



# THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

This thesis has been submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for a postgraduate degree (e.g. PhD, MPhil, DClinPsychol) at the University of Edinburgh. Please note the following terms and conditions of use:

This work is protected by copyright and other intellectual property rights, which are retained by the thesis author, unless otherwise stated.

A copy can be downloaded for personal non-commercial research or study, without prior permission or charge.

This thesis cannot be reproduced or quoted extensively from without first obtaining permission in writing from the author.

The content must not be changed in any way or sold commercially in any format or medium without the formal permission of the author.

When referring to this work, full bibliographic details including the author, title, awarding institution and date of the thesis must be given.

The United Kingdom, the United States, and  
Nuclear Proliferation in South Asia:  
The Case of Pakistan, 1974-1980

Malcolm MacMillan Craig

Ph.D Thesis  
The University of Edinburgh  
2014



## **Declaration**

---

I declare that this thesis has been composed by myself, it is my own work, and the work has not been submitted for any other degree or professional qualification.

Date.....

Signature.....

## Abstract

---

This thesis is a history of American and British efforts to halt or retard the Pakistani nuclear weapons programme. It assesses US and UK non-proliferation policy towards Pakistan from the Indian nuclear test of May 1974 to the decline of anti-proliferation activity in 1979 and 1980. A broadly chronological analysis of key government and media sources from American and British archives highlights the development of non-proliferation policy and the factors that influenced anti-proliferation activity.

Scrutiny of British—and not just American—involvement in Pakistan’s nuclear programme permits an assessment of the existence of a ‘non-proliferation special relationship’ between Washington and London. This study demonstrates that successive British governments played a significant role in creating, shaping, and at times adversely affecting, non-proliferation activity on the sub-continent. Additionally, this thesis demonstrates that the UK frequently deprioritised non-proliferation concerns in favour of economic considerations, creating tension between London and Washington. Thus, it is shown that there was a close working relationship between the US and UK governments, but the relationship was riven with fissures. Alongside this examination of British policy, this study also examines American policy and attitudes, demonstrating that infighting and conflicts between strategic priorities impaired the effectiveness of American non-proliferation policy.

Furthermore, this study offers a detailed examination of the cultural underpinnings of UK-US non-proliferation policy directed against Pakistan. It demonstrates that—contrary to popular and long-lasting media representations—the paradigm of an ‘Islamic bomb’ played no part in the creation and application of non-proliferation policy. This thesis makes it clear that in UK-US efforts to halt or retard Pakistani nuclear attainment, issues of credibility and global standing were far more significant than religious factors. Overall, this study examines a key moment in non-proliferation history and offers new findings on the Anglo-American relationship and the role of cultural factors in shaping foreign policy.

## Contents

---

Acknowledgements		vi-vii
List of Acronyms		viii-ix
Introduction		1-15
Chapter 1:	“No hope of preventing proliferation” May 1974 to December 1975	16-50
Chapter 2:	“An end to the first ‘easy’ phase” January 1976 to January 1977	51-86
Chapter 3:	“The omens are scarcely encouraging” February 1977 to March 1978	87-129
Chapter 4:	“A disquieting statement of intentions” March 1978 to December 1978	130-163
Chapter 5:	“A dream of nightmare proportions” January 1979 to December 1979	164-214
Chapter 6:	“Peanuts” January 1980 to January 1981	215-248
Conclusion		249-257
Primary Sources		258-261
Bibliography		262-272

## Acknowledgements

---

First and foremost, this thesis would not exist without the support of my two excellent supervisors, Fabian Hilfrich and Robert Mason. Both have consistently gone above and beyond the call of duty to wisely advise, encourage, and reassure. From the wider history staff at the University of Edinburgh, I would also like to express my sincere thanks to Frank Cogliano, Robert Crowcroft, Owen Dudley-Edwards, Rhodri Jeffreys-Jones, David Kaufman, and Paul Quigley (now at Virginia Tech). I would also like to offer my thanks to my thesis examiners Pertti Ahonen (formerly of Edinburgh, now at the University of Jyväskylä, Finland) and Andrew Preston (Clare College, Cambridge), who read, commented, and made the examination such a rewarding experience.

This thesis was completed with the help of the Professor James F. McMillan Scholarship, the Jeremiah Dalziel Prize, and a President Gerald R. Ford Foundation research and travel grant. Without these generous awards, the research for this thesis would not have been so successful.

Friends and colleagues within the Ph.D community at the University of Edinburgh have also been an invaluable source of support and advice. In particular, I would like to offer my gratitude to Mark Heise, Frances Houghton, Jane Judge, Mark McLay, Owain Mason, Robbie Maxwell, Adrienne Miller, and Louise Settle. From the global academic community, I would also like to express my thanks to Dolores Janiewski and Malcolm McKinnon (Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand), and Philip Morgan (Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD).

No academic endeavour would be possible without considerable administrative support, and it would be remiss of me not to thank the outstanding administrative staff of the School of History, Classics, and Archaeology at the University of Edinburgh. In particular, I should mention Anne Brockington, Margaret Forrest, Richard Kane, Niko Ovenden, Marie-Therese Rafferty, and Lindsay Scott. Likewise, without skilled archivists around the world, our task as historians would be that much harder. The staff of the British Broadcasting Corporation Written Archives Centre (Caversham, Berkshire), the Gerald R. Ford Presidential

Library (Ann Arbor, MI), the Jimmy Carter Presidential Library and Museum (Atlanta, GA), the US National Archives and Records Administration (College Park, MD), the National Security Archive (George Washington University, Washington D.C.), and The National Archives of the United Kingdom (Kew, London) have all given invaluable assistance during the research component of this thesis. In particular, I would like to thank Jim Clancy and Keith Schuyler (Jimmy Carter Presidential Library), Bill McNitt (Gerald Ford Presidential Library), and Steven Twigge (The National Archives of the United Kingdom).

There are also numerous groups representing the wider academic community who must be mentioned, including all the undergraduate students whom I have had the pleasure of teaching on the University of Edinburgh's American History 2 course, the attendees of the American History Workshop and Centre for the Study of Modern Conflict Seminar Series, all the participants in the annual Historians of the Twentieth Century United States (HOTCUS) conferences, and the attendees at the annual Scottish Association for the Study of America (SASA) conferences.

No endeavour such as this would be possible without the support of family and friends. With that in mind, I must thank my father John Craig, my mother Irene Craig, my sister Lesley Craig, and my friends from all around the world, including—but most certainly not limited to—Paul Bourne, Scott Dorward, Cam Eeles, Leanne Fulton, Neil Gow, Jonny Hodgson, Gregor Hutton, Andrew Kenrick, Lucy McCraw, Nick Radburn, Robert Robertson, Doug Whitely, and many others too numerous to mention.

Finally, there are two people without whom this thesis would have been impossible to complete. The first of these is my grandmother, Mary MacMillan, who sadly died only a short time before this thesis was submitted. The second is my wife, Jaqueline Booth. Above all others, she has been the source of strength, support, and love.



## Acronyms Used in the Text

---

ABM: Anti Ballistic Missile Treaty (1972)

ACDA: US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency

ACDD: UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office Arms Control and Disarmament  
Department

AEC: US Atomic Energy Commission

BNFL: British Nuclear Fuels Limited

CIA: US Central Intelligence Agency

CENTO: Central Treaty Organisation

CIEC: Conference on International Economic Cooperation

CND: Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament

DoE: UK Department of Energy

DoI: UK Department of Industry

DoT: UK Department of Trade

ECGD: UK Department of Trade Export Credits Guarantee Department

EEIC: Emerson Electric Industrial Controls Limited

ERDA: US Energy Research and Development Agency

FCO: UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office

FRG: Federal Republic of Germany ('West Germany')

G7: Group of Seven industrialised nations

GAC: US General Advisory Council

IAF: Indian Air Force

IAEA: International Atomic Energy Agency

INFCE: International Nuclear Fuel Cycle Evaluation project

JIC: UK Joint Intelligence Committee

JNS: UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office Joint Nuclear Section

JNU: UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office Joint Nuclear Unit

MoD: UK Ministry of Defence

MP: UK Member of Parliament  
NNPA: US Nuclear Non-proliferation Act of 1978  
NNWS: Non-nuclear Weapon State  
NPT: Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (1968/70)  
NSC: US National Security Council  
NSG: Nuclear Suppliers Group (also known as the 'London Club')  
NWS: Nuclear Weapon State  
PAEC: Pakistan Atomic Energy Agency  
PNE: Peaceful Nuclear Explosion  
PPS: US State Department Policy Planning Staff  
PRC: US Policy Review Committee  
SAD: UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office South Asia Department  
SALT: Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (1972)  
SANWFZ: South Asian Nuclear Weapons Free Zone  
THORP: Thermal Oxide Reprocessing Plant  
UKAEA: UK Atomic Energy Agency  
UNGA: United Nations General Assembly  
UNSC: United Nations Security Council

## Introduction

---

On May 28, 1998, Pakistan—responding to Indian atomic tests conducted two weeks previously—set off five nuclear explosions beneath the hills of Balochistan. Despite international efforts to prevent their development of atomic capability, Pakistan thus became the seventh admitted nuclear weapon state. The nation's 1998 tests were the result of a lengthy development programme that in its infancy two decades earlier had occupied the attention of successive British and American governments.

Preventing the global spread of nuclear weapons had been a pressing concern for international policymakers since 1945. For the American and British administrations in office during the 1970s, Pakistan was one of the foremost proliferation worries. Accelerating that nation's drive towards nuclear capability during this period were a series of military and authoritarian governments, coupled to Islamabad's fear of its much larger neighbour India. Both of these factors caused considerable diplomatic difficulties for the United States and United Kingdom during the 1970s.

This thesis examines US and UK non-proliferation policy towards Pakistan from the catalytic Indian nuclear test of May 1974 to the decline of overt anti-proliferation activity in 1979 and 1980. The case of Pakistan reveals a 'non-proliferation special relationship' between the United States and United Kingdom in the 1970s. Despite this cooperation, however, there were core disagreements between Washington and London that pointed to divergent interests in nuclear and other policy questions. Whereas, particularly under the Carter administration, the Americans focused on non-proliferation, their British partners found it more difficult to juggle those concerns with commercial and energy interests. In addition to that, this study also argues that—in contrast to widespread public alarm—in the case of Pakistan the fear of an 'Islamic bomb' failed to influence non-proliferation policy.

The study of United States and United Kingdom cooperation in non-proliferation activity against Pakistan illustrates a functional 'special non-proliferation relationship.' This contrasts significantly with America's non-proliferation relationships with France and the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), both of which were plagued with acrimonious public

and private disputes.<sup>1</sup> Major factors in these disputes were France and West Germany's sizeable deals to sell nuclear technology to developing world states. Britain, by comparison, held no such contracts. This thesis supports and extends the arguments of Susanna Schrafstetter and Stephen Twigge who contend that a 'non-proliferation special relationship' existed in the 1950s and 1960s, compared to the frequently troubled relations between the United States and other major Western European allies.<sup>2</sup> These findings stand in contrast to a literature that mostly interprets a 'special relationship' in terms of US-UK nuclear relations (for example, collaboration over nuclear technology in the form of missiles) or intelligence sharing.<sup>3</sup> John Baylis and Ronald Powaski, for example, have identified nuclear ties as paramount within the so-called 'special relationship,' even during periods of 'cooling' such as the 1970s. However, these ties relate specifically to nuclear defence and US-UK technology exchanges and there is only the briefest mention of non-proliferation within this scholarship.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, the literature on US-UK Cold War relations concentrates on the nuclear capabilities of both states and pays little attention to non-proliferation beyond limited discussions of the 1968 Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT). The works of Christopher Bartlett, John Dumbrell, and Ritchie Ovendale typify analyses of Cold War Anglo-American

---

<sup>1</sup> On the acrimonious US-FRG non-proliferation relationship in the 1970s, see William Glenn Gray, 'Commercial Liberties and Nuclear Anxieties: The US-German Feud Over Brazil, 1975-7,' *The International History Review*, 34:3 (2012), 449-474 and Fabian Hilfrich, 'The Roots of Animosity: Bonn's Reaction to US Pressures in Nuclear Proliferation,' *The International History Review*, 2014, online publication <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/07075332.2013.864694> (accessed on February 6, 2014). The US-French discussions over Pakistan shall be covered within the body of this thesis.

<sup>2</sup> Susanna Schrafstetter and Stephen Twigge, *Avoiding Armageddon: Europe, the United States, and the Struggle for Nuclear Nonproliferation, 1945-1970* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2004).

<sup>3</sup> For a sample of works in this vein, see Timothy J. Botti, *The Long Wait: The Forging of the Anglo-American Nuclear Alliance, 1945-1958* (New York, NY: Greenwood Press, 1987); Jan Melissen, *The Struggle for Nuclear Partnership: Britain, the United States, and the Making of an Ambiguous Alliance, 1952-1959* (Groningen: Styx Publications, 1993); Len Scott and Stephen Twigge, *Planning Armageddon: Britain, the United States, and Command of Western Nuclear Forces, 1945-1964* (Amsterdam: Harwood Academic, 2000); and John Simpson, *The Independent Nuclear State: The United States, Britain, and the Military Atom*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (London: Macmillan, 1986). One volume that does offer an analysis of the US-UK arms control relationship is J. P. G. Freeman, *Britain's Nuclear Arms Control Policy in the Context of Anglo-American Relations, 1957-68* (Basingstoke: MacMillan, 1986). Because of its age, Freeman's work obviously does not benefit from the many valuable archival releases that have taken place in the intervening years. For a recent work on the intelligence relationship, using the most up to date sources, see Rhodri Jeffreys-Jones, *In Spies We Trust: The Story of Western Intelligence* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

<sup>4</sup> John Baylis, *Anglo-American Defence Relations 1939-1980*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (London: Macmillan, 1984), 213-14; Ronald E. Powaski, *Entangling Alliance: The United States and European Security, 1950-1993* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1994). Scholars are beginning, however, to offer increased attention to the fine detail of US-UK non-proliferation relations beyond the NPT negotiations. For example, see John Krige, 'US Technological Superiority and the Special Nuclear Relationship: Contrasting British and US Policies for Controlling the Proliferation of Gas Centrifuge Enrichment,' *The International History Review*, 2014, online edition <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/07075332.2013.864691> (accessed on February 6, 2014), 1-22.

relations.<sup>5</sup> The authors posit a relationship that waxed and waned, with highs and lows across the years as administrations changed in both countries and international issues—such as the Vietnam War—prompted markedly different responses in Washington and London.

It is important, however, not to overstate the ‘special’ nature of this trans-Atlantic relationship. Although US-UK non-proliferation cooperation was certainly stronger than that between the United States and France or the United States and West Germany, it was also beset by problems. There were significant clashes between American non-proliferation policy and British commercial interests during the 1970s. The case of Pakistan brought Washington and London into conflict over domestic nuclear policy and international arms sales, both of which were inextricably tangled up with the Pakistani nuclear problem. By analysing these areas, this study highlights how the domestic economic and energy imperatives of the US’s most important ally (the UK) affected global attempts to prevent proliferation. This typifies what John Young describes as “an intensification of the relationship between domestic and international problems,” that became apparent as British influence in the world steadily declined from its imperial heyday.<sup>6</sup>

Bringing the UK into the picture allows a revealing examination of the ways in which British arms sales to India had a deleterious effect on the relationship between Britain and America *and* contributed to Pakistani anxiety. Islamabad’s insecurity and fear of Indian military power thus fed the desire for nuclear capability. The United Kingdom’s negotiations and eventual deal with India in 1979 to sell Jaguar strike aircraft—a deal worth billions of pounds to the teetering British aerospace industry—problematized the issue of non-proliferation on the subcontinent. In comparison, the US government—particularly the Carter administration—chose to abandon commercial advantage in favour of non-proliferation. The sale of potentially nuclear capable aircraft to Pakistan’s regional arch-rival

---

<sup>5</sup> C. J. Bartlett, *British Foreign Policy in the Twentieth Century* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1989); John Dumbrell, *A Special Relationship: Anglo-American Relations in the Cold War and After* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2001); Ritchie Owendale, *Anglo-American Relations in the Twentieth Century* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1998). John Dumbrell mentions non-proliferation (specifically, the NPT negotiations) once in *A Special Relationship* (Dumbrell, 72); In *Britain and the Cold War, 1945-91* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000) Sean Greenwood discusses non-proliferation only within the limited context of the NPT (see Greenwood, 170-171); Owendale mentions anti-proliferation policy within the context of the 1963 Limited Test Ban Treaty and the international Multi-lateral Force concept of the 1960s, but does not reference the NPT or subsequent developments (Owendale, 129-130); Mark Curtis does not refer to non-proliferation in *The Ambiguities of Power: British Foreign Policy Since 1945* (London: Zed Books, 1995). Likewise, Bartlett does not mention non-proliferation policy in *British Foreign Policy in the Twentieth Century*.

