 (Winter 1978), pp. 13–43. For constraints that systemic structure imposes on states, see Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (New York: Random House, 1979), chs. 5 & 8, and Stephen D. Krasner, *Structural Conflict: The Third World Against Global Liberalism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), p. 28.

decisional category in the arms transfer context, conflicts of interest between supplier and recipient on a specific issue area or policy realm are resolved in consonance with the preferences of the former.

The criterion, therefore, for a successful influence attempt at the decisional level is whether the recipient modifies a particular policy according to the wishes of the supplier that were expressed prior to the arms deal, or along with their delivery. Correspondingly, if the recipient does not modify its policies, the attempt can be deemed to have failed. At the structural level, the criterion is whether a recipient invariably takes positions favorable to a supplier as a result of a long-term arms supply relationship. At the reverse structural level, the criterion is whether a supplier is willing to give arms to a recipient even when the latter does not always follow the policy preferences of the former.

Determinants of Successful Influence Attempts

Influence through arms supply is predicated on the nature of the dependence relationship between a recipient and a supplier. Consistent with Albert Hirschman's view on influence through trade, the leverage that country A acquires over country B through arms supply may depend upon the total gain that B derives from the trade, which is equivalent, in turn, to the total impoverishment that would be inflicted upon it by a stoppage of the trade.² Arms dependence can constitute one element of a country's nonautonomy in its relationship with supplier nations. It arises from a situation where the defense program of one country is significantly determined by the policymakers of another country.

External dependence for arms can vary with the intensity of a regional conflict and with the size of the state involved in the conflict. Thus, small states with serious external threats are likely to be more dependent on supplier nations and, in turn, more susceptible to attempts at influence. During the Cold War era, countries that were closely affiliated with the military bloc under either superpower bore constraints in approaching supplier nations from the rival bloc, which often forced them to be dependent on a limited number of weapon sources.

Countries that are involved in intense regional conflicts but that possess limited defense infrastructure invariably tend to be dependent upon outside suppliers for the sophisticated weapon systems they need. Developing countries keen to arm with the latest generation of weapons—often monopolized by a few producing nations—could also have a high level of dependence on supplier states. Dependence can be higher if the recipient

2. Albert Hirschman, *National Power and the Structure of Foreign Trade* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), p. 18.

does not pay for the weapons in cash and has to rely on supplier grants or loans. Another important factor is whether the recipient is involved in a crisis, or war, and therefore urgently needs to shore up its inventory. Attempts at exerting influence may not succeed in such contexts, unless the recipient has no other weapon sources. Supplier attempts at decisional influence can take the form of denying promised arms shipments and placing restrictions on spare parts to force modification of a recipient's specific political behavior. Arms embargoes fall under this category. Embargoes can be effective if the recipient is solely dependent on a particular supplier or is in urgent need of a particular weapon that only one supplier can provide.

At structural and decisional levels, recipients could exert reverse influence over suppliers. This was especially prevalent during the heyday of the Cold War. Reverse influence arose from the structural conflict in which the superpowers had been engaging. The East-West rivalry demanded superpower reliance on recipient nations for political as well as for material support, even while the U.S. and the Soviet Union possessed immense military and economic prowess. A recipient's strategic leverage resulted when arms were traded for substantial return benefits such as base facilities, or when the supplier had a high stake in maintaining good relations with the recipient to promote its global or regional interests. Thus, a country's strategic and geographic significance in the superpower competition enhanced its reverse leverage, especially if the concerned superpower had few other supports in the region.

In many cases, membership in alliances with the superpowers increased the leverage of smaller powers. Robert Keohane cites several instances where lesser allies were able to use alliance relationships to influence U.S. policy perspectives through formal bargaining, by developing close working relationships with agencies of the U.S. government, and by setting out to influence public opinion and private interest groups.³ Such attempts at domestic influence by smaller allies also affected the U.S. arms transfer policy toward these states.

An activist, zero-sum foreign policy posture by the U.S. or of the Soviet Union was another determinant of the level of influence that they could exert on regional powers. If the superpowers needed to make their presence felt in a particular region, smaller allies would become important partners in that effort. The active, anticommunist foreign policy posture of several administrations forced the United States to pay more attention to the Soviet threat than to the actions of its regional allies. The strategic

3. Robert Keohane, "The Big Influence of Small Allies," *Foreign Policy* 2 (Spring 1971), pp. 161-82.

importance of smaller allies also varied with the significance and level of regional conflicts and the superpower stakes in those conflicts. The U.S. also feared that regime or regional instability could result in Moscow enhancing its influence in such regions, and consequently lent its support to many nondemocratic regimes.

However, with the demise of the Cold War and the end of bipolarity, major structural changes occurred in the international system. The Soviet Union no longer exists as a single, unified state capable of providing support to erstwhile allies. The end of the bipolar competition also signaled the decline of the reverse influence that smaller allies could derive from their relationships with the superpowers. This has serious repercussions that could influence patterns, although the impact may be countervailed by other new conditions in the international arms trade such as the emergence of suppliers like China as serious contenders to traditional Western sources. The patterns of regional conflicts are also undergoing changes, with proxy wars becoming things of the past. Western attempts to control the flow of advanced weaponry such as missiles, as embodied in the missile control regime, may further limit the developing countries' access to modern technology in the coming years.

The following discussion of U.S. arms transfers to, and attempts to influence Pakistan during the period of Soviet intervention in Afghanistan (1979–89) examines the above stated linkage between arms and influence. The U.S.-Pakistani arms relationship shows the successes and failures in supplier influence through arms transfers, especially at the height of the Cold War. However, Pakistan's near total dependence on U.S. weapons and its own less-developed domestic armament-manufacturing capabilities made it vulnerable to U.S. structural influence. Despite these constraints, Pakistan succeeded in obtaining many modern weapon systems from the U.S.; this was largely because of structural factors, the U.S.-Soviet zero-sum rivalry in the region until the late 1980s being the most prominent. The end of the Cold War and the Afghan War changed the strategic relationship that the U.S. had developed with Pakistan, drastically undermining Islamabad's reverse influence.

U.S. Arms Supply and Its Influence in Pakistan

The period of the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan provides a test case of how arms transfers worked as an instrument of structural and decisional influence in the U.S.-Pakistani relationship. The Soviet move generated a serious strategic response from Washington, as it followed the fall of the Shah of Iran and threats to oil supplies for American allies from the Per-

sian Gulf. Moreover, U.S.-Pakistani relations were at a low ebb as a result of the burning of the American Embassy in Islamabad in September 1979.

Following the Soviet intervention, the Carter administration persuaded the Pakistani regime to act as a conduit for arms supplied to the Afghan resistance groups; the promise of arms and economic assistance to Pakistan was the main component of this influence attempt. Until the Afghan crisis began, the administration had viewed Pakistan as a less significant power in the region, owing to such reasons as human rights violations, Pakistan's efforts to acquire nuclear weapons capability, Carter's affinity toward India, the emergence of Iran and Saudi Arabia as America's principal allies in the Persian Gulf region, and the administration's proclaimed policy of disengagement from the Indian Ocean. The Afghan crisis dramatically altered the administration's policy toward Pakistan, which suddenly became the most important country in the region for the containment of the Soviet Union in the resurgent Cold-War climate. President Carter, responding to the Soviet action, offered Pakistan a \$400 million assistance package in February 1980, but this was considered by the Pakistanis as too small a price for substantial security cooperation.

Unlike Carter, President Reagan was determined to challenge the Soviets anywhere in the world and Afghanistan emerged as a major trump card in the containment of Soviet power and influence. Arms transfers to the Third World became an important policy instrument for the Reagan administration in its program to revive America's and its allies' military prowess around the globe. As one administration official put it: "Arms transfers properly considered and employed represent an indispensable instrument of American policy that both complements and supplements the role of our own military forces."⁴

To the Reagan team, countries in strategic locations needed to be supported with military and economic aid in order to deter any aggression against them by the Soviets. Rapid response to meet challenges and flexibility in policy became the key words in the administration's arms transfer approach. Thus, in its overriding belligerent attitude toward the Soviet Union, Reagan and his team rejected Carter's pre-December 1979 arms restraint, non-proliferation, and human rights policies. Consistent with this new permissive policy framework, Pakistan emerged as a strategically important state. The result was a manifold increase in the U.S. arms and economic aid to Pakistan in the 1980s and a substantial bolstering of its defense capabilities, despite the concerns expressed by some quarters on