<sup>6</sup> John W. Young, *Twentieth-Century Diplomacy: A Case Study of British Practice, 1963-1976* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 18.

demonstrated that in times of economic crisis, the British government was unwilling to prioritise non-proliferation over economic self-interest. The UK also pursued an expansive domestic nuclear reprocessing industry while supporting the United States against the Pakistani quest for similar facilities. This created tension between Washington and London and between London and Islamabad. In the US-UK case, the British pursuit of reprocessing facilities conflicted with Jimmy Carter's stated mission to see such facilities eliminated, despite his public assurances that Western European states would not find their reprocessing ambitions inhibited by the United States. In the UK-Pakistan case, British actions left successive governments open to Pakistan's accusations of hypocrisy and double standards.

In addition to examining these conflicting facets of the so-called 'special relationship,' this study further enhances our understanding of US and UK foreign policy by analysing in detail how and why America and Britain attempted to influence the nuclear affairs of a sovereign third party and how such efforts related to other foreign policy priorities. In terms of the United States, this thesis critically adds to the literature on the foreign policy of the presidencies of Gerald Ford and Jimmy Carter by offering a detailed case study of policy in action. Both presidencies have been included in significant foreign policy studies by Odd Arne Westad and Dennis Kux that respectively offer analyses of the many travails that afflicted Ford and Carter's foreign policy and the broad contours of US-Pakistani relations from 1945 to 2000.<sup>7</sup> The recent works of Betty Glad, Scott Kaufman, and Robert Strong excellently cover Jimmy Carter's career in foreign policy, highlighting—as this thesis also does—the tension between the various strands of Carter's foreign policy.<sup>8</sup> All of the above scholars note that there were within the Carter administration clashes of principles and personalities that actively inhibited the successful implementation of foreign policy. However, in all of these cases wider discussions of foreign policy issues take

---

<sup>7</sup> In particular, see Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 218-330 and Dennis Kux, *Disenchanted Allies: The United States and Pakistan, 1947-2000* (Washington D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2001), 215-255. Kux is the author of two volumes that shall be referenced in this thesis. The aforementioned *Disenchanted Allies*, and *Estranged Democracies: India and the United States, 1941-1991* (Washington D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1993). In the text these will be referenced by their two word initial titles.

<sup>8</sup> Betty Glad, *An Outsider in the White House: Jimmy Carter, His Advisors, and the Making of American Foreign Policy* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2009); Scott Kaufman, *Plans Unraveled: The Foreign Policy of the Carter Administration* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2008); Robert A. Strong, *Working in the World: Jimmy Carter and the Making of American Foreign Policy* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2000).

precedence over any deep-seated analysis of Pakistan and non-proliferation. Only Kaufman devotes significant attention to the non-proliferation issue in US foreign policy, but again the analysis does not cover in detail the situation of Pakistan in this context.<sup>9</sup>

The foreign policy of the British governments that held office during the mid to late 1970s—especially pertaining to non-proliferation—has not been the subject of such a vast scholarship as their American counterparts. The work of John Callaghan, Rhiannon Vickers, and a volume on the Wilson and Callaghan governments edited by Anthony Seldon and Kevin Hickson offer valuable insights into Labour Party foreign policy but, as with many such studies, non-proliferation policy is markedly absent, subsumed beneath offensive and defensive Cold War nuclear strategy.<sup>10</sup> This broad omission of non-proliferation policy has thus created a further gap in existing scholarship, which this thesis will also fill.

In the face of a state determined to acquire nuclear capability, were there alternatives short of direct intervention that would move Pakistan away from the nuclear path? Two broad options were open to the United States and United Kingdom: placing diplomatic pressure on Pakistan or putting pressure on Islamabad's nuclear technology suppliers. Attempting to influence Pakistani leaders had little effect. In the face of a determined drive for the bomb that remained consistent across the governments headed by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Muhammad Zia ul-Haq, failure was the norm.

However, for the US and UK, placing pressure on Pakistan's mostly Western European nuclear technology suppliers was potentially the most promising non-proliferation tactic. Most notably, US diplomatic pressure at least in part served to persuade France not to sell a nuclear reprocessing plant to Pakistan, although French economic considerations also played a role in this decision. Although America and Britain made efforts to prevent Pakistani acquisition of uranium enrichment capacity, the skilful Pakistani purchasing programme, the recalcitrance of key nuclear equipment suppliers such as the FRG, and the difficulty of enforcing vague international standards for nuclear trade hampered non-

---

<sup>9</sup> Kaufman, 52-54, 103, and 217-218.

<sup>10</sup> John Callaghan, *The Labour Party and Foreign Policy* (London: Routledge, 2007); Rhiannon Vickers, *The Labour Party and the World, Volume 2: Labour's Foreign Policy 1951-2009* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011); Anthony Seldon and Kevin Hickson (eds.), *New Labour, Old Labour: The Wilson and Callaghan Governments, 1974-79* (London: Routledge, 2004). Within the Seldon and Hickson volume, Ann Lane briefly alludes to the non-proliferation interests of David Owen that shall be examined within this thesis.

proliferation efforts. Thus, this thesis offers an opportunity to study relative success and failure, inexorably demonstrating that short of military intervention against Pakistan, there was no chance of diminishing Islamabad's nuclear aspirations.

A theme that unites much of the specific literature on non-proliferation is the positioning of the United States as the critical—and often solo—player in global non-proliferation affairs. While it is obvious that the US was a preeminent force in Cold War nuclear affairs, the history of non-proliferation is an international one. Other actors, even those in the past considered insignificant, must be given due attention by historians. In order to understand the global, transnational history of nuclear non-proliferation, it is vital to take on board Odd Arne Westad's exhortation, in relation to the broader history of the Cold War, to examine the role and influence of non-superpower actors.<sup>11</sup>

While there is an extensive literature on non-proliferation as it relates to the United States and Pakistan in the 1970s, Britain has so far received limited attention. More specifically, Britain's contribution to anti-proliferation action in relation to Pakistan in the 1970s has frequently been ignored or placed in the shadow of the United States. This study finds that Britain played a significant—and at times critical—role in combating Pakistani nuclear ambitions. The case for foregrounding Britain in studies of the impact of policy and action on non-proliferation is crucially supported by the work of Schrafstetter and Twigge, Matthew Jones, and John W. Young.<sup>12</sup> Schrafstetter and Twigge argue that the role of European states in non-proliferation is an important and often overlooked dimension, European governments frequently acting in opposition to the United States but never acting as a monolithic entity and always primarily pursuing national interest as a primary goal.<sup>13</sup> As well as moving Britain, France, and West Germany from the periphery to the centre of post-war non-proliferation policy in the years to 1970, Schrafstetter and Twigge identify major

---

<sup>11</sup> Westad, 1-7. One work that does examine nuclear history through a global lens is Lawrence S. Wittner's magisterial study of the worldwide anti-nuclear movement *The Struggle Against the Bomb: A History of the World Nuclear Disarmament Movement* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1993, 1997, 2003).

<sup>12</sup> Susanna Schrafstetter, 'Preventing the "Smiling Buddha"; British-Indian Nuclear Relations and the Commonwealth Nuclear Force, 1964-68,' *The Journal of Strategic Studies*, 25:3 (September, 2002), 87-108; Matthew Jones and John W. Young, 'Polaris, East of Suez: British Plans for a Nuclear Force in the Indo-Pacific, 1964-1968,' *Journal of Strategic Studies*, 33:6 (December, 2010), 847-870.

<sup>13</sup> Schrafstetter and Twigge, 10-13.



gaps in the scholarship surrounding pre-1970 British, French, and West German non-proliferation policy. In the case of the UK, these gaps relate to the overweening emphasis on nuclear strategy and its place within the ‘special relationship,’ and the lack of an overarching analysis of British non-proliferation policy.<sup>14</sup> These absences become even more apparent when examining the 1970s. This thesis redresses the balance by moving Britain towards the centre of non-proliferation discussions over Pakistan during the 1970s.

In addressing this gap in the literature, this study does not ask *if* Britain influenced non-proliferation policy in the 1970s, but rather *how* it influenced non-proliferation policy. By adopting this approach, it makes plain that the governments of Harold Wilson (1974-76) and James Callaghan (1976-79), and the initial eighteen months of Margaret Thatcher’s first administration (1979-1983) played an important role in creating, shaping, and at times adversely affecting, non-proliferation policy on the sub-continent. In so doing, this thesis provides a focused case study to help illuminate the contours of Anglo-American relations regarding the spread of nuclear weapons to the developing world.

In analysing US and UK non-proliferation policy with regard to Pakistan in the 1970s, this study looks beyond the technical and technological aspects of non-proliferation to integrate analyses of policy, action, and culture. Although in the case of Pakistan technical and technological considerations are significant and play a role in US-UK non-proliferation policy, a focus by scholars on the technical aspects of non-proliferation—for example, the operation of supplier controls and means of retarding access to nuclear technologies—has dominated the literature on non-proliferation. This thesis follows the precedent set by William C. Potter in the early 1980s, where he challenged the preponderance of technical and economic considerations—and the focus on the United States—within the non-proliferation literature, issuing a clarion call for a broader examination of non-proliferation issues.<sup>15</sup> Potter warned against the purely technical view of non-proliferation, suggesting that it was simplistic to see non-proliferation as a mechanical challenge to be overcome, as if by

---

<sup>14</sup> Schrafstetter and Twigge, 10. In ‘Spinning into Europe: Britain, West Germany and the Netherlands: Uranium Enrichment and the Development of the Gas Centrifuge 1964-1970,’ *Contemporary European History*, 11:2 (May, 2002), 253-272, Schrafstetter and Twigge also provide a compelling account of Britain’s use of uranium enrichment centrifuge technology as a means to speed up integration with Europe, weaken the Franco-German axis, and ensure continued supplies of enriched uranium regardless of the effect on the US-UK relationship.

<sup>15</sup> William C. Potter, *Nuclear Power and Nonproliferation: An Interdisciplinary Perspective* (Cambridge, MA: Oelgeschlager, Gunn, and Hain, 1982), xiv-xv.

instrumentally restricting access to technology and imposing increasingly complex international laws the desire of some states to acquire nuclear weapons could be inhibited. Furthermore, Potter argued that this single-minded approach divorced the analysis of proliferation policy objectives from broader foreign policy considerations and ignored the connection between non-proliferation policies and domestic/foreign policy goals.<sup>16</sup>

Potter's call for a broader understanding of non-proliferation policy threads through recent literature on the topic. Selected examples include Jacques Hymans' argument that, for nations looking to attain nuclear capability, the psychological makeup of those in charge plays a significant—indeed, vital—role in decision making about how and when to pursue the atomic bomb. Hymans recapitulates many of Potter's arguments, noting that many works on non-proliferation that emerged after the implementation of the NPT placed an overweening emphasis on the technical aspects of non-proliferation: safeguarding nuclear facilities, the workings of the international regime, and technological means of preventing proliferation.<sup>17</sup> Within her study on American non-use of nuclear weapons from 1945 onwards, Nina Tannenwald offers a constructivist analysis of the role of moral norms—in particular the evolution of a 'nuclear taboo'—in inhibiting the proliferation of nuclear weapons.<sup>18</sup> These studies demonstrate that cultural factors are a vital element when analysing the phenomenon of nuclear proliferation and the efforts to combat it, which this thesis recognises and correspondingly reflects.

---

<sup>16</sup> Ibid, xiii-xv and 230-32.

<sup>17</sup> Jacques E. C. Hymans, *The Psychology of Nuclear Proliferation: Identity, Emotions and Foreign Policy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 11.

<sup>18</sup> Nina Tannenwald, *The Nuclear Taboo: The United States and the Non-use of Nuclear Weapons Since 1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007). For other approaches and methods of analysis, see for example Michael J. Brenner, who offers a still relevant analysis of bureaucratic and institutional factors affecting US non-proliferation policy in *Nuclear Power and Non-proliferation: The Remaking of U.S Policy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981); Peter A. Clausen takes a classically realist approach to the topic in *Non-proliferation and National Interest* (New York, NY: HarperCollins College Publishers, 1992); John Mueller provides a forthright interpretation of global nuclear fears in *Atomic Obsession: Nuclear Alarmism from Hiroshima to al-Qaeda* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); Mohamed I. Shaker's detailed work on the NPT remains relevant, see *The Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty: Origin and Implementation 1959-1979* (London: Oceana Publications, 1980); The idea of alarmism—defined by Mueller as an obsession with “an endless array of creative, if consistently unfulfilled, worst-case scenarios deriving from fears about the cold war arms race, nuclear apocalypse, and the proliferation of the weapons to unreliable states (or even to reliable ones)”, (Mueller, ix)—pervades the scholarship on proliferation. The history of proliferation is very much a history of pessimism in the face of a reality that contradicts such gloom. Francis J. Gavin argues in *Nuclear Statecraft: History and Strategy in America's Atomic Age* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2012) that nuclear alarmists claims are “overstated, and in some cases, wrong, emerging from a poor understanding of the history of nuclear proliferation and nonproliferation.” (Gavin, 135).

As this study argues, during 1979, a key change in non-proliferation policy occurred that typifies the need to look beyond technical considerations and examine the cultural components of non-proliferation policy and strategy. Often, the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan in December 1979 is cited as the turning point for proliferation policy towards Pakistan. Various scholars have confidently observed that after the intervention, the Carter administration—in the face of a reinvigorated Cold War—abandoned attempts to prevent Pakistani acquisition of nuclear capability in favour of bolstering their South Asian ally.<sup>19</sup> This thesis contends, however, that the major change from a policy of *prevention* of Pakistani acquisition to one of *mitigation* of that eventual acquisition took place in mid-1979, several months *before* the Afghanistan crisis. Key to this mitigation approach were requests by the US and UK that Pakistan should not test a nuclear device. This would be the most public expression of nuclear capability, and could cause considerable loss of credibility for the US and the UK who had invested so much in preventing Pakistani nuclear capability. Thus, considerations of national standing and ‘face’ played a significant role in shaping non-proliferation strategy and policy.

Following on from the above, woven into this analysis of US and UK non-proliferation policy is an important investigation into the cultural aspects of non-proliferation. During the late 1970s, the cultural paradigm of an ‘Islamic bomb,’ a nuclear weapon originating in Pakistan but which would allegedly be proliferated to other Muslim states because of the bonds of faith, emerged from the rhetoric of Pakistani leaders. This coincided with the rise of modern, political Islam, typified by the Iranian Revolution of 1979. The ‘Islamic bomb’ remains a powerful and influential trope today. Offering a detailed investigation of the roots and spread of this idea, this thesis demonstrates that while a media ‘scare’ developed around the issue, the ‘Islamic bomb’ construct had no actual effect on American and British non-proliferation policymaking in the case of Pakistan. While individuals within the US and UK governments may have expressed fears of an ‘Islamic bomb’ there is no evidence to suggest their concerns found concrete form in policy outcomes.

---

<sup>19</sup> For example, see Clausen, 152-153; Kaufman, 217-218; and Kux, 245-255.