4. James L. Buckley, "Conventional Arms Transfers," statement before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee (July 28, 1981), reprinted in *Current Policy*, no. 301, Bureau of Public Affairs, Department of State, Washington, 1981, p. 3.

the trampling of democracy and human rights by the Zia regime and Pakistan's quest for achieving nuclear capability. By 1985, Pakistan became the fourth largest recipient of U.S. bilateral military assistance, behind Israel, Egypt, and Turkey. With the approval of the \$4.02 billion military and economic aid package in 1987, Pakistan emerged as the second largest recipient of American aid, after Israel.

For Pakistan, Moscow's intervention had raised the specter of the mighty Soviet military machine on its doorstep, while for the United States, Pakistan became a frontline state in the resistance against the Soviet occupation and its further advances into the region. The Afghan crisis thus dramatically transformed Pakistan's geostrategic environment; no longer buffered by Afghanistan, Pakistan was faced with the specter of Soviet troops along the 1,300 mile frontier with its western neighbor. The influx of over three million Afghan refugees into Pakistan and Pakistani willingness to provide arms and base facilities for the *mujahideen* resistance forces gave the country added importance in the U.S. strategy against the Soviet occupation.

The Pakistan-U.S. arms relationship was advocated by U.S. analysts and policymakers on the grounds that: (1) Soviet control or influence over Pakistan would have serious negative effects on U.S. commercial and military interests in the Persian Gulf region; (2) Pakistan could be used as a channel for U.S. assistance to the *mujahideen*; (3) Pakistani territory could be of use as a base for future contingencies involving the Rapid Deployment Force (RDF); and (4) a credible defense of Pakistan would increase American prestige among the Arab countries and China.⁵ According to a State Department official, the arms offer was the regional response of the U.S., as a militarily strong Pakistan would be a deterrent to Soviet reprisals against the resistance forces operating from that country.⁶

In some respects, the Afghan crisis helped to increase the U.S. structural and decisional influence over Pakistan. Pakistan's willingness to act as a pipeline for arms supplies to the *mujahideen* rebels, headquartered in its border city of Peshawar, even at the risk of possible Soviet retaliation, and its unwillingness to agree to initial Soviet proposals on a timetable for a troop pullout may be attributed to the American structural influence arising from substantial economic and military assistance. The asymmetry in power capabilities meant that a U.S. withdrawal from the relationship

5. Francis Fukuyama, "The Security of Pakistan: A Trip Report," *Rand Note*, no. N-1584-RC (Santa Monica: The Rand Corporation, September 1980), pp. 30-35.

6. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Jane Coon testifying before the House of Representatives, Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1980), p. 4.

would have hurt Pakistan more than the U.S.⁷ The Soviet presence at its border provided Pakistan with an additional reason to strengthen its political and military ties with Washington, which had been at a low key for nearly a decade.

Although to a large extent Pakistan successfully resisted U.S. efforts to acquire base facilities on its territory, its willingness to act as a conduit for arms supplies to the Afghan rebels can be perceived as an indication of the structural influence enjoyed by the U.S. over Islamabad during the 1980s. As Pakistan's involvement in the superpower rivalry grew, its dependence on the U.S. also increased, creating structural power for the U.S. vis-à-vis Pakistan. From Islamabad's perspective, the U.S. presence was necessitated by the Afghan problem, especially in the face of air raids by Soviet-backed Afghan forces—even though Islamabad outwardly denied its role as conduit for weapons transfers to the Afghan rebels.

Pakistan's Reverse Influence

Pakistani leaders attempted quite successfully to use their country's newly acquired strategic importance to influence U.S. decision makers, especially regarding arms and economic aid as quid pro quo for supporting the *mujahideen* forces fighting the Soviet-backed Kabul regime. The rejection of President Carter's initial aid offer was a calculated move on the Pakistani side to influence Washington to provide greater military and economic assistance. President Zia ul-Haq termed the \$400 million arms and economic aid package as "peanuts" and said: "You take Pakistan out of the region, and you will find that you have not one inch of soil where America can have influence—right from Turkey down to Vietnam."⁸