Additionally, therefore, this thesis challenges the substantial body of literature that positions Pakistani nuclear aspirations as an ‘Islamic’ project. This literature is heavily influenced by the media accounts of ‘Muslim’ nuclear aspirations that came to prominence from 1979 onwards, the journalism of the 1970s, and continues to feed perceptions today. As Fawaz Gerges argues, “in the minds of many Americans, the menace of ‘extremist Islam’ is multiplied by its equation with domestic and international terrorism and the spectre of an Islamic nuclear bomb.”<sup>20</sup> This thesis demonstrates that hallmarks of these books (a belief in the United States as the almost sole actor, a contention that Washington could and should have prevented Pakistani nuclear acquisition, and a belief that Islam was a significant factor in the Pakistani drive for nuclear capability) are founded in media constructs established in the late 1970s. As this thesis emphasises, there were limited measures that either America or Britain could have taken short of military intervention that could have halted the Pakistani drive for nuclear capability. Steve Weissman and Herbert Krosney’s *The Islamic Bomb: The Nuclear Threat to Israel and the Middle East* is the foundational text of these accounts.<sup>21</sup> Krosney and Weisman write *The Islamic Bomb* more in the style of a cheap thriller than as a serious investigation into the issues surrounding international proliferation. As Eric Davis observes, Weissman and Krosney’s thesis is “glib” and anchored in a perception of Islam as irrational and violent.<sup>22</sup> Nevertheless, this book continues to be influential, referred to by commentators, politicians, and academic institutions such as the National Security Archive.<sup>23</sup>

The notion of an ‘Islamic bomb’ remains a popular theme in the media and the world of geopolitical punditry. In the post-9/11 milieu, a wide range of popular works on the Pakistan nuclear programme appeared in the years 2006-07, all inspired by the 2004 revelations about Pakistani scientist A.Q. Khan’s international nuclear proliferation network. The media devoted considerable space to detailing how Khan and his subordinates supplied

---

<sup>20</sup> Fawaz Gerges, *America and Political Islam: Clash of Cultures or Clash of Interests?* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 12.

<sup>21</sup> Steve Weissman and Herbert Krosney, *The Islamic Bomb: The Nuclear Threat to Israel and the Middle East* (New York, NY: Times Books, 1981).

<sup>22</sup> Eric Davis, review, ‘The Middle East Arms Race,’ *MERIP Reports*, 111, Rapid Deployment and Nuclear War (January, 1983), 26-27.

<sup>23</sup> For example, when examining the evidence for Libyan involvement in the Pakistani nuclear programme of the 1970s, Feroz Hassan Khan almost entirely relies on Weissman and Krosney. See Feroz Hassan Khan, *Eating Grass: The Making of the Pakistani Bomb* (Stanford, CA: Stanford Security Studies/Stanford University Press, 2012). The excellent online briefing books of the National Security Archive also frequently footnote Weissman and Krosney.

nuclear technology to Iran, Libya, and North Korea. From these dramatic tales of intrigue sprang alarmist works typified by David Armstrong and Joseph Trento's *America and the Islamic Bomb: The Deadly Compromise*.<sup>24</sup> All of these books place an overwhelming reliance on media sources, anonymous or unreliable interviewees, and secondary texts.<sup>25</sup> Furthermore, they all implicitly support the 'Clash of Civilizations' thesis—arguing that global conflict is now rooted in tension between the largely secular, rational West and the religious, irrational 'Islamic world'—popularised by scholars Bernard Lewis and Samuel P. Huntington.<sup>26</sup> This emphasises the need for a rigorous, archivally based study that examines the origins and—most importantly for US-UK non-proliferation policy—influence of the 'Islamic bomb' paradigm. This thesis therefore demonstrates that it was not religion but the cultural factors of credibility and 'face' that had the greatest influence on British and American non-proliferation policy in the case of Pakistan.

In investigating the paradigm of the 'Islamic bomb,' this thesis thus forms part of a broader school of literature that analyses the impact of cultural factors on nuclear issues. Although the cultural construct of religion in the form of the 'Islamic bomb' did not have the effect on policymaking that might be expected, there were irrefutably cultural factors—namely credibility and international standing—that *did* significantly influence policy and strategy. Correspondingly, this study may be located among the works of scholars such as Matthew Jones, Shane J. Maddock, and George Perkovich, who have discovered that cultural constructs such as race, gender, and identity, exerted a powerful influence on nuclear policymaking. The pioneering work of Matthew Jones analyses US nuclear policy in Asia

---

<sup>24</sup> David Armstrong and Joseph Trento, *America and the Islamic Bomb: The Deadly Compromise* (Hanover, NH: Steerforth Press, 2007), 89-91; See also Gordon Corera, *Shopping for Bombs: Nuclear Proliferation, Global Insecurity and the Rise and Fall of the A. Q. Khan Network* (London: Hurst & Co., 2006), 30-31; Douglas Frantz and Catherine Collins, *The Man From Pakistan: The True Story of the World's Most Dangerous Nuclear Smuggler* (New York, NY: Hachette Book Group, 2007), 107-108; Adrian Levy and Catherine Scott-Clark, *Deception: Pakistan, the United States, and the Secret Trade in Nuclear Weapons* (New York, NY: Walker & Co., 2007), 70; Al Venter, *Allah's Bomb: The Islamic Quest For Nuclear Weapons* (Guilford, CT: The Lyons Press, 2007). The first printing of Frantz and Collins' work was titled *The Nuclear Jihadist*, a name changed after complaints regarding inaccuracy and potential legal complications. Levy and Scott-Clark offer the most outlandish claims, arguing for a decades-long US conspiracy to cover-up and aid the Pakistani nuclear programme. Ironically, this volume pays most attention to Britain's role in the affair.

<sup>25</sup> Mark Hibbs offers a detailed review of Armstrong and Trento, Frantz and Collins, and Levy and Scott-Clark in 'Pakistan's Bomb: Mission Unstoppable,' *The Nonproliferation Review* 15:2 (July, 2008), 381-391, noting the unreliability of two of the main characters in all three books, Welsh arms dealer Peter Griffin and disaffected CIA operative Richard Barlow.

<sup>26</sup> Bernard Lewis, 'The Roots of Muslim Rage,' *The Atlantic Monthly*, September 1990, [www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1990/09/the-roots-of-muslim-rage/304643](http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1990/09/the-roots-of-muslim-rage/304643) (accessed on February 10, 2014); Samuel P. Huntington, 'The Clash of Civilizations?,' *Foreign Affairs* 72:3 (Summer, 1993), 22-49.

through the lens of race, demonstrating the previously undervalued impact of race, racism, and racial issues on nuclear affairs.<sup>27</sup> Maddock integrates an examination of race and gender into his chronological overview of US non-proliferation policy from 1945 to 1970.<sup>28</sup> Although concentrating on the Indian nuclear programme, George Perkovich's *India's Nuclear Bomb* makes an important contribution to the general area of this study. Perkovich argues against the dominant theory that India developed nuclear capability because of national security concerns related to China and Pakistan, instead contending that domestic politics, and moral and political norms bound up in the evolving post-colonial identity of India, have been more significant determinants of India's nuclear policy.<sup>29</sup> More narrowly, this thesis situates itself within a significant body of work that examines the role and salience of the cultural construct of religion in foreign affairs and on those who make foreign policy.<sup>30</sup> Critically, however, this thesis argues that despite considerable public disquiet over the 'Islamic bomb' and the efforts of the Israeli state to use the issue to promote its own interests, the paradigm failed to influence actual non-proliferation policy in the case of Pakistan, thus challenging the popular literature and the findings of scholars such as Hugh Gusterson, who argue that fear of 'Islamic' nuclear proliferation has been a significant force in non-proliferation policy since the 1970s.<sup>31</sup>

---

<sup>27</sup> Matthew Jones, *After Hiroshima: The United States, Race, and Nuclear Weapons in Asia, 1945-1965* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

<sup>28</sup> Shane J. Maddock, *Nuclear Apartheid: The Quest for American Atomic Supremacy from World War II to the Present* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010). For a comprehensive review of Maddock's work, see Thomas Maddux and Diane Labrosse (eds.), H-Diplo/ISSF Review Roundtable, *Nuclear Apartheid: The Quest for American Atomic Supremacy from World War II to the Present*, June 17, 2011, [www.h-net.org/~diplo/ISSF/PDF/ISSF-Roundtable-2-10.pdf](http://www.h-net.org/~diplo/ISSF/PDF/ISSF-Roundtable-2-10.pdf).

<sup>29</sup> George Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb: The Impact On Global Proliferation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 5-6.

<sup>30</sup> Two similarly titled volumes that explore a variety of perspectives, states, and relationships are Dianne Kirby (ed.), *Religion and the Cold War* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2003) and Philip Muehlenbeck (ed.), *Religion and the Cold War: A Global Perspective* (Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press, 2012); Patricia R. Hill outlines the difficulties of using religion as a category of analysis in the history of foreign relations in 'Commentary: Religion as a Category of Diplomatic Analysis,' *Diplomatic History* 24:4 (Fall, 2000), 633-640. Andrew Preston has recently gone on to show that these difficulties are by no mean insurmountable in his path-breaking work *Sword of the Spirit, Shield of Faith: Religion in American War and Diplomacy* (New York, NY: Anchor Books, 2012) that demonstrates in detail how and why religion has infused and influenced American foreign policy from the earliest days of the republic. Andrew Rotter argues that in the early years after Partition, US policymakers had the greater antipathy towards Indian Hinduism and saw Pakistani Islam as closer to their own Christian beliefs. See Andrew J. Rotter, 'Christians, Muslims, and Hindus: Religion and U.S.-South Asian Relations, 1947-1954,' *Diplomatic History*, 24:4 (Fall, 2000), 593-613.

<sup>31</sup> Hugh Gusterson, 'Nuclear Weapons and the Other in the Western Imagination,' *Cultural Anthropology*, 14:1 (February, 1999), 111-143, 125-26.

Since this study focuses on the United States and United Kingdom, it is not primarily concerned with the evolution of the Pakistani nuclear weapons programme, technically, politically, or culturally. It investigates American and British attitudes and policies towards Pakistan, not Pakistan itself. There are several reasons for this. Primarily, this is a study of US and UK policy. Secondly, there is very little—if any—extant official primary source documentation available from Pakistan. The government of Pakistan is rigorous in preventing foreign scholars from examining materials related to the nuclear programme. Thus, researchers must rely on secondary sources, often written by former Pakistani ‘insiders’ and frequently unhelpfully speculative. Useful studies of the ‘insider’ variety include those by Feroz Hassan Khan, Kamal Matinuddin, and Saeem Nalik.<sup>32</sup> As former senior Pakistani military officers, these men bring substantial personal experience to their respective studies, and there is considerable reliance on interviews that could only be gained by insiders. There are, however, problems inherent in such works in that there is a reticence on the part of the authors to delve into certain areas and, significantly, they rely largely on popular works on the Pakistani nuclear programme. However, by making careful use of such accounts, Pakistani voices are granted a presence as far as possible within this study.

With its firm focus on foreign relations, this thesis takes as its key sources documents associated with the foreign policy arms of the US and UK governments. These have been acquired from the national archives of both states, and from collections associated with particular leaders, such as the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library, the Jimmy Carter Presidential Library, and the Margaret Thatcher Archives. Through research into these US and UK government documents, this thesis offers significant new insights into non-proliferation in the 1970s. Many of the sources consulted have only recently been declassified, or have been declassified through freedom of information requests made as part of the research for this work. In terms of media sources, this thesis utilises the major newspapers of record from the United States (the *Washington Post* and *New York Times*) and

---

<sup>32</sup> Khan, *Eating Grass*; Kamal Matinuddin, *The Nuclearization of South Asia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); Naeem Salik, *The Genesis of South Asian Nuclear Deterrence: Pakistan’s Perspective* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

United Kingdom (*The Times* and the *Guardian*). Finally, there have been investigations into critical oral history collections in order to provide nuance to various points within the thesis. In this regard, the British Diplomatic Oral History Project (BDOHP) administered by Churchill College Cambridge has been an invaluable resource.

In order to chart the progression of US-UK non-proliferation policy, this thesis is structured chronologically. Chapter One focuses on the impact of the Indian nuclear test on May 18 1974 on the sub-continental non-proliferation policies of the Nixon-Ford administration and Wilson governments up to the end of 1975.

Chapter Two examines in detail the changes that took place in 1976, in particular, the transition during the late-period Ford administration from non-proliferation laxity to a more active policy. This was also the period when British government officials discovered the first hints that Pakistan was, in addition to its very public quest for a nuclear reprocessing plant, undertaking a clandestine purchasing programme aimed at building a uranium enrichment plant.

Chapter Three studies the arrival of Jimmy Carter in the White House and the effects his dedication to non-proliferation had on relations with the Callaghan government *and* on joint-action directed against Pakistan. This chapter also demonstrates that British economic requirements and the energy crisis created by the ‘oil shocks’ of the 1970s intersected in adverse ways with non-proliferation policy as it related to Pakistan.

Chapter Four, examining the period from March to December 1978, interrogates the formation of a strong Anglo-American alliance to prevent Pakistani acquisition of nuclear capability. While Pakistan was pursuing the twin means of reprocessing and enrichment in order to access fissile material, the US and UK governments engaged in coordinated diplomatic efforts aimed at cutting off Pakistani access to vital nuclear equipment and materials.

Chapter Five stresses the hugely significant change from a strategy of prevention to a strategy of mitigation. The Carter administration and the Callaghan and Thatcher governments radically changed their non-proliferation policies in the case of Pakistan, in essence acquiescing to eventual Pakistani nuclear status while taking overt and covert action



to retard the attainment of that status as much as possible. This chapter also offers a detailed account of the public and private impact of the 'Islamic bomb,' demonstrating that while there was a media outcry surrounding perceived proliferation throughout the Muslim world, such concerns did not have the same impact in Washington or London.

Finally, Chapter Six assesses the impact of the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan on non-proliferation policy. This chapter explains that the policies of America and Britain underwent further change, transitioning from a stance of mitigation combined with withholding arms sales and aid to a posture where mitigation of nuclear attainment was de-linked from arms sales and aid. This ultimately found expression through US and UK willingness to arm Pakistan in the face of perceived aggressive Soviet expansionism.

# Chapter 1: “No hope of preventing proliferation”

## May 1974 to December 1975

---

In December 1975, the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) issued a report arguing that globally there was “no hope of preventing proliferation.”<sup>1</sup> This fatalistic analysis came after eighteen months of half-hearted and generally fruitless American and British attempts to persuade Pakistan—a key state highlighted by the CIA—not to go down the nuclear path. In the aftermath of India’s May 18, 1974 nuclear test, the US and UK did little to discourage Pakistani nuclear ambitions, despite ample evidence—in the form of statements by Pakistani politicians and an overt quest for advanced nuclear facilities—that Islamabad sought nuclear weapons to counterbalance the new Indian capability.

During 1974 and 1975, notable differences existed between United States and United Kingdom on non-proliferation matters. America concentrated on regional factors, in particular the sub-continental rivalry between India and Pakistan. America founded its regional focus in a desire not to highlight Nixon and Kissinger’s extreme *laissez-faire* attitude towards non-proliferation from 1969 to 1974. Furthermore, Henry Kissinger’s fatalism about proliferation and emphasis on regional security reinforced the American position. Britain concentrated on the Indian test’s wider effects on the terrain of non-proliferation, unwilling to damage relations with its two ex-colonies and aware of the potential hypocrisy of a nuclear weapon state (NWS) being overly critical of a new entrant to the ‘nuclear club.’

Arms sales to the sub-continent—in particular advanced aircraft—played a major role during this period. On one hand, the United States used weapons sales as a non-proliferation tool to either bribe or coerce Pakistan into foregoing nuclear capability. On the other hand, Britain’s determination to land a lucrative Indian contract for strike aircraft actively inhibited non-proliferation by alarming Islamabad. Despite debates in London, British commercial considerations took precedence over anti-proliferation imperatives.

---

<sup>1</sup> CIA Office of Political Research, ‘Managing Nuclear Proliferation: the Politics of Limited Choice,’ December, 1975 (exact date unknown), National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book (hereafter NSAEBB) ‘National Intelligence Estimates of the Nuclear Proliferation Problem: the First Ten Years, 1957-1967’ (hereafter ‘NIENP’), [www2.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB155/index.htm](http://www2.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB155/index.htm) (accessed on March 5, 2013), Doc.15, 40.

This eighteen-month period highlights many issues that remained significant for the rest of the 1970s. These included the deleterious effects of British economic self-interest on non-proliferation goals and American political decisions in favour of Pakistan. Provoked by Indian actions, Pakistan would become the most significant US and UK proliferation concern as the decade progressed.

### **The Indian Test**

For America and Britain, the Indian detonation of May 18, 1974 was a nuclear Rubicon. The explosion under the Rajasthan desert destroyed the fragile perceptive membrane embodied in the NPT that separated civilian and military nuclear technology. The explosion had implications far beyond the sub-continent and, as Michael J. Brenner contends, the test “blew a psychological hole in the world’s confident perception of how difficult it was for a marginally proficient state to build a bomb, and how hard it was to evade safeguards against the surreptitious exploitation of a nominally civilian program.”<sup>2</sup> As Samina Ahmed notes, the test was also a turning point that set Pakistan irrevocably along the nuclear weapons path.<sup>3</sup> The US and the UK reacted to the explosion in a modest fashion, but for quite different reasons. President Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger (occupying the dual role of Secretary of State and National Security Adviser), despite an outwardly exemplary arms control record—such as the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT) and the Anti Ballistic Missile (ABM) treaty—lacked enthusiasm for preventing the further horizontal and vertical proliferation of nuclear weapons.<sup>4</sup> This was despite the fact that it was the relaxation in superpower tensions inherent in détente that allowed non-proliferation to flourish.<sup>5</sup> The Nixon administration saw the Indian test as a fundamentally regional issue, and treated it as such, seeking to de-emphasise US laxity on non-proliferation matters and avoid setting a precedent demanding future action on non-proliferation. Harold Wilson’s government emphasised the case’s global consequences in an effort to avoid antagonising either India or Pakistan by singling them out for criticism. Furthermore, Foreign Secretary James Callaghan

---

<sup>2</sup> Brenner, 64.

<sup>3</sup> Samina Ahmed, ‘Pakistan’s Nuclear Weapons Program: Turning Points and Nuclear Choices,’ *International Security*, 23:4 (Spring, 1999), 183-184.

<sup>4</sup> Gavin, 104-105.

<sup>5</sup> Clausen, 74-76.

wished to avoid the suggestion of hypocrisy inherent in a NWS criticising another nation for gaining atomic capability.

India presented its test as a “peaceful nuclear explosion” (PNE) designed to gain scientific data and examine the civil engineering possibilities of nuclear explosives, Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi insisting that there was “nothing to get excited about.”<sup>6</sup> The distinction between peaceful and non-peaceful explosions built into the NPT allowed this characterisation of the detonation.<sup>7</sup> A majority of Indians welcomed the test and it provided a much-needed political boost for Gandhi.<sup>8</sup> Journalists reported a mood of national rejoicing at all levels of Indian society, despite the shadows of economic deprivation and labour unrest.<sup>9</sup> US analysts noted that alongside the morale effect of the explosion, New Delhi also hoped that Indian nuclear capability would have a deterrent effect on China. However, this was at the cost of provoking considerable alarm in Pakistan.<sup>10</sup>

The State Department informed Kissinger about the test during the twenty-first day of exhausting shuttle diplomacy in the Middle East. The Secretary of State ordered his subordinates to remain silent but, if pressed, to offer a low-key response, stating that, “the United States has always been against nuclear proliferation for the adverse impact it will have on world stability.”<sup>11</sup> Kissinger rejected the State Department’s draft of a critical response to Indian actions. Bilateral relations were one reason for this. Dennis Kux notes that Kissinger had concluded, “public scolding would not undo the event, but only add to US-Indian bilateral problems and reduce the influence Washington might have on India’s future nuclear policy.”<sup>12</sup> Relations with India had been problematic at least since the 1971 Indo-

---

<sup>6</sup> Walter Schwarz, 'India Joins Nuclear Club,' The *Guardian* (hereafter *TG*), May 19, 1974, 1.

<sup>7</sup> Potter, 44.

<sup>8</sup> Perkovich, 179.

<sup>9</sup> Inder Malhotra, 'Atomic Jubilation Sweeps India,' *TG*, May 20, 1974, 3.

<sup>10</sup> US Mission to NATO, 'Assessment of Indian Nuclear Test,' June 5, 1974, NSAEBB 'India and Pakistan-On the Nuclear Threshold,' (hereafter IPNT), [www2.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB6](http://www2.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB6) (accessed on March 5, 2013), Doc.18, 1-2.

<sup>11</sup> United States Embassy (hereafter USE) Damascus to State Department (hereafter 'State'), 'Indian Nuclear Test,' May 18, 1974, US National Archives and Records Administration Access to Archival Databases system (hereafter NARA AAD), 1974DAMAS00764.

<sup>12</sup> Kux, *Estranged Democracies*, 315.

Pakistani War, when the United States had ‘tilted’ towards Pakistan.<sup>13</sup> However, bilateral relations were not the sole motivating factor.

Kissinger had a fatalistic view of the inevitability of proliferation that de-emphasised non-proliferation as a foreign policy priority.<sup>14</sup> The relative importance that Kissinger attached to non-proliferation is highlighted, as George Perkovich notes, by the fact that in the relevant volume of his memoirs, neither the Indian test nor the general problem of proliferation are discussed.<sup>15</sup> Coupled to this, Kissinger *and* Nixon believed that nuclear weapons did not actually transform the way nations behaved. Atomic bombs, according to this view, were important, but they did not alter more powerful political forces. Arms control was thus a useful tool, but not an end in itself.<sup>16</sup> Treating the Indian test as fundamentally a regional issue and downplaying its significance allowed Kissinger to achieve three broader political goals. Firstly, not reacting to the test and treating India as just another state mitigated the ‘prestige’ effect of nuclear acquisition. Secondly, a strong stance against India would have required a strong stance against all other proliferators.<sup>17</sup> Such broader non-proliferation action was not a desired part of Kissinger’s finely tuned network of policies and alliances. Thirdly, and finally, J. Samuel Walker argues that the subdued reaction to the test can at least in part be accounted for by Nixon-Kissinger plans to export nuclear technology to Israel and Egypt, plans that were enacted a mere month after the Indian detonation.<sup>18</sup>

A rapidly produced State Department analysis emphasised that containing an adverse Pakistani reaction was the most immediately pressing issue, an interpretation confirmed when Pakistani Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto angrily commented that Pakistan would never be the victim of “nuclear blackmail” or be intimidated by India.<sup>19</sup>

---

<sup>13</sup> Robert Dallek, *Nixon and Kissinger: Partners in Power* (New York, NY: HarperCollins, 2007), 349-352.

<sup>14</sup> Clausen, 115.

<sup>15</sup> Perkovich, 184fn162.

<sup>16</sup> Gavin, 105-106.

<sup>17</sup> Brenner, 69.

<sup>18</sup> J. Samuel Walker, ‘Nuclear Power and Nonproliferation: The Controversy Over Nuclear Exports, 1974-1980,’ *Diplomatic History*, 25:2 (Spring, 2001), 222.

<sup>19</sup> State to Mission to the International Atomic Energy Agency (hereafter M-IAEA), ‘Indian Nuclear Tests,’ May 18, 1974, *Foreign Relations of the United States 1969-1976* (hereafter *FRUS* 69-76), Volume E8 ‘Documents on South Asia, 1973-1976,’ <http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76ve08> (accessed on November 13, 2013), Doc. 162, 2; United Kingdom Embassy (hereafter UKE) Islamabad to Foreign & Commonwealth Office (hereafter FCO), ‘Indian Nuclear Explosion,’ May 20, 1974, The National Archives of the United Kingdom (hereafter TNA) Foreign & Commonwealth Office Files (hereafter FCO) 66/653.

There was also the consideration that other nuclear “potentials” were watching the US reaction very closely.<sup>20</sup> Nixon and Kissinger had far less belief in the significance of nuclear weapons than the US arms control community did, and the subdued response to the test provoked concern over the long-term impact on proliferation. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA) Director Fred Iklé warned of the impact on regional South Asian stability, the dire consequences for further ratification of the NPT, and the potential impetus that the Indian test could give to other nations’ nuclear programmes.<sup>21</sup> This was a warning that Iklé had been issuing for years. As far back as 1965, he argued that if proliferation cascaded beyond the “middle powers” then the result would be “owners of nuclear weapons who cannot be deterred because they feel they have nothing to lose.”<sup>22</sup> Led by Iklé, the ACDA had been the only organisation within the US government to maintain, as Michael Brenner points out, “an institutional and intellectual commitment to the spirit of non-proliferation, as well as to the law of the Non-Proliferation Treaty.”<sup>23</sup> Kissinger approved Iklé’s take on events as a response to individual enquiries, with the proviso that communications did not suggest that the US was attempting to marshal opinion against India and an order not to comment on the wider proliferation issues the test raised.<sup>24</sup> The State Department recognised the dichotomy of the US position: avoiding being seen as orchestrating a worldwide campaign against India, while evading perceptions of acquiescence to Indian nuclear status. The State Department instructed US diplomatic posts around the world not to take the initiative in raising the test.<sup>25</sup>

The response to the Indian test had a similar, but subtly different, tone in London. The British government initially reacted along analogous lines to the US, stating, “We would regret the explosion of any nuclear device, even for peaceful purposes, outside the context of

---

<sup>20</sup> State to M-IAEA, ‘May 18, 1974, 2.

<sup>21</sup> State to USE Jerusalem, ‘U.S. Position on Indian Nuclear Test,’ May 18, 1974, NARA AAD, 1974STATE104621, 1-2; US Mission to the United Nations to USE Damascus, ‘Indian Nuclear Test,’ May 20, 1974, NARA AAD, 1974USUNN01875.

<sup>22</sup> Fred Iklé, quoted in Gavin, 7.

<sup>23</sup> Brenner, 83.

<sup>24</sup> USE Jerusalem to State, ‘US Position on Indian Nuclear Test,’ May 19, 1974, NARA AAD, 1974JERUSA00966.

<sup>25</sup> State to USE Jerusalem, ‘US Position on Indian Nuclear Test,’ May 19, 1974, NARA AAD, 1974STATE104655.

the NPT.<sup>26</sup> Foreign Secretary Callaghan—a man committed to re-emphasising the trans-Atlantic relationship after the relative stagnation of the Heath years—stated that this event demonstrated the need for the NPT.<sup>27</sup> Thus, from the outset Britain placed the situation within a global non-proliferation context. The test provoked Pakistani comment on valuable resources being diverted to the Indian nuclear programme when foreign aid was required for basic human needs and the Labour government’s response to the test was coloured by the fact that financial assistance to India amounted to nearly twenty-per cent of the UK foreign aid budget.<sup>28</sup> The Wilson government wished to avoid entangling the two issues.<sup>29</sup> The UK was far less concerned about the influence on Pakistan when compared to the test’s impact on the global non-proliferation environment, reflecting Callaghan’s and the parliamentary Labour party’s pragmatic internationalism that emphasised global co-operation, the strengthening of international institutions, and multilateral disarmament.<sup>30</sup> There was also the fact that while the Cabinet had to deal with global nuclear issues, there were popular and vocal anti-nuclear elements in the wider party, typified by Members of Parliament (MPs) Frank Allaun and Tam Dalyell, who would both come to prominence as the Pakistani nuclear weapons programme became a major public issue in the late 1970s. Pakistani Foreign Secretary Agha Shahi’s ominous statement that, “A qualitatively new situation has thus arisen, a situation full of menace to the security of India’s immediate neighbours. The barrier to nuclear proliferation interposed by the NPT has been demolished. A precedent has been set” gave the Wilson government’s concerns increased salience<sup>31</sup>

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) advised Callaghan—in Washington for a meeting of Central Treaty Organisation (CENTO) foreign ministers due to take place

---

<sup>26</sup> UK Delegation Geneva to FCO, ‘Indian Nuclear Explosion,’ May 18, 1974, TNA FCO 66/653.

<sup>27</sup> Lane, in Seldon and Hickson (eds.), 155; Anon., ‘Pakistan Enters Fray on Indian A-Test,’ *TG*, May 22, 1974, 4. In contrast to the prevailing scholarly opinion, Niklas H. Rossbach argues that the Heath-Nixon years saw a survival of the ‘special relationship,’ despite London and Washington’s at times conflicting interests. See *Heath, Nixon and the Rebirth of the Special Relationship: Britain, the US and the EC, 1969–74* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.)

<sup>28</sup> Claire Provost, ‘UK aid: where does it go and how has it changed since 1960?’ *TG*, April 14, 2011, data spreadsheet <https://spreadsheets.google.com/ccc?key=0AonYZs4MzlZbdGY4VXR1RmRkY0dOUg9jejNEM0JNaEE&hl=en> (accessed on November 13, 2013).

<sup>29</sup> UK Delegation to UNICEF to FCO, ‘Indian Nuclear Test,’ May 23, 1974, TNA FCO66/653.

<sup>30</sup> Lane, 156; Vickers, 105.

<sup>31</sup> Agha Shahi, quoted in Sumit Ganguly, ‘The Indian and Pakistani Nuclear Programmes: a Race to Oblivion?’ in Raju G.C. Thomas (ed.), *The Nuclear Non-proliferation Regime: Prospects for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1998), 278.

on May 22—that the NPT’s status was paramount and that the Indian explosion represented a tipping point that threatened to lead to a proliferation cascade. The FCO, like Kissinger, cautioned restraint, but for quite different reasons, arguing along Callaghan’s lines that:

We do not wish to take a strong line against the Indian government.  
A) because as a nuclear weapon state such a posture might appear hypocritical and  
B) because any appearance of taking sides between India and Pakistan would certainly adversely affect our own position in the sub-continent.  
Nor should we wish to commit ourselves to any kind of open-ended guarantee of the kind which Mr Bhutto appears to envisage.<sup>32</sup>

The FCO articulated much more ephemeral anxieties than those voiced by Kissinger and Iklé. The essential hypocrisy of the nuclear weapon states when it came to nuclear development, especially in the developing world, and lingering British loyalty to its former colonies came to the fore. Furthermore, Britain was reluctant to acquiesce to Bhutto’s demands for nuclear security assurances. The main tool for reassuring India’s neighbour, the FCO argued, should be the NPT and the security assurances *it* guaranteed.<sup>33</sup> Informed observers at the British Embassy in Islamabad suggested a great intensity of feeling in Pakistan about the nuclear security question and, more specifically, argued that if the Wilson government did not take a strong stance, British interests in the country would suffer.<sup>34</sup> Despite this warning and despite couching their entire response within the framework of the NPT, the government delayed, choosing to sit and watch the unfolding superpower reactions.<sup>35</sup>

As the impact of the test was absorbed, officials in Washington and London sought to evaluate each other’s views on the test. The assessment from the US Embassy in London offered a mixed outlook, characterising the Wilson government as being in a conflicted situation, torn between its commitment to international disarmament and its need to maintain a close friendship with India. US officials saw Wilson and his cabinet as more likely to base their actions around wider NPT concerns, rather than making direct points to the Indians

---

<sup>32</sup> FCO to UKE Washington, ‘Nuclear Test Explosion in India,’ May 20, 1974, TNA FCO66/653, 2-3.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> UKE Islamabad to UKE Washington, ‘Nuclear Test Explosion in India,’ May 21, 1974, TNA FCO66/653.

<sup>35</sup> FCO to UK Delegation Geneva, ‘Indian Nuclear Explosion,’ May 20, 1974, TNA Prime Ministerial Files (hereafter PREM) 16/1182.



about the impact of their nuclear actions.<sup>36</sup> In addition, nuclear questions began to tie into questions of conventional arms supplies to the sub-continent. Britain was liable to come under increasing pressure from Pakistan (then labouring under a United States arms embargo put in place by the Johnson administration during the 1965 Indo-Pakistani war) to sell advanced aircraft.<sup>37</sup> The Americans were unsure which way the UK would jump, but felt that the US stance on arms sales would be a major contributing factor in any British decision.<sup>38</sup> US consular officials correctly assessed that Britain placed a greater emphasis on the NPT, as opposed to the sub-continental implications.<sup>39</sup> Communicating from Washington, Sir Peter Ramsbotham (British ambassador to the United States) noted three days after the test that the Americans had not yet formulated a definitive view on the issue. Speaking to the ambassador, Dennis Kux, the State Department's Indian section chief, had placed Pakistan at the top of the priority list, suggesting that the explosion would send a "shiver down their spines." It would take time, Ramsbotham suggested, for the various departments of the US government to determine the full impact on Pakistan and on the wider non-proliferation environment.<sup>40</sup>

In Washington on May 22, American, British, and Pakistani representatives came together face-to-face at the pre-arranged CENTO foreign ministers meeting.<sup>41</sup> CENTO had been a source of disappointment for Pakistan, with the other treaty countries—the UK, Iran, Iraq, and Turkey—refusing to involve themselves in the Indo-Pakistani wars of 1965 and 1971. The crux of Pakistan's disappointment rested upon a misunderstanding of the organisation's nature: Islamabad imagined CENTO standing against the USSR *and* India, while the other nations—in particular Britain—saw it as a purely anti-Soviet measure. Nixon argued that Pakistani security in the wake of the Indian nuclear test was of prime importance and

---

<sup>36</sup> USE London to State, 'British Reaction to Indian Nuclear Testing,' May 20, 1974, NARA AAD, 1974STATE104647, 2.

<sup>37</sup> For more on the 1965 embargo, see Kux, *Disenchanted Allies*, 161-165.