The Reagan administration's willingness in 1981 to provide \$3.2 billion in military and economic aid could be regarded as a diplomatic success for the Pakistani leadership at a time when the antinuclear proliferation lobby was gaining momentum in the U.S. Congress. Pakistan's success in convincing the administration of the need for a deep penetration aircraft like the F-16 in place of the initially proposed but less advanced F-5G aircraft demonstrated the leverage that a dependent nation could exert on the U.S. when it was engaging in serious structural conflict.⁹ The Pakistani arguments that the F-16 would provide a credible deterrent until the turn of the century, that the bombers would have a longer useful life for its air

7. Stephen P. Cohen, "U.S.-Pakistan Security Relations," in *United States-Pakistan Relations*, Leo E. Rose and Noor A. Husain, eds. (Berkeley: University of California, Institute of East Asian Studies, 1985), pp. 15-33.

8. *New York Times*, January 18, 1980, p. 1.

9. See W. Howard Wriggins, "Pakistan's Search for a Foreign Policy After the Invasion of Afghanistan," *Pacific Affairs*, 57:2 (Summer 1984), pp. 284-303.

force, and that the overall cost of the F-16 would be less than that of any other aircraft were convincing for Washington.

The symbolic value of supplying these aircraft was described by a congressional study committee as the "keystone of the new U.S.-Pakistani relationship embodied in the larger package." Recommending the supply of the aircraft to Pakistan, the committee argued that any significant change in the number and nature of the aircraft would result in Pakistan's reviewing its relationship with the U.S., propelling the country toward a nuclear explosion, and forcing it to some face-saving agreement with the USSR on the Afghan question.¹⁰

The negotiations on the aircraft, its components, and the delivery schedule signify the success of Pakistan in reversely influencing U.S. decision makers. The aircraft were initially supposed to have been equipped with the ALR-46 electronic countermeasure system rather than the more sophisticated ALR-69 version used by NATO. Eventually, as requested by Islamabad, Pakistan received the advanced version, suggesting that it exercised some influence in this U.S. decision. Additionally, Pakistan was successful in obtaining the AIM 9L version of the Sidewinder missile rather than the AIM 9 version that was originally offered. The U.S. agreed to provide the first batch of six F-16s from U.S. and European stocks, to be delivered no later than 12 months after the signing of the acceptance offer. The remaining 36 were to be delivered at a rate of five per quarter beginning 27 months after the signing of the agreement.¹¹ In fact, under Pakistani pressure, Washington moved up the delivery of the first planes from the European stocks to a date earlier than the announced schedule.

During the decade-long Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, the Soviet/Afghan forces suffered many casualties and encountered serious resistance from the rebel forces armed by the U.S. with such weapons as Stinger missiles. According to one estimate, U.S. humanitarian assistance to Afghan refugees reached \$45 million per year during the 1980s but covert aid to the resistance ran at nearly \$600 million annually.¹² By 1986, the *muja-hideen* brought the war to Afghanistan's major cities, thus making the Soviet presence extremely tenuous. The Soviets were forced to revise

10. *Proposed U.S. Assistance and Arms Transfers to Pakistan: An Assessment*, Report of the Staff Study Mission to Pakistan and India, Committee on Foreign Affairs, U.S. House of Representatives, November 20, 1981, p. 3.

11. Robert G. Wirsing, "The Arms Race in South Asia: Implications for the United States," *Asian Survey* 25:3 (March 1985), pp. 265-90; and *Aid and Proposed Arms Sales of F-16s to Pakistan*, Congress, 97th Session, Hearings before the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, November 12 and 17, 1981.

12. Richard P. Cronin, "Pakistan's Nuclear Program: U.S. Foreign Policy Considerations," *Issue Brief*, Congressional Research Service, June 13, 1988, p. 3.

drastically their military tactics against the rebels, and had to replace Babrak Karmal with Mohammed Najibullah as the Afghan leader. The increased resistance and the new policies of Mikhail Gorbachev led to the signing of the Geneva accords in April 1988, under which Moscow agreed to the 115,000-strong Soviet army pull out in Afghanistan by February 1989.