<sup>38</sup> USE London to State, May 20, 1974, 3.

<sup>39</sup> USE London to State, 'Further British Concern Over Indian Nuclear Actions,' May 28, 1974, NARA AAD, 1974LONDON07588.

<sup>40</sup> UKE Washington to FCO, 'Indian Nuclear Explosion,' May 21, 1974, TNA FCO66/653, 1-2.

<sup>41</sup> The United States was the architect of CENTO and sat on the Military Council of the alliance, but was not a full member.

characterised the US-UK position as having a “restraining influence on those who might be tempted -- to go under or over a border to destroy a country’s independence.” Nixon suggested that if the US went so far as to re-establish dialogue with India, it would be to encourage Indian restraint.<sup>42</sup> Aziz Ahmed, Pakistani Minister of State for Defense and Foreign Affairs, attempted to pressure the nuclear weapon states into adopting a tone more critical of India, to no avail. Ahmed’s pleas that the USSR was abusing détente to infiltrate Afghanistan, India, and Iraq likewise fell on deaf ears.<sup>43</sup>

Despite Ahmed’s entreaties being ignored, reassuring Pakistan was key to a private meeting between Nixon and his Pakistani guest. Although US policy was broadly supportive of Pakistan, prior to the meeting the State Department suggested that at this stage little could be done by the administration other than offer bland commitment to do something once the test’s full implications had been assessed.<sup>44</sup> The Pakistani diplomat—drawing on the treaty of friendship between India and the Soviet Union and what Islamabad now realised was CENTO’s true nature—portrayed the Indian test as part of a wider Soviet scheme to gain influence in South Asia. Ahmed actively sought two things from Nixon: conventional arms to defend Pakistan from further attack and nuclear security assurances to “reduce the incentive [for Pakistan] to get nuclear weapons.”<sup>45</sup> Although Ahmed was speaking in general terms, this was a hint of the direction in which Pakistan was heading. Ahmed also presaged the much more explicit hints given by Pakistani officials in future meetings that insufficient US help would force Pakistan down the nuclear path. Nixon agreed in principle to Ahmed’s requests, but commented that nothing could really be done at this stage. The President noted that he would make the US commitment to Pakistan clear to the Soviets and, if possible, encourage restraint in Moscow. Nuclear security guarantees were a complex area that, although agreeable to Nixon, was difficult to implement. The President thought it would be

---

<sup>42</sup> Memorandum of Conversation (hereafter Memcon), Nixon and CENTO Foreign Ministers, May 22, 1974, *FRUS* 69-76, Vol.E8, Doc.74, 1-2.

<sup>43</sup> State to USE Kabul, ‘The Pakistanis at the CENTO Ministerial,’ May 25, 1974, *FRUS* 69-76, Vol.E8, Doc.75, 2.

<sup>44</sup> Memorandum for Scowcroft, The White House, ‘President’s Meeting With Pakistan’s Minister of State,’ May 22, 1974, The Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library (hereafter GRFPL), National Security Adviser Files (hereafter NSAF), Presidential Country Files for Middle East and South Asia, Box 26, Pakistan, 1-3.

<sup>45</sup> Memcon, Nixon, Scowcroft, Ahmed, May 23, 1974, *FRUS* 69-76, Vol.E8, Doc.164, 2-3.

difficult to put such guarantees into a treaty, harking back to his and Kissinger's lack of faith in the credibility of nuclear-based commitments.<sup>46</sup>

Following these face-to-face meetings, letters sent by Bhutto to Nixon and Wilson on May 24 gave the strongest hint yet that Pakistan desired nuclear capability. These letters formed part of a major Pakistani diplomatic campaign, with similarly worded missives sent to scores of world leaders.<sup>47</sup> Disparaging the Indian claim that the test was a "peaceful nuclear explosion," Bhutto argued that the detonation would provoke many more national nuclear weapons programmes. The Pakistani Prime Minister portrayed his country as the victim of continual Indian aggression and emphasised his attempts at cross-border compromise. On the letter's last page, Bhutto stated, "Pakistan will do its utmost to resist pressures toward a nuclear option. But these pressures will increase if there is no credible political insurance against nuclear blackmail."<sup>48</sup> Here the leader of the country most affected by the Indian explosion made a barely veiled threat to pursue a nuclear weapons programme if Pakistan was not offered adequate protection. This should not have come as any great surprise; Bhutto had signposted his intentions as far back as 1965 when he made his famous statement that Pakistanis would "eat grass" in order to match any future Indian nuclear capability.<sup>49</sup> Bhutto's 1965 comments—well publicised in the aftermath of the Indian test—led Agha Shahi to state that Pakistan could not bear the costs of a nuclear weapons programme, but (echoing his Prime Minister's letters to Nixon) the internal pressures might be too much to resist.<sup>50</sup>

Wilson, influenced by the FCO Arms Control and Disarmament Department's (ACDD) thinking on the test's implications, attempted to mollify Bhutto by agreeing with

---

<sup>46</sup> Ibid; Pakistan also raised the issue of nuclear security guarantees at every possible international venue. See Bhumitra Chakma, *Strategic Dynamics and Nuclear Weapons Proliferation in South Asia: A Historical Analysis* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2004), 146fn48.

<sup>47</sup> CIA, 'Bhutto Seeks Nuclear Policy Assurances,' *National Intelligence Daily*, May 30, 1974, CIA Freedom of Information Electronic Reading Room (hereafter CIA-FOIA), Doc.0000845825.

<sup>48</sup> Bhutto to Nixon, 'Text of Message From Mr. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, Prime Minister of Pakistan to His Excellency Richard M. Nixon, President of the United States of America,' Letter, May 24, 1974, GRFPL, National Security Council Institutional Files, Box 105, Chronological File—Fazio, James (1), 3; Bhutto to Wilson, Letter, May 24, 1974, TNA PREM16/1182, Doc.11, 3. The Bhutto letter, delivered via the Pakistani Ambassador to the UK, arrived at 10 Downing Street on May 28.

<sup>49</sup> Patrick Keatley, 'The Brown Bomb,' *TG*, March 11, 1965, 10.

<sup>50</sup> UKE Islamabad to FCO, 'Indian Nuclear Explosion,' May 28, 1974, TNA FCO66/653, 1-2.

many of his remarks and sharing his concerns about international peace and security.<sup>51</sup>

Wilson was less alarmist than his Pakistani counterpart about the impact on the NPT, trying to cajole Bhutto into signing up to the treaty by emphasising the inherent security guarantees and the greater need for treaty signatories in the test's wake. Wilson stated that, in relation to the bold statement about "resisting pressure" for a Pakistani nuclear weapons programme, he was heartened to hear that Bhutto would do his best to avoid that route and continued to sell him on the benefits of the NPT.<sup>52</sup> Still, for British policymakers, the most pressing concern resulting from the test was ensuring the non-proliferation regime's survival, rather than "sub-continental rivalry or the security concerns of any particular country."<sup>53</sup>

With more worrisome developments at home to consider, the Nixon White House offered a far more succinct reply than Wilson's friendly cajoling. The President offered to carefully consider nuclear security assurances via the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and expressed his continued sympathy for the situation in which Pakistan found itself. Nixon assured Bhutto that the independence and security of Pakistan was "a cornerstone of American policy."<sup>54</sup>

The Indian test also gave added impetus to a study that was under way to prepare the United States for the 1975 NPT Review Conference. National Security Study Memorandum-202 (NSSM-202) had been "limping along" before the May explosion, mostly because of the uncooperative head of the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC), Dixy Lee Ray.<sup>55</sup> The study was wide-ranging, but was also specifically considered whether the US should press for renewed support for the NPT by existing signatories and for accession to the treaty by those who had not yet signed up, a category that included Pakistan.<sup>56</sup> By the end of 1974, the NSSM-202 study's results had been presented to the Ford administration. The report struck a demoralised tone, bemoaning the loss of US primacy in the field of international nuclear

---

<sup>51</sup> Summerhayes to Seaward et al, 'Indian Nuclear Test,' June 3, 1974, TNA FCO66/654. It should be noted that the ACDD still positioned the wider global non-proliferation implications of the Indian test above the regional consequences.

<sup>52</sup> Wilson to Bhutto, 'Indian Nuclear Test,' Letter, June 28, 1974, TNA PREM16/1182, 1-2.

<sup>53</sup> Dales to Bridges, Letter, June 24, 1974, TNA PREM16/1182, 1.

<sup>54</sup> Nixon to Bhutto, Letter, June 1, 1974, GRFPL, National Security Council Institutional Files, Box 105, Chronological File-Fazio, James (1), 1-2.

<sup>55</sup> Brenner, 53.

<sup>56</sup> Kissinger to Secretary of Defense et al, 'National Security Study Memorandum 202,' May 23, 1974, Digital National Security Archive (hereafter DNSA), PD01462.

sales. This loss of dominance could have dire effects on proliferation, as would-be nuclear states turned for supplies to other nations with much less rigorous controls on sensitive materials, and technology.<sup>57</sup> NSSM-202, however, failed to answer crucial questions of technology transfer and the risks of a plutonium-based nuclear economy.<sup>58</sup>

In their initial reactions to the test, therefore, the American and British governments reacted in subtly different ways. Britain, by immediately placing the test within the global context of the NPT, took the more global stance. The American reaction—fundamentally that of Kissinger—was founded in fatalism about proliferation and an emphasis on regional issues. Where the two states came together was in their assessment that the test could well be a tipping point that led to further proliferation. The prospect of a proliferation cascade was something that threaded its way through discussions of the now invigorated Pakistani programme over the next five years. In the test's immediate aftermath, America and Britain offered Pakistan little more than vague reassurance. Through the rest of 1974 and into 1975, Bhutto would demand—and receive—more concrete signifiers of Western commitment to Pakistani security. Most notably, the issue of arms sales to the sub-continent came to the fore as a means for retarding Pakistani nuclear development and a factor pushing Bhutto's country towards the atomic option.

### **Arms Sales and the Nuclear Issue**

Conventional arms sales were tied to the nuclear issue in Pakistan from the very instant of the Indian test. Not only did America attempt to use weapons sales as a means of discouraging the Pakistani drive towards nuclear capability, Britain also found itself mired in the issue through its long-running efforts to sell advanced aircraft to India. However, there were stark differences in the reasons for, and effects of, conventional arms sales to the sub-continental neighbours. American offers of arms for Pakistan were an anti-proliferation measure, designed—through their provision or withdrawal—to bribe or coerce Islamabad into abandoning its nuclear ambitions. British arms sales to India were founded in the “unparalleled economic crisis” of the mid-1970s, a situation where the Wilson and

---

<sup>57</sup> NSSM 202 Study, ‘U.S. Non-proliferation Policy,’ December 4, 1974, DNSA, PR01262, 4.

<sup>58</sup> Brenner, 75.

Callaghan governments saw the British aircraft industry as an essential revenue generator.<sup>59</sup> The 1970s were a particularly lean time for Britain's aerospace industry, having been a successful exporter for the previous two decades. Manufacturers found themselves in a position where potential purchasers would not consider replacing their equipment until the 1980s.<sup>60</sup> Any major sales opportunity was, therefore, vital. In the case of British sales to India, then, advanced weapons were only ever an *impediment* to non-proliferation policy. Firstly, British reluctance to abandon sales to India affected the US-UK relationship. Secondly, Britain's potential arming of India with advanced new weapons created alarm in Islamabad and contributed to Pakistan's desire for nuclear capability. The British government was also caught up in internal wrangles, with different departments and sub-departments arguing for and against arms sales. The entire issue of arms sales was emblematic of the tension between non-proliferation and commercial interests. The issue of arms—in particular warplane—sales drove a wedge between the US and the UK when, as the decade progressed, Britain refused to give up on strike aircraft sales to India, despite the effects on Pakistani nuclear ambitions. This demonstrates a division between a 'comprehensive' view of the arms sales and nuclear issues, where the two are explicitly connected, and a 'compartmentalised' approach that sought to place a hard line between the two issues.

The test's immediate aftermath saw senior Pakistani government officials request that the United States ease the 1965 arms embargo in order that they may defend themselves from—as Pakistan saw it—an aggressive, nuclear armed India. Having fought three major wars with India since Partition in 1947, Pakistani fears were understandable. However, US officials later argued that Bhutto, Ahmed, and others were dramatically over-playing the situation in the hope of getting the embargo lifted. Aziz Ahmed, in his very first post-test meetings with Nixon and Kissinger, had already brought up the subject. Ahmed continued with this theme in early June when he again met with Kissinger. The spectre of Soviet involvement in the Indian nuclear programme was raised once more by the Pakistani representative who then

---

<sup>59</sup> Harold Wilson, *Final Term: The Labour Government, 1974-1976* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1979), 13.

<sup>60</sup> Mark Phythian, *The Politics of British Arms Sales Since 1964* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 19.

immediately segued into a request for “defensive” weapons: anti-aircraft and anti-tank missiles, RADAR systems, and submarines. Ahmed pressed Kissinger for an immediate announcement on this, to which the Secretary of State demurred. Kissinger blamed Congress for his inability to do anything in the near term stating, “I’ve always believed in military supply for Pakistan. It's absurd that the Soviets can arm India while our hands are tied. It's a massive problem, but I don't believe the Congress would let us do it.”<sup>61</sup>

In the face of Kissinger’s dissembling on arms supplies, Ahmed sought nuclear security assurances from friendly powers. Britain was viewed as uncertain, due to Commonwealth ties (which Pakistan had withdrawn from in 1972) and perceived British sensitivity about India.<sup>62</sup> Kissinger offered to make a statement supporting “Pakistan's independence and territorial integrity” and making clear that “the use of nuclear weapons against Pakistan would be a very grave matter.” This was a bold statement that Ahmed interpreted as including the *threat* of use and not simply use, but fell far short of the nuclear assurances he sought. Kissinger reiterated that he would probe Congress on military aid, even though his advisers suggested that any change in arms supply policy came with unbearable Congressional costs.<sup>63</sup> Daniel Patrick Moynihan, US ambassador to India, voiced further objections to changes in arms supply to Pakistan, contending that to supply weapons to Pakistan would result in the immediate failure of US non-proliferation policy on the sub-continent.<sup>64</sup> Moynihan’s counterpart in Islamabad, Henry Byroade opposed this view, arguing that arms sales would actually reassure Bhutto and improve the chances of normalization in Indo-Pakistani relations.<sup>65</sup>

As the Pakistanis attempted to gain military supplies from the United States, officials within the Wilson government assessed British arms sales policy on the sub-continent. Sales to both Pakistan and India were of “immediate concern,” although in the long run it was sales to the latter that were the most problematic and introduced the greatest complexity into

---

<sup>61</sup> Memcon, Ahmed, Yaqub-Khan, Sober, Constable, ‘Military Supply for Pakistan,’ June 3, 1974, *FRUS* 69-76, Vol.E8, Doc.166, 3-4.

<sup>62</sup> Pakistan left the Commonwealth in 1972 over the organisation’s recognition of Bangladesh.

<sup>63</sup> Memcon, June 3, 1974, 7-8; Sober to Kissinger, ‘Military Supply for Pakistan,’ June 4, 1974, Declassified Documents Reference System (hereafter *DDRS*), *DDRS-270991-i1-4*, 3.

<sup>64</sup> USE New Delhi to State, ‘The Secretary’s Meeting With Aziz Ahmed, June 3,’ June 6, 1974, *DDRS*, *DDRS-270989-i1-3*, 1.

<sup>65</sup> Sober to Kissinger, June 4, 1974, 3.

the non-proliferation effort against Pakistan.<sup>66</sup> This situation was not without precedent, for successive British governments had faced the challenging task of balancing sales to the two regional rivals ever since Partition.<sup>67</sup> The FCO South Asia Department (SAD)—with the concurrence of ACDD, the Far Eastern Department, and the East European and Soviet Department—recognised that the potential British sale of a nuclear-capable strike aircraft such as the SEPECAT Jaguar (which had just come into service with the Royal Air Force in the tactical nuclear strike role) to India might be regarded by Pakistan with “great suspicion.”<sup>68</sup> Sir Michael Cary, Chief of Defence Procurement in the Ministry of Defence (MoD), argued that the Jaguar was *not* a new capability for India, which had a fleet of aging but serviceable Canberra bombers that could be adapted for nuclear delivery.<sup>69</sup> Sir Thomas Brimelow, Cary’s opposite number in the FCO, counter-argued that the sale of Jaguar aircraft to New Delhi was inconceivable in light of the Indian nuclear test. The Indians would require subtle notification so as not to wound their pride, but could be mollified by the sale of less controversial equipment such as the Nimrod maritime patrol aircraft.<sup>70</sup> David Summerhays, the ACDD’s head, argued that wider knowledge of British intent to sell nuclear delivery systems to India would have a significant, damaging impact on the standing of the UK as an anti-proliferation voice.<sup>71</sup> Summerhays’ colleague John Thomson agreed, vigorously stating the primacy of non-proliferation policy and arguing, “if ever there was a moral cause, it is this.”<sup>72</sup> Thus, the battle lines over Jaguar were drawn. Throughout the rest of the 1970s, the perception (if not the reality) that Jaguar *was* a nuclear delivery system adversely affected both non-proliferation efforts directed against Pakistan *and* the Anglo-American relationship.

The peripatetic Aziz Ahmed arrived in London on June 10 for a high-level meeting with Harold Wilson. Once again the Pakistani minister characterised the May 18 test as part

---

<sup>66</sup> Seaward to White, ‘Indian Nuclear Test Explosion,’ May 28, 1974, TNA FCO66/653.

<sup>67</sup> Phythian, 130.

<sup>68</sup> Seaward to Wilford, ‘Implications of the Indian Nuclear Test,’ May 29, 1974, TNA FCO66/654.

<sup>69</sup> Cary to Brimelow, ‘Relations With India,’ June 10, 1974, TNA FCO66/655, 2. In RAF service, the Jaguar would occupy the role formerly taken by the Canberra.

<sup>70</sup> Brimelow to Cary, ‘Relations With India,’ June 13, 1974, TNA FCO66/655, 2.

<sup>71</sup> Summerhays to Thomson et al, ‘Indian Nuclear Test,’ June 13, 1974, TNA FCO66/655, 3.

<sup>72</sup> Thomson, attachment to: Summerhays to Thomson et al, ‘Indian Nuclear Test,’ June 13, 1974, TNA FCO66/655.



of an Indo-Soviet attempt to dominate South Asia and called for British nuclear security guarantees. Wilson also stuck to a familiar line: sympathising with the Pakistani position, but always emphasising Britain's commitment to the NPT.<sup>73</sup> Wilson's continued calls—made to both India and Pakistan—to sign up to the NPT were always destined to fail. As Sumit Ganguly and S. Paul Kapur argue, the refusal to join was not based solely on strategic considerations, but also on recent colonial history and the lingering view on the sub-continent that the NPT represented a condescending, possibly even racist, worldview that amounted to “nuclear apartheid.”<sup>74</sup> On the question of arms sales, Ahmed asked if there was any way that Britain could lift its arms embargo, a decision that might have a favourable influence on United States thinking. Although Wilson responded that he would see what he could do, Ahmed was mistaken in this case. There was no British arms embargo, only a requirement that Pakistan must pay cash for any sales.

Following Ahmed's attempts to have the US arms embargo lifted, Henry Byroade added his weight to the June weapons sales debates by noting the “profound shock” in Pakistan over the Indian test with recent events exacerbating “chronic feelings of insecurity.”<sup>75</sup> Byroade argued that the on-going requests to lift the embargo and give security guarantees were not just for show. Such requests reflected deep-seated, genuine Pakistani concerns about national security. However, the ambassador was firm in his belief that the overriding concern for the United States must be the impact of events on the NPT and the global non-proliferation regime.<sup>76</sup> In public, Bhutto was at this point resisting calls in parliament for an immediate Pakistani nuclear weapons programme (despite the fact that he had personally instigated such a programme in 1972), arguing that there was no way for the country to build the bomb due to technological and economic disadvantages. Byroade noted that Bhutto had foreseen American action against Pakistan, the Prime Minister commenting that any public call for a

---

<sup>73</sup> ‘Record of a Conversation Between the Prime Minister and the Pakistan Minister of State for Defence and Foreign Affairs at No 10 Downing Street at 5.15pm on Monday 10 June,’ June 10, 1974, TNA PREM16/1182, 2-3.

<sup>74</sup> Sumit Ganguly and S. Paul Kapur, *India, Pakistan, and the Bomb: Debating Nuclear Stability in South Asia* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2010), 18.

<sup>75</sup> USE Islamabad to State, ‘US Arms Policy Towards Subcontinent Following Indian Nuclear Test,’ June 12, 1974, *FRUS* 69-76, Vol.E8, Doc.167, 1

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

weapons project “could precipitate active efforts on the part of the nuclear powers to obstruct Pakistan’s nuclear programme.”<sup>77</sup>

When Kissinger made a highly publicised trip to the sub-continent in October, the question of arms for Pakistan was a core element of discussions. Before Kissinger’s trip, America had suffered its most significant political upheaval of the modern era when Richard Nixon resigned the presidency rather than face impeachment over Watergate. The new president, Gerald R. Ford, was an amateur in the field of foreign relations and relied heavily on his Secretary of State.<sup>78</sup> At the same time, the United States had continued to demonstrate that the consequences for India of testing a nuclear device were limited, when it proceeded to ship an instalment of previously approved uranium fuel for the nuclear reactor at Tarapur.<sup>79</sup> During this transitional period, Ahmed had a series of meetings with Ford and Kissinger to again press for an end to the embargo.<sup>80</sup> Within the US foreign policy apparatus, Pakistani pleas for a change to weapon sales policy were seen as less to do with actual security needs and more to do with the psychological pressure of the Indian test and affirmation of a strong political relationship with the United States that the “arms pipeline” once implied.<sup>81</sup> Bhutto also tied conventional arms to the quest for nuclear weapons. A few weeks before the Kissinger mission, he told the *New York Times*, “If security interests are satisfied, if people feel secure and if they feel they will not be subject to aggression, they [will] not want to squander away limited resources in [the nuclear] direction.”<sup>82</sup>

Kissinger utilised the notion of ‘pressures to go nuclear’ in Pakistan when he met Indira Gandhi at the end of October. In his report to Ford, he noted, “I made the point that at most what was involved were limited cash sales to Pakistan and that she should reflect on the risk that, if frustrated on conventional arms purchases, Pakistan would be under even greater

---

<sup>77</sup> USE Islamabad to State, ‘Further GOP [Government of Pakistan] Reaction to Indian Nuclear Test,’ June 12, 1974, NARA AAD, 1974ISLAMA05622, 2-3.

<sup>78</sup> Kux, *Disenchanted Allies*, 215.

<sup>79</sup> Perkovich, 184.

<sup>80</sup> Memcon, ‘The Call of the Pakistani Minister of State for Defense and Foreign Affairs, Aziz Ahmed, on the Secretary,’ September 30, 1974, *FRUS* 69-76, Vol.E8, Doc.176.

<sup>81</sup> Memorandum for the President, ‘Your Meeting With Pakistani Minister of State Aziz Ahmed,’ October 16, 1974, GRFPL, Presidential Country Files, Box 26, Pakistan (2), 4.

<sup>82</sup> Bernard Weinraub, ‘Pakistani Presses U.S. For Arms,’ *The New York Times* (hereafter *NYT*), October 14, 1974, 10.

pressure to go nuclear.”<sup>83</sup> Having been briefed that an Indo-Pakistani nuclear arms race was a distinct and alarming possibility—to such an extent that the CIA had asserted that Pakistan would move ahead with the nuclear programme as rapidly as its limited capabilities allowed—Kissinger pressed his Indian hosts over the arms to Pakistan issue.<sup>84</sup> The Secretary of State challenged the Indian line that any shipments would cause great harm to Indo-American relations, by stating that the United States had no interest in Indo-Pakistani military conflict but that the US had to consider the independence of Pakistan.<sup>85</sup>

After Kissinger’s visit to New Delhi, his meeting with Bhutto in Islamabad on October 31 was friendly and good-humoured. In typical style, the American joked darkly that after seeing India first hand he was, “thinking about supplying nuclear weapons, not only conventional arms, to Pakistan and even Bangladesh!”<sup>86</sup> The discussions ranged widely, from the problems of the Middle East to the perceived hegemonic ambitions of India. The two statesmen briefly spoke of arms, Kissinger indicating that it was very much in the United States’ interest to ensure the integrity of Pakistan.<sup>87</sup>

In London, the Wilson government debated the problematic nature of arms sales to India in the time between the Byroade telegrams and Kissinger’s visit to the sub-continent. The UK was delaying giving a definitive answer to the Indians over Jaguar—using a wrangle over credit terms as the excuse—and British officials were dispatched to Washington in an effort to understand American thinking.<sup>88</sup> How the US handled Pakistani arms requests—where weapon sales *were* a non-proliferation measure—would have significant bearing on the

---

<sup>83</sup> Scowcroft to Ford, Memorandum, October 28, 1974, GRFPL, NSAF, Kissinger Trip Briefing Books Box 3, October 20–November 9, 1974–Europe, South Asia, and Middle East, HAK [Henry A. Kissinger] Messages for the President (1), 2.

<sup>84</sup> CIA Special National Intelligence Estimate (SNIE) 4-1-74, ‘Prospects for Further Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons,’ August 23, 1974, NSAEBB ‘In 1974 Estimate, CIA Found that Israel Already Had a Nuclear Stockpile and that “Many Countries” Would Soon Have Nuclear Capabilities’ (hereafter CIAINS), [www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB240/index.htm](http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB240/index.htm) (accessed on March 5, 2013), 38.

<sup>85</sup> CIA, ‘Memorandum in Support of the Secretary of State’s Trip to South Asia: Tab E, Regional Papers; Prospects for Long-term Stability in South Asia,’ October 15, 1974, GRFPL, Remote Archives Capture files (hereafter RAC), Box 16, NSAF, Briefing Books and Cables for Henry Kissinger, 29; Scowcroft to Ford, Memorandum, October 29, 1974, GRFPL, NSAF, Kissinger Trip Briefing Books, Box 3, October 20–November 9, 1974–Europe, South Asia, and Middle East, HAK [Henry A. Kissinger] Messages for the President (1), 2.

<sup>86</sup> Memcon, Kissinger and Bhutto, October 31, 1974, DNSA, KT01391, 4.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 7-8.

<sup>88</sup> ‘Mr Thomson’s Visit to Washington: Policy Towards India Following the Indian Nuclear Explosion: Speaking Notes,’ July 22, 1974, TNA FCO66/657, 4.

British position regarding India, where arms sales were never anything *but* an impediment to non-proliferation.

In the test's aftermath, the Jaguar issue had become the subject of vigorous debate within the Wilson government, a government that had—in the words of John Thomson—taken a “strong and consistent stand” on non-proliferation.<sup>89</sup> Internally, non-proliferation was a significant factor in arguments over Jaguar, but in Anglo-Indian discussions the concerns were all economic. Favouring the sale were Secretary of State for Industry Tony Benn and Secretary of Defence Roy Mason. Benn recognised that the explosion was concerning, but argued that the sale helped the British aircraft industry.<sup>90</sup> On the other side were the Treasury—where Indian demands for generous credit terms and not nuclear concerns provoked objections—and sub-departments such as the ACDD that emphasised non-proliferation's significance. All sides recognised the £300 million-plus deal's “immense benefit to British industry.”<sup>91</sup> Such divisions were hardly unexpected. The FCO's position had always been to maintain as many friendly relations as possible, while the Department of Industry (and its close partner the Department of Trade) sought to maximise British trade links. In representations to India's government, the economic—not nuclear—sticking points were the main topics for discussion.<sup>92</sup>

ACDD argued that selling Jaguar to India would have a negative impact on Britain's general non-proliferation efforts, contending that, “[A] British decision to supply Jaguar and thus improve India's nuclear delivery capability would be interpreted on all sides as showing that we are not really serious about containing nuclear proliferation and that we give narrow commercial and industrial interests a higher priority than this major issue of world security.”<sup>93</sup> There followed a paper analysing Anglo-Indian relations circulated by Brimelow, drafted by the FCO Planning Staff, and approved by Callaghan. The paper made

---

<sup>89</sup> Thomson to Walker, ‘Non-proliferation and the Indian Nuclear Explosion,’ August 6, 1974, TNA FCO66/657, 1.

<sup>90</sup> Benn to Callaghan, Letter, August 8, 1974, TNA FCO66/657.

<sup>91</sup> Callaghan to Benn, ‘Jaguar Sales to India,’ Letter, August 23, 1974, TNA FCO66/658, 1; Mason to Benn, Letter, September 2, 1974, TNA FCO66/658.

<sup>92</sup> Walker to Cary, ‘Corvettes and Jaguars for India,’ August 16, 1974, TNA FCO66/658, 2-3.

<sup>93</sup> ‘OPD (Official) Committee Meeting: 2.30pm. 15 October 1974; Defence Sales to India,’ October 14, 1974, TNA FCO66/659, 1-2.

the case that, absent any real chance of significantly moving India away from Soviet arms purchases:

[T]he justification for continued major British arms sales to India must therefore rest on the value of such arms sales to our own economy either through the payments received for them or through the contribution they make to the workload of certain of our own industries.<sup>94</sup>

Furthermore, analysts downplayed the symbolism of selling allegedly nuclear capable aircraft and the impact this might have on Pakistan in favour of stressing the economic benefits. Pakistan was, the Planning Staff argued, much less important than India. Pakistani objections to the deal were better countered with parallel sales rather than restricting supplies to India. Finally, the Planning Staff contended that should India request actual nuclear capable aircraft, the government might need to consider a politically motivated embargo.<sup>95</sup>

This assessment wilfully ignored the fact that, whether they were or not, the Jaguar was already seen in Islamabad and other quarters as a nuclear bomber. Here was an explicit recognition – approved at the highest level – that a nuclear capable aircraft was genuinely and symbolically different from other arms, although the FCO, MoD, and other departments repeatedly emphasised that India would not be offered the nuclear capable version of the aircraft. As Jeffrey Engel argues in relation to aircraft sales to the communist world, Britain ‘consistently downplayed security threats’ whenever the government saw those threats as imperilling sales.<sup>96</sup> The same pattern can be observed in relation to the Jaguar sale: the impact on Pakistan’s security and the symbolism of selling allegedly nuclear-capable aircraft was downplayed in favour of stressing the economic benefits to the UK.

The Jaguar sale was still primarily viewed by the wider government through the lens of economic necessity, as bringing in hundreds of millions of pounds to British industry, securing thousands of jobs, boosting the aircraft’s further marketability, and counterbalancing Soviet arms sales to India. At this stage, Pakistan was only really

---

<sup>94</sup> Brimelow to Heads of Department et al, ‘British Policy Towards India,’ 4 November, 1974, TNA FCO 66/660, 9.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> Jeffrey A. Engel, *Cold War at 30,000 Feet: The Anglo-American Fight for Aviation Supremacy* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), 298.

considered as possibly desiring equal treatment.<sup>97</sup> The British government gave relatively little consideration at the highest levels to the impact on the Pakistani drive for nuclear weapons of the sale of what was seen as a nuclear-capable strike aircraft to the nation that was the catalyst for Pakistani nuclear ambitions.

This lack of consideration was despite the fact that, at the pinnacle of the British government, there was a nagging sense that Pakistan might be heading towards a nuclear weapons programme. Wilson, while understanding the reasons why Pakistani requests for nuclear security guarantees had so far been declined, feared that under the circumstances the Pakistani government may decide to develop its own nuclear capability (an assessment backed up by the FCO), putting the NPT under increasing strain.<sup>98</sup> Washington shared the view that Islamabad had committed to the nuclear option, as State Department officials were “convinced that the Pakistanis would make every endeavour to develop a nuclear capability in as short a time as possible.”<sup>99</sup> The vexed question of Britain potentially selling arms to Pakistan as a means of heading off the nuclear quest was mired in misperceptions and economic problems. The parlous state of both the British and Pakistani economies and the continued defaulting of Pakistan on previous deals meant that Britain preferred to deal in cash, not credit, for arms. It was a misunderstanding by the Pakistanis—as articulated by Ahmed in June—that there was a UK embargo in place similar to that of the United States, thus placing Britain firmly in the same camp as the US. However, the British position on arms sales was less to do with high-minded concerns about the sub-continent and everything to do with the brutal economic necessities of the time. As long as Britain could maintain a good relationship with India, there might be commercial opportunities in relaxing the attitude towards Pakistan. As the FCO’s Richard Dales argued, Pakistan would get arms somehow and by continuing with this obstructive attitude, Britain was depriving itself of further sales.<sup>100</sup>

---

<sup>97</sup> Cabinet: Defence and Overseas [sic] Policy (Official) Committee, Sub-committee on Strategic Exports, ‘Credit for Export of Defence Equipment to India; Note by the Secretaries,’ November 8, 1974, TNA FCO66/660, 2-4.