Buoyed by developments in the Afghan resistance, the Reagan administration decided in 1986 to increase military and economic aid to Pakistan from \$3.2 billion for 1981–86 to \$4.02 billion for 1987–93. The important rationale for the new assistance was that it would help quicken the Soviet withdrawal and serve as a deterrent against further violations of Pakistan's sovereignty by Afghan air raids. The arms supplies also helped the U.S. maintain Islamabad's interest in assisting the rebel forces headquartered in Peshawar. Moreover, it enabled the rebels to receive weapons and supplies without succumbing to Soviet offers for a conditional pullout and substantial economic and military assistance.

The Nuclear Weapons Program

Pakistan's relentless effort to attain nuclear weapons capability has been a major thorn in its relations with the United States. American efforts to influence the Pakistani weapons program by convincing Islamabad to sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) have met with very little success. On the contrary, Pakistan has been relatively successful in securing more U.S. arms and economic aid, while at the same time promoting its nuclear program as a lever in its relationship with the United States. The Reagan and Bush administrations had attempted to convince critics in Congress and in the nonproliferation lobby by asserting that conventional weapons transfer would work as a disincentive on Pakistan to acquire nuclear weapons capability.

During the Carter years, serious attempts were made to influence Pakistan's nuclear program. The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Act of 1977 and the Glenn and Symington amendments to the Foreign Assistance Act were aimed at arresting the spread of nuclear weapons to countries like Pakistan. These amendments specifically forbade U.S. aid to countries that transfer to, or receive from other nations plutonium reprocessing or uranium enrichment equipment, materials, or technology that is not under international safeguards. The termination of aid to Pakistan in April 1979 under the Glenn amendment and the pressure exerted on France by the U.S. to cancel the agreement to sell a reprocessing plant to that country were intended to arrest Pakistan's nuclear ambitions. Before the cutoff, the administration had asked Pakistan to place its nuclear facilities under international safeguards, which it refused to do.

Simultaneously, the Carter administration attempted to woo Pakistan by offering fifty F-5E fighters equipped with advanced air-to-ground missiles, if Islamabad would place its centrifuge facility under safeguards. When this proved futile, some administration officials who supported a "buy-out" option argued for the supply of advanced F-16 aircraft to influence Pakistani nuclear decision-making. President Zia termed the U.S. decision to cut off aid as a "blessing in disguise"—that is, a means to achieve greater self-sufficiency. He argued that the U.S. action was a "short-sighted, punitive policy," especially when the danger of Soviet intervention in Afghanistan was high, Iran was in turmoil, and Pakistan was the only ally the U.S. had in the region. American officials later conceded that the arms cutoff did not succeed in persuading Pakistan to renounce its nuclear option and to accept international safeguards on its nuclear facilities.¹³

The Reagan administration was convinced that its predecessor's termination of military assistance had increased Pakistan's sense of insecurity and, thereby, its determination to pursue nuclear weapons capability. It contended that improvement in Pakistan's conventional weapons capability would reduce its incentive to acquire a nuclear capacity and that Pakistan would not sacrifice such significant assistance for a mini-nuclear capability. The provision to cut off aid, it was argued, would at least prolong the lead time for the Pakistanis to detonate a nuclear weapon. Notwithstanding the administration's argument, available evidence indicated that all through the 1980s, Pakistan relentlessly pursued a covert nuclear weapons program, and that the U.S. aid factor had limited effect on Pakistan's calculations for achieving nuclear weapons capability.

Concerned by reports that Pakistan had been enriching weapons-grade uranium to a 90% level, Reagan wrote to Zia in 1984 asking that the enrichment at the Kahuta plant be restricted to a 5% level, the requirement for a non-weapons program. Despite that request, the Pakistanis reportedly produced weapons-grade uranium at the facility, and although this was confirmed by U.S. intelligence reports, President Reagan in 1986 offered Pakistan a second aid package of \$4.02 billion to begin in 1987. Before consideration of this offer by Congress, the chief of the Kahuta centrifuge facility, A. Q. Khan, announced that Pakistan possessed nuclear weapons capability; the message directed toward congressional critics was to the effect that if the U.S. wanted Pakistan to be a conduit of arms supplies to the Afghan rebels, it had to approve the aid and disregard the nuclear proliferation issue. Subsequent statements by Pakistani leaders and officials confirmed the long-known position of intelligence agencies

13. Andrew J. Pierre, *The Global Politics of Arms Sales* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), pp. 29–30; *New York Times*, August 9, 1979, p. 6, and August 12, 1979, p. 1.