<sup>98</sup> Bridges to Dales, ‘Pakistan,’ September 18, 1974, TNA FCO66/664; Thomson to Edmonds, ‘Pakistan,’ October 25, 1974, TNA FCO66/664.

<sup>99</sup> ‘Talks In State Department, October 2,’ October 11, 1974, TNA FCO66/660, 3.

<sup>100</sup> Dales to Bridges, ‘Defence Sales to Pakistan,’ Letter, September 11, 1974, TNA FCO66/664, 1-2.

The arms supply debate continued on both sides of the Atlantic into 1975. The invitation to make a state visit to America delighted Bhutto and the discussions that took place in the new year resulted in much more concrete and satisfactory outcomes for Pakistan.<sup>101</sup> In Britain, the debate over selling Jaguar to India and the potential non-proliferation implications rumbled on for some time, complicating the South Asian non-proliferation landscape.

### **The Bhutto Visit**

The drama of the Indian nuclear test and its catalytic effect on Pakistan was felt into 1975. During the year, the Ford administration began to consider the putative Pakistani nuclear weapons programme in a more systematic way, using bribery and persuasion in an effort to lead their South Asian ally from the nuclear path. The British government continued to concentrate on global non-proliferation issues while engaging in a spirited internal debate over the wisdom of the Indian Jaguar negotiations. Furthermore, 1975 saw the first NPT Review Conference, an event that promised much but resulted in very little.

In the run-up to Bhutto's visit to the United States in February of 1975, American suspicions about a Pakistani bomb programme hardened. Robert Gallucci of the ACDA submitted a briefing document arguing that although the Pakistani nuclear infrastructure's current state was not a cause for worry, the intentions of the Pakistani government once it gained access to a significant infrastructure *did* provide cause for concern. Most significantly, Pakistan had re-energised its negotiations with France for the purchase of a nuclear fuel reprocessing plant, one of the vital components of a complete fuel cycle and a source of plutonium that could be used in nuclear weapons. Gallucci was definite in his assessment of future prospects, "Given their treaty status, their determination to purchase critical nuclear facilities, and their near declaratory policy of acquisition following the Indian detonation, they [Pakistan] may well have already decided to produce a weapon, and they clearly decided to have the capability to build one." According to the ACDA man, the reasons for the Pakistani quest for a bomb were many and complicated. The Indian explosion was the defining factor, but Gallucci argued that Bhutto might well use a nuclear explosion

---

<sup>101</sup> Kux, *Disenchanted Allies*, 217.

as a means of creating national unity, in much the same way as Indira Gandhi had gained a brief political boost after the test.<sup>102</sup> Gallucci also alluded to the possibility of “Arab financing” being available to Pakistan, connecting the Pakistani programme with a non-Western community tied together by bonds of faith. Finally, he urged a modicum of caution on the linkage between arms supply and the nuclear issue. Gallucci argued that although the two should not be specifically linked, if it did become clear that Pakistan was aiming for nuclear capability, United States policy would be “sensitive to such an important and unfortunate turn of events.”<sup>103</sup> A few days later, Gallucci’s assertions were backed up in part by his boss, Fred Iklé. In a meeting with Ford, Iklé pointed out that France was preparing to export reprocessing plants and that Pakistan may be able to divert technically knowledgeable scientists and engineers from its nuclear reactor facilities towards a bomb programme.<sup>104</sup>

The perception of Pakistan’s ties with the ‘Arab’ or ‘Islamic’ world, Islamabad’s negotiations with France over the reprocessing plant, and the solidifying belief in Bhutto’s military nuclear intentions all dominated high-level briefings and discussions in advance of Bhutto’s arrival. An American aim in the discussions with the Pakistanis was to extract a public statement from Bhutto not to develop nuclear explosives. Briefings were clear that Pakistan *was* clearly trying to develop an independent nuclear fuel cycle and the requisite technical expertise to make “the nuclear explosion option” feasible.<sup>105</sup> Another briefing commented on Bhutto’s exploitation of Pakistan’s Islamic ties, particularly when it came to economic aid from fellow Muslim countries in the aftermath of the 1973 oil crisis. Using such ties paid off for Pakistan, as states such as Saudi Arabia and Iran promised \$400 million in assistance.<sup>106</sup> There were significant internal differences of opinion within the Ford administration. Unlike the assessments offered by Gallucci and Atherton, in this case the State Department characterised Bhutto as being ambivalent about the quest for a nuclear

---

<sup>102</sup> Gallucci, ‘Pakistan and the Non-proliferation Issue,’ January 1, 1975, IPNT, Doc.20, 1-3; See Perkovich, 187-88 for a succinct analysis of the rapid rise and equally precipitous fall in Gandhi’s popularity after ‘Smiling Buddha.’

<sup>103</sup> ‘Pakistan and the Non-proliferation Issue,’ January 1, 1975, 3-5.

<sup>104</sup> Memcon, Ford and Iklé, January 6, 1975, GRFPL, NSAF, Memoranda of Conversations, 1973-1977, [www.fordlibrarymuseum.gov/library/guides/findingaid/Memoranda\\_of\\_Conversations.asp#Ford](http://www.fordlibrarymuseum.gov/library/guides/findingaid/Memoranda_of_Conversations.asp#Ford) (accessed on March 6, 2013), 2.

<sup>105</sup> Atherton to Kissinger, ‘Your Meeting With Prime Minister Bhutto of Pakistan, February 5, 2:30pm,’ January 31, 1975, DDRS, DDRS-255407-i1-15, 3, 6.

<sup>106</sup> Kux, *Disenchanted Allies*, 218.



bomb.<sup>107</sup> In his final briefing to Ford before the meeting, Kissinger—normally distrustful of the ACDA—sided with Gallucci’s viewpoint, informing the President there was “considerable evidence that Pakistan is embarking on a program that could in time give it the capability of duplicating India’s nuclear explosion last May.”<sup>108</sup>

At the Ford-Bhutto meeting on the morning of February 5, the American side arrived having finally decided to lift the embargo. Although Bhutto and Ahmed were mildly aggrieved at the initially limited value of arms sales, they recognised that they had gained the concessions they had travelled 7,000 miles in the hope of achieving. In order to smooth the passage of arms sales through Congress, Kissinger sought an assurance from Bhutto that he would make a public statement regarding nuclear restraint. After pressing his hosts to agree to substantial food aid and development loans, Bhutto was not exactly forthcoming, stating, “I am not enchanted by the grandiose notion that we must explode something, no matter how dirty, if our security needs are met. I want to spend the money on something else. We will have a nuclear programme, but if our security is assured, we will be reasonable.”<sup>109</sup>

In the afternoon, Kissinger had a further meeting with Bhutto and his key advisers where he continued to press for a public statement from the Prime Minister. Kissinger’s aim was to obtain non-proliferation assurances from Pakistan in exchange for US arms sales. Pakistani Foreign Secretary Agha Shahi claimed that due to pre-existing safeguards agreements on nuclear facilities, Pakistan could not clandestinely aim for a nuclear weapons option. Kissinger jumped on this morsel, asking if the public statement could be that no nuclear development would take place outside of internationally agreed safeguards.<sup>110</sup> Bhutto glossed over the issue and segued into a discussion of moral objections to the NPT. Kissinger steered the conversation back to safeguards, but Bhutto once more diverted into comments about PNEs. For the developing countries, Kissinger saw no difference between a PNE and a bomb. In response, the Pakistanis sought further US assurances for a South Asian

---

<sup>107</sup> ‘Briefing Notes On Bhutto,’ February, 1975 (exact date unknown), GRFPL, NSAF, Presidential VIP Briefings, Box 6, Pakistan–Prime Minister Bhutto (6), 1-3. It is unclear from the documentary records which particular parts of the State Department created this brief. The overall briefing package was signed off by Executive Secretary George Springsteen.

<sup>108</sup> Kissinger to Ford, ‘Meeting With Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, Prime Minister of Pakistan,’ February 1975 (exact date unknown), GRFPL, NSAF, Presidential VIP Briefings, Box 6, Pakistan–Prime Minister Bhutto (6), 3.

<sup>109</sup> Memcon, Bhutto and Ford, February 5, 1975, *FRUS* 69-76, Vol.E8, Doc.188, 3-7.

<sup>110</sup> Memcon, ‘The Secretary’s Meetings with Prime Minister Bhutto,’ February 5, 1975, *FRUS* 69-76, Vol.E8, Doc.189, 5.

Nuclear Weapon Free Zone (SANWFZ), something that Kissinger found problematic due to the Cold War imperatives of nuclear defence in Europe. At the end of this back and forth, the Pakistanis had what they wanted while the Americans failed to gain assurances from their guests not to develop a nuclear weapon.<sup>111</sup>

On February 24, the US government announced that they had lifted the ten-year-old arms embargo covering Pakistan and India. Unsurprisingly, the reactions from Islamabad and New Delhi were quite different. Bhutto wrote a warm letter of thanks to Ford, in which he reaffirmed his commitment to the 'Simla Process' negotiations with India and the avoidance of a South Asian arms race.<sup>112</sup> Although the Indian reaction was relatively restrained, External Affairs Minister Yashwantrao Chavan cancelled a pre-arranged trip to the United States and Gandhi sharply criticised the United States and Pakistan.<sup>113</sup> The lifting of the embargo was subject to some limitations. The US government would review sales on a case-by-case basis, credit for arms was unavailable, and (at least in the arrangement's initial stages) all weapons sold must be purely 'defensive.'<sup>114</sup> Although logically explicable, it was a bitter twist of fate for Indira Gandhi that India's own act of setting off a nuclear explosion led directly to the delivery of US arms to Pakistan.<sup>115</sup>

### **Jaguar, Again**

While the United States was lifting the sub-continental arms embargo, potential warplane sales to India and the impact this had on Pakistani perceptions remained a major factor for British politicians and civil servants through 1975. Harold Wilson had visited Washington just before Bhutto's arrival, but other than a brief discussion of the plans for the Nuclear Suppliers' Group (NSG) and Wilson's expression of concern over the issue in general, non-

---

<sup>111</sup> Ibid, 6-7.

<sup>112</sup> Bhutto to Ford, Letter, February 24, 1975, GRFPL, NSAF, Presidential Correspondence Files, Box 3, Pakistan-Prime Minister Bhutto (1), 1.

<sup>113</sup> Sober to Kissinger, 'Indian Reaction to Arms Supply Decision-Chavan Postpones Visit,' February 26, 1975, *FRUS* 69-76, Vol.E8, Doc.191.

<sup>114</sup> National Security Decision Memorandum 289, 'US Military Supply Policy to Pakistan and India,' March 24, 1975, GRFPL, NSAF, Study Memoranda and Decision Memoranda, Box 1, 1.

<sup>115</sup> Perkovich, 186.

proliferation was simply not on an agenda packed with discussions of oil, Anglo-American nuclear defence cooperation, the Middle East, and the on-going British defence review.<sup>116</sup>

In preparation for Wilson's visit to America, the British sought to push non-proliferation on to the agenda, at least in part due to alarming intelligence reports on the danger of more nations—including Pakistan—acquiring nuclear weapons. Wilson's briefing noted that the "prospects for a stable environment had deteriorated" in light of the Indian test and the Israeli President Ephraim Katzir had recently alluded to his country's nuclear weapons, perhaps driving Arab nations towards nuclear capability. The mantra in London was that "only strong international controls universally accepted and applied" could solve the proliferation problem.<sup>117</sup> Even though Britain was pushing ahead with plans for the 1975 NPT Review Conference and the NSG, Wilson's government still saw cooperation with the United States as the bedrock of any successful anti-proliferation activity. Wilson hoped that the Americans would approve the issue of a major statement on non-proliferation during his subsequent visit to Moscow, a visit that at its core was about expanded British-Soviet commercial links.<sup>118</sup> Part of the American agenda was to re-emphasise to the British delegation the UK's importance as an actor in global affairs, something that obviously included non-proliferation affairs. US officials therefore raised no objections to a proposed British-Soviet communiqué on disarmament and non-proliferation.<sup>119</sup> This statement— included in the joint declaration that came at the end of the mid-February Anglo-Soviet summit and couched in the usual bland goodwill of such events—stressed the significance of

---

<sup>116</sup> 'Note of a Meeting Held in the Oval Office, White House, on Friday 31 January, 1975: Nuclear Non-proliferation,' February 3, 1975, TNA PREM16/1182; Memorandum of Conversation, Ford and Wilson, January 31, 1975, GRFPL, NSAF, Memoranda of Conversations, 1973-1977, [www.fordlibrarymuseum.gov/library/guides/findingaid/Memoranda\\_of\\_Conversations.asp#Ford](http://www.fordlibrarymuseum.gov/library/guides/findingaid/Memoranda_of_Conversations.asp#Ford) (accessed on March 6, 2013). For an overview of the NSG planning using up to date archival sources, see William Burr, 'A Scheme of "Control": The United States and the Origins of the Nuclear Suppliers' Group, 1974-1976,' *The International History Review*, 2014, online publication <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/07075332.2013.864690> (accessed on February 7, 2014), 1-25.

<sup>117</sup> Joint Intelligence Committee (hereafter JIC) to Wilson, 'Nuclear Proliferation,' November 15, 1974, TNA PREM16/1182.

<sup>118</sup> Hunt to Wilson, Memo, January 20, 1975, TNA PREM16/1182; Brearley to Wright, 'Nuclear Weapons and Non-proliferation,' January 28, 1975, TNA PREM16/1182.

<sup>119</sup> Kissinger to Ford, 'Meeting With Harold Wilson, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland,' January 29, 1975, GRFPL, NSAF, Presidential Briefing Material for VIP Visits, Box 5, 1/29-2/1/75—United Kingdom—Prime Minister Wilson (7), 2; 'Note of a Meeting,' February 3, 1975, TNA PREM16/1182.

moves towards disarmament and the importance of multilateral talks as a means to achieve non-proliferation goals.<sup>120</sup>

Notwithstanding the Wilson government's non-proliferation enthusiasm, Jaguar—and its place within non-proliferation diplomacy—remained a complicating factor from the start of 1975. As ministers and civil servants debated the deal's financing, MPs posed difficult questions in the House of Commons.<sup>121</sup> Minister of State for Defence William Rodgers glossed over the non-proliferation implications when quizzed in Parliament on January 23, preferring to concentrate on the benefits to British industry.<sup>122</sup> The British government hoped that the Indians would—in light of the upcoming changes to US arms sales policy to Pakistan—still agree to purchase the aircraft, despite being denied credit. This decision was conveyed to the Indians as one made on purely economic grounds.<sup>123</sup>

Despite the insistence to India that decisions being made about the sale were economic, there was an intense debate in Whitehall over the non-proliferation implications coupled to mounting realisation that this was a matter of great interest to Pakistan. The SAD contended that it was possible that the aircraft would form the core of a small nuclear strike-force, but that India was too far away from producing a workable bomb for that to be a concern. Moreover, if Britain did not sell the aircraft, other competitors such as France or Sweden most certainly would.<sup>124</sup> Even though the version of Jaguar that the UK proposed for India was not—without substantial modification—able to deliver nuclear weapons, the Pakistanis would *think* that the aircraft was adding to Indian nuclear capabilities.<sup>125</sup> Despite ACDD's objections, the FCO's South Asian, Science, and Defence departments all agreed—with varying degrees of reservation—that the sale should go ahead.<sup>126</sup>

The sale's most vocal critics were the ACDD, who consistently argued that the non-proliferation implications were significant and should be given prominence. ACDD's

---

<sup>120</sup> Anon., 'Extracts from Wilson-Brezhnev communiqué signed in Kremlin yesterday,' *The Times* (hereafter *TT*), February 18, 1975, 6.

<sup>121</sup> Seaward to Wilford, 'Credit for defence Sales to India,' January 30, 1975, TNA FCO37/1626.

<sup>122</sup> William Rodgers, House of Commons Debate, 'Jaguar Aircraft,' January 23, 1975, *Hansard Online* <http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1975/jan/23/jaguar-aircraft> (accessed on March 7, 2013).

<sup>123</sup> United Kingdom High Commission (hereafter UKHC) New Delhi to MoD, 'Jaguar Sales,' February 24, 1975, TNA FCO37/1626; FCO to UKHC New Delhi, 'Jaguar,' February 17, 1975, TNA FCO37/1626.