that Pakistan possessed the capability to build an atomic bomb. Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto stated in September 1991 that Pakistan had acquired sufficient knowhow to build a nuclear weapon in the event of a crisis, and in February 1992, Foreign Secretary Shahryar Khan confirmed that Pakistan had the components to construct a minimum of one nuclear weapon.¹⁴

It is clear from these reports and statements that efforts by the Reagan and Bush administrations to curb the Pakistani nuclear program proved futile to a large extent. In August 1987, U.S. Under Secretary for Political Affairs Michael Armacost visited Pakistan with the tough message that if Pakistan did not make all of its nuclear facilities available for on-site inspection, the aid would be terminated. President Zia flatly rejected the U.S. demand.¹⁵ Concern over Pakistan's enrichment program and over its failure to provide credible assurances to the U.S. that it was not making uranium beyond the 5% enrichment level led to a six-week suspension of U.S. aid in October 1987. Pressure from the pro-aid lobby ultimately forced the Senate to adopt a much diluted bill under which Pakistan was approved to receive military and economic aid for another six years. The president would have to approve an annual waiver stating that Pakistan did not possess a nuclear device and that the aid was in the national security interests of the United States.

President Reagan's sanctioning of the first part (\$480 million) of the six-year, \$4.02 billion military and economic aid package came just after the State Department reported to him that the Pakistani government was probably involved in a plot by a Pakistani-born businessman to smuggle 50,000 pounds of specialized steel and beryllium from the U.S. for Pakistan's nuclear weapons program, a circumstance that would ordinarily have resulted in the cutoff of all U.S. aid to the country. The presidential waiver was justified by the White House on the grounds that denial of aid would be counterproductive for the strategic interests of the United States, destabilizing for South Asia, and unlikely to stop Pakistan from going nuclear.¹⁶ With the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, U.S. pressure on Pakistan to give up its nuclear program increased, and the Bush administration in October 1990 reestablished the linkage between arms aid and nuclear nonproliferation in South Asia. The president's unwillingness to certify, as per the Pressler Amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act, that Pakistan did not possess nuclear weapons resulted in the suspension of arms and economic aid worth \$600 million for fiscal year 1991-92.

14. Dilip Bobb and Ramindar Singh, "Pakistan's Nuclear Bombshell," *India Today*, March 31, 1987, pp. 8-16, and *Arms Control Today*, March 1992, p. 25.

15. "A Bad Case for Nuclear Fiction," *Time*, August 17, 1987, p. 40.

16. *Los Angeles Times*, January 16, 1988, p. 3.

This influence attempt has had some impact, albeit modest, on the Pakistani nuclear policy. For the first time, Pakistan openly admitted that it had nuclear capability and renewed its offer to engage in negotiations with India for a nuclear weapons-free zone in South Asia. On June 6, 1991, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif proposed a five-nation conference—India, Pakistan, U.S., Russia, and China—for the purpose of banning nuclear weapons from the South Asian subcontinent. The objective of these moves was to gain the resumption of U.S. economic and military aid, as well as put pressure on India to respond to previous Pakistani proposals for nuclear negotiations.¹⁷

Although U.S. influence on Pakistan's nuclear option has been limited, it can be perceived as one of the reasons for Pakistan not openly testing a nuclear device. However, the policy of "no open test" does not mean that Pakistan has retreated from the course of nuclear weapons development. The U.S. administration's need for Pakistan to challenge the Soviets in Afghanistan made it difficult for Washington to act on this issue in a way that would have seriously affected the Pakistani nuclear program. The U.S. desired that, even after the Soviet military pullout, Moscow should not be allowed a diplomatic and political gain by a rapprochement with Pakistan; therefore, continued assistance became necessary until the Soviet collapse.¹⁸ But with Soviet withdrawal and the fall of the Soviet-backed Afghan regime, Pakistan's strategic significance declined substantially, thus reducing its reverse strategic leverage.

U.S. Influence in Pakistan: Some Conclusions

During the Cold War, the United States to a significant degree attempted to base its political and diplomatic influence in Pakistan on arms transfers—with modest success. At the structural level, influence was exerted on the South Asian regional balance and on the security calculations of Pakistan and India. The U.S. not only acted as a major source of arms supply to the subcontinent but also helped fuel arms races between India and Pakistan. As one analyst suggests, directly or indirectly, the United States profoundly influenced the military balance in South Asia by determining the type, quality, and quantity of weapons transferred and the pricing, credit, and repayment conditions. Additionally, Washington also made its impact on training, maintenance, supply of spare parts, licensing of co-production, technology transfer, and re-export of weapons.¹⁹

17. *New York Times*, February 19, 1992, p. A10.

18. Cronin, "Pakistan's Nuclear Program," p. 7.

19. Wirsing, "The Arms Race in South Asia."

In a structural sense, arms transfers provided the U.S. with a major foothold in South and Southwest Asia and with a voice in determining the regional military balance and security. Specific examples of behavioral change by Pakistan on the basis of arms supply are few. The impetus for a particular policy preference by Islamabad invariably depended upon other vital interests and threats as perceived by it. During the 1979–89 period, U.S. arms supplies to Pakistan were mainly induced by the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, and Pakistan's importance in countering the Soviet threat gave it some reverse leverage over the United States. In the U.S. perception, the Pakistani armed forces could assimilate sophisticated weapon systems with relative ease; thus, Pakistan's military potential in deterring Soviet advancement in the region became important in U.S. strategic calculations.

This perception was one source of the reverse structural influence that Pakistan exerted on the United States. The reverse influence stood in contrast to the pattern up to the early 1960s, when Pakistan had little hesitation in exchanging base rights, treaty commitments, and its U.N. votes for U.S. weapons and Washington's political support for its claim over Kashmir.²⁰ Pakistan also echoed U.S. positions in U.N. debates, various nonaligned meetings, and in other Third World forums.

Pakistan's endorsement of Western positions included its refusal to support the Algerian war of independence and its unwillingness to back Egypt's nationalization of the Suez Canal. These were clear-cut instances of a supplier developing structural influence on an overdependent recipient. Employing such means as weapon diversification, especially through China, Pakistan showed a certain amount of resourcefulness in exploiting superpower competition in the region in order to get advanced military hardware. It succeeded in this pursuit to some extent. It can thus be argued that U.S. influence at the structural and decisional level during the Cold-War period was limited, that it was not on par with the quantity or quality of weapons transferred to Pakistan. The convergence of opinions and perceptions resulted from the overwhelming security concerns—for Pakistan, the continuing struggle with India and the Afghan regime and its desire to attain sufficient capability vis-à-vis India provided significant incentives to continue its arms relationship with the United States, and for the U.S., the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan made Pakistan an important country in the Middle East-Persian Gulf strategic consensus for containing the Soviet presence and its influence.

20. Stephen P. Cohen, "U.S. Weapons and South Asia: A Policy Analysis," *Pacific Affairs*, 49:1 (Spring 1976), pp. 49–69; see also Baldev Raj Nayar, "American Containment Policy and Regional Powers: Motivations and Diplomacy in the U.S. Decision on Military Aid to Pakistan, 1954," *CDAS Discussion Paper*, no. 62, McGill University, July 1990.

However, the Soviet pullout from Afghanistan, the end of the Cold War, and the eventual break up of the USSR changed global politics so dramatically that the strategic environment in the region also underwent major alterations. Pakistan's significance for the U.S. as a strategic partner declined considerably. There was no longer a need for a pipeline of weapon supplies to the Afghan resistance groups; in fact, the U.S. has been increasingly concerned about regaining weapons, such as Stinger missiles, that it had supplied to the resistance.

The U.S.-Pakistan attempts at mutual influence through an arms transfer relationship has some theoretical and policy implications. First, great powers can develop a certain amount of structural influence vis-à-vis smaller allies through arms transfers, especially if the smaller partners are heavily dependent on them. Second, influence is rarely a one-way street, as the U.S.-Pakistani case illustrates. A weaker ally may develop reverse structural influence if the great power patron is engaged in a bitter struggle with its opponent. The strategic significance of the smaller ally is a key determinant in this respect. Arms transfers tend to provide only a limited amount of decisional influence to suppliers, especially on issue areas such as security that involve high stakes for the recipients. Washington's failure to influence significantly Pakistan's nuclear weapons program attests to this conclusion.