<sup>124</sup> O'Neill to Richards, 'Sale of Jaguar to India,' May 28, 1975, TNA FCO37/1626, 2.

<sup>125</sup> Dean to Seaward & O'Neill, 'Indian Air Force Capabilities,' June 2, 1975, TNA FCO37/1626.

<sup>126</sup> O'Neill to Wilford, 'Sale of Jaguar Aircraft to India,' June 5, 1975, TNA FCO37/1627, 2.

contention that the sale was incompatible with Britain's overall non-proliferation stance was summarised in a comprehensive submission to ministers. If the sale went ahead, ACDD argued, the government would be criticised domestically and internationally as symbolically validating India's nuclear status. Unsurprisingly, Pakistan came into the equation as the nation most likely to attack the UK over the sale. Moreover, the Jaguar sale could be perceived by non-signatories of the NPT as legitimising their status: currently non-nuclear states could go nuclear if they wished, and Britain would still be happy to sell them weapons.<sup>127</sup>

Senior ministers were now left to make the final decision. The response from Callaghan came quickly: "Arms Control are right to put their case, but I think we cannot refuse the order."<sup>128</sup> Harold Wilson, despite misgivings about the non-proliferation implications, signed off on the deal one week later.<sup>129</sup> The British Embassy in Islamabad was informed of the decision but London asked them to keep quiet, as the FCO was well aware of Pakistan's interest in the case.<sup>130</sup> By the winter of 1975, arms control proponents within the FCO were still trying to argue that arms sales to India would negatively affect non-proliferation. A key contention was the impact on domestic and foreign opinion, with Pakistan highlighted as a key element of this. The main non-proliferation objection to the sale was based around:

The potential effect on opinion in this country, on opinion amongst the committed non-proliferation countries, e.g. the US, USSR, Japan, and on opinion in the potential exploders, e.g. Pakistan, Argentina, etc. It is this effect on opinion in these areas rather than in India itself which is the core of the non-proliferation argument.<sup>131</sup>

This was only the beginning of an issue that would affect Britain's non-proliferation standing in the years to come, as the UK sought to halt the Pakistani nuclear programme.

---

<sup>127</sup> O'Neill to Wilford, 'Sale of Jaguar Aircraft to India,' Annex B, June 5, 1975, TNA FCO37/1627.

<sup>128</sup> Dales, 'Sale of Jaguar Aircraft to India,' June 9, 1975, TNA FCO37/1627.

<sup>129</sup> Wright to Dales, 'Sale of Jaguar Aircraft to India,' June 16, 1975, TNA FCO37/1627.

<sup>130</sup> O'Neill to Imray, 'Sale of Jaguar to India,' June 20, 1975, TNA FCO37/1627.

<sup>131</sup> Thomson to Mason, 'Credit for Export of Jaguars to India,' October 8, 1975, TNA FCO37/1628.

## **Multilateral Action**

During 1975—as America used arms sales as a non-proliferation tool and Britain debated the implications of its potential weapons deal with India—there were two multilateral meetings that carried the potential for significant changes in the non-proliferation landscape. The first of these—the NSG’s opening meeting—set in motion export controls that would prove problematic for the Pakistani nuclear programme. The second meeting—the NPT’s first review conference—was a major disappointment that clearly highlighted the rift between the nuclear world’s haves and have-nots. These two international non-proliferation gatherings’ initial impact was relatively insignificant. However, the issues considered at the NSG meeting and review conference became vastly more significant in future Anglo-American attempts to combat the Pakistani nuclear weapons programme.

During late 1974 and early 1975, the United States began to consult with other nuclear supplier nations in the hope of putting together a comprehensive ‘trigger list’ of technology not to be supplied to non-nuclear weapon states (NNWS). This was an expansion of the agreement reached in August 1974 by the ‘Zangger Committee’ in an effort to prevent a repetition of the Indian test.<sup>132</sup> The NSG—made up of the UK, USA, USSR, Canada, France, Japan, and West Germany—was itself one of the immediate concrete outcomes of the Indian test. Flustered by the ease with which India had used civilian technology to produce a nuclear weapon, the Group was created to monitor the export of nuclear materials and technology from the advanced nuclear supplier states to other nations. The NSG also resulted from divisions within the Ford administration: the ACDA felt that the US should take a lead in restricting exports, while Kissinger and others argued that a multilateral approach must be taken to avoid harming the domestic nuclear industry.<sup>133</sup> The ‘London Club’ met in secret, due to French insistence, during April. For informed observers such as the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, the NSG’s very existence, and the need for even more restrictions beyond the NPT, was an open admission that the treaty had

---

<sup>132</sup> The Committee was named for its first chairman, Professor Claude Zangger and began meeting after the implementation of the NPT in 1970. The NSG drew upon the work of the Committee, but was not initially associated with it. For more, see Fritz Schmidt, ‘NPT Export Controls and Zangger Committee,’ *The Non-proliferation Review*, 7:3 (Fall-Winter, 2000) 136-145.

<sup>133</sup> Perkovich, 191.

failed.<sup>134</sup> More widely, the meeting's secretive nature boosted the opinion in the developing world that the NSG was a conspiracy to prevent less developed states from gaining access to nuclear technology.<sup>135</sup> Meetings to formulate a list of sensitive items that the nuclear supplier states would control the export of took place throughout 1975 and 1976. As a result of these meetings, the NSG 'trigger list' of sensitive exports was eventually published in 1977.<sup>136</sup> The Group was not without its tensions and problems. The West German announcement of the nuclear "deal of the century" with Brazil just as the NSG was meeting caused considerable Congressional and public outcry in the United States.<sup>137</sup> The FRG-Brazil deal and the Franco-Pakistani reprocessing plant deal were the two major nuclear contracts of the 1970s that put the greatest strains on non-proliferation diplomacy.

In May 1975, the ninety-one states that had acceded to the NPT met in Geneva for the first Review Conference. Demands from the NNWS that the nuclear powers take greater steps towards disarmament, as they were obligated to do under Article VI of the treaty, dominated the event. The conference's Final Declaration acknowledged this aim in the most general and non-committal terms.<sup>138</sup> The reaction to the conference was generally gloomy, with the US and USSR seen as the major culprits in a lack of progress towards genuine nuclear disarmament.<sup>139</sup> Britain was seen as less blameworthy because of statements to the effect that the UK would not move towards deploying a new generation of nuclear missiles. The positive outcomes of the conference were that it once more made non-proliferation a major political issue and that it served notice on the superpowers that serious arms control negotiations must start moving, and start moving quickly.<sup>140</sup>

---

<sup>134</sup> Potter, 44-45.

<sup>135</sup> John Simpson, Jenny Neilsen, Marion Swinerd, and Isabelle Anstey (eds.), *NPT Briefing Book, 2012 Edition* (London: Kings College London Centre for Science & Security Studies, 2012), 18.

<sup>136</sup> Ian Anthony, Christer Ahlstrom, and Vitaly Fedchenko, *SIPRI Research Report No.22: Reforming Nuclear Export Controls: The Future of the Nuclear Suppliers Group* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 16-18.

<sup>137</sup> Gray, 456-457.

<sup>138</sup> Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, Final Document, Part 1, 'Final Declaration of the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons,' May 30, 1975, United Nations Office For Disarmament Affairs, NPT Review Conferences and Preparatory Committees, [http://www.un.org/disarmament/WMD/Nuclear/NPT\\_Review\\_Conferences.shtml](http://www.un.org/disarmament/WMD/Nuclear/NPT_Review_Conferences.shtml) (accessed on March 6, 2013), 8.

<sup>139</sup> Jack N. Barkenbus, 'Whither the treaty?,' *The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, 36:4 (April, 1980), 38; Alan McGregor, 'Gloom ends conference on nuclear proliferation,' *TT*, May 30, 1975, 4.

<sup>140</sup> Keith D. Suter, 'The 1975 review conference of the nuclear non-proliferation treaty,' *Australian Outlook*, 30:2 (1976), 337-340. The British statement was somewhat disingenuous. Although the Labour government had not committed to new missiles, it had committed to a complex and expensive upgrade (codenamed, at different times,

While the immediate impact of these two international non-proliferation meetings was small, the issues they addressed became hugely significant in later Anglo-American efforts to combat the Pakistani nuclear weapons programme. The increased emphasis on sensitive nuclear exports—typified by the NSG “trigger list”—narrowed down Pakistani options in the nuclear field and drove them towards a diffuse clandestine programme. This in turn created significant new non-proliferation challenges for the US and UK.

### **Nuclear Exports and Arms Deals**

By mid-1975, Pakistani negotiations with France over the supply of the nuclear fuel reprocessing plant were well advanced. Related to this, discussions were also taking place with the FRG for a heavy water plant. Both facilities were cited as a vital expansion of the Pakistani civilian nuclear network in light of vast increases in oil prices. This was part of a global trend, with expanded reliance on nuclear power seen as one way to meet the post-1973 energy predicament.<sup>141</sup> France wanted to make profits from nuclear deals with developing countries and was happy to enter into negotiations for a reprocessing plant that—to informed observers—far exceeded possible Pakistan civilian needs.<sup>142</sup> The FRG also possessed a significant commercial nuclear industry that—like France—“sweetened” its offers to developing world countries by adding sensitive fuel cycle technologies to the deal, a result of the fierce commercial competition between nuclear supplier states.<sup>143</sup> Despite these moves, and notwithstanding the warnings of analysts like Gallucci and agencies such as the Energy Research and Development Administration (ERDA) who warned that they had “hard intelligence” that Bhutto had ordered a PNE to be ready in four years, little was done by the US to prevent Pakistan from acquiring these facilities during 1975.<sup>144</sup>

Aziz Ahmed continued to press the issue of Soviet influence in India. At a meeting of CENTO ministers in May, five days after the Indian explosion’s first anniversary, he gave

---

‘Super Antelope’ and ‘Chevaline’) to the Polaris missiles that were the backbone of the nuclear strike force. For more on this, see Kristan Stoddart, ‘The Labour Government and the development of Chevaline, 1974-1979,’ *Cold War History*, 10:3 (September, 2010), 287-314.

<sup>141</sup> Salik, 79.

<sup>142</sup> Khan, 130.

<sup>143</sup> Clausen, 128; Potter, 109.

<sup>144</sup> Jones to Nettles, Letter, April 1, 1975, DNSA, NP01401, 1.



a lengthy speech on creeping Soviet involvement in South Asia and the need for CENTO as a bulwark against India becoming the Soviet proxy in the region. Kissinger again reiterated the US commitment to Pakistan, commenting, “we believe the integrity of Pakistan to be an interest of the United States.”<sup>145</sup> In private, Kissinger sympathised with Ahmed’s characterisation of the Indo-Soviet relationship, encouraging the Pakistani minister to seek funds for arms from Iran and Saudi Arabia and making apparent his dislike of India and individual Indian politicians.<sup>146</sup>

Gerald Ford was also coming under diplomatic pressure from Pakistan. After the CENTO meeting, Bhutto wrote a series of letters to Ford that re-emphasised the points made by his Minister and continued to position India as a pawn of Soviet expansionism.<sup>147</sup> Ford and Kissinger attempted to calm the slightly histrionic nature of Bhutto’s missives by pointing out that the United States did indeed have the best interests of Pakistan at heart, pointing to the lifting of the arms embargo and the considerable amount of food aid as signifiers of this.<sup>148</sup>

The various parties discussed arms sales in September during a meeting between Kissinger and Ahmed in New York. Uppermost in Ahmed’s thoughts were the purchase of advanced A-7 attack aircraft. Kissinger was reticent about the sales of such long-ranged, offensive weapons, despite the fact that they were obviously core to Pakistani demands.<sup>149</sup> In his briefing for a meeting with Ahmed on October 9, Ford was informed by Kissinger that interest in the A-7 should be discouraged and the emphasis placed on defensive armaments. While recognising legitimate Pakistani security concerns, Kissinger had also assessed that the bluster about an imminent, Soviet-backed, Indian attack was a fiction created for the

---

<sup>145</sup> Memcon, ‘Restricted CENTO Ministerial Session,’ May 23, 1975, *FRUS* 69-76, Vol.E8, Doc.88, 3-4, 6.

<sup>146</sup> Memcon, Kissinger and Ahmed, May 22, 1975, GRFPL, NSAF, Presidential Correspondence File, Box 3, Pakistan–Prime Minister Bhutto (1), 3-5.

<sup>147</sup> Bhutto to Ford, Letter, June 13, 1975, GRFPL, NSAF, Presidential Correspondence File, Box 3, Pakistan–Prime Minister Bhutto (1); Bhutto to Ford, Letter, August 17, 1975, GRFPL, NSA, Presidential Correspondence File, Box 3, Pakistan–Prime Minister Bhutto (1).

<sup>148</sup> Kissinger to Bhutto, ‘Message for Prime Minister Bhutto,’ Telegram, August 30, 1975, GRFPL, NSAF, Presidential Correspondence File, Box 3, Pakistan–Prime Minister Bhutto (1); Ford to Bhutto, Letter, October 15, 1975, GRFPL, NSAF, Presidential Correspondence File, Box 3, Pakistan–Prime Minister Bhutto (2).

<sup>149</sup> Memcon, Kissinger and Ahmed, September 30, 1975, GRFPL, NSAF, Presidential Correspondence File, Box 3, Pakistan–Prime Minister Bhutto (2), 3.

purpose of leveraging more and faster American arms sales.<sup>150</sup> In all of these high-level discussions, not once was the Pakistani nuclear programme raised, despite the fact that in the final months of 1975 Islamabad's nuclear ambitions became a subject of greater concern for the State Department.<sup>151</sup>

Two CIA reports highlighted the significance of Pakistan's nuclear development and raised doubts over the capacity for arms sales to change the Pakistani course. In a follow-up to August 1974's Special National Intelligence Estimate 4-1-74, the CIA suggested that lifting the embargo "may have reduced Pakistan's motivation to develop nuclear weapons, but we believe it did not remove it. On balance, we conclude that the Pakistanis still intend to try to acquire a nuclear capability."<sup>152</sup> Assuming a quick conclusion to Franco-Pakistani wrangling regarding safeguards for the reprocessing plant, it was estimated that Pakistan could produce a crude nuclear device as early as 1978. Significantly for what was to come with the Pakistani programme, the report gave little attention to uranium enrichment as a route to the bomb. Its focus was almost exclusively on plutonium—the product of reprocessing—as the means by which Pakistan would gain nuclear capability. Pakistan also frequently cropped up in a generally gloomy assessment of the proliferation picture 'Managing Nuclear Proliferation: The Politics of Limited Choice.' This report suggested that there was "no hope of preventing proliferation" and that proliferation was very much a political phenomenon "strongly influenced by the growing atmosphere of confrontation between the developed and less-developed countries." The CIA argued that the barrier between civilian and military nuclear power that had existed before the Indian test had been well and truly smashed. Coupled with the desire of nuclear supplier states to make money from selling advanced technology to the developing world, this made proliferation more likely *and* more dangerous. The United States' and Britain's muted reaction to the Indian test had demonstrated the limited political costs of setting off a nuclear explosion.<sup>153</sup>

---

<sup>150</sup> Kissinger to Ford, 'Meeting With Aziz Ahmed, Minister of State for Foreign and Defense Affairs of Pakistan,' October 8, 1975, GRFPL, NSAF, Presidential Correspondence File, Box 3, Pakistan–Prime Minister Bhutto (2).

<sup>151</sup> Memcon, 'Apprehensions Regarding Pakistan's Nuclear Intentions,' September 3, 1975, DNSA, NP01433.

<sup>152</sup> Memorandum to Holders of SNIE 4-1-74, 'Prospects for Further Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons,' December 18, 1975, NSAEBB 'The United States and Pakistan's Quest for the Bomb' (hereafter USPQB), [www2.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nukevault/ebb333](http://www2.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nukevault/ebb333) (accessed on March 6, 2013), Doc.1, 8.

<sup>153</sup> 'Managing Nuclear Proliferation: the Politics of Limited Choice,' December 1975, 5-7

Furthermore, a new threat had raised its head: that of nuclear terrorism, the “most puzzling and extreme aspect of the potential diversification of nuclear actors.” The possible acquisition of nuclear weapons by non-state actors was, argued the CIA, intimately connected to developing world proliferation: “The same increasing availability of nuclear materials and technology which has made nuclear explosives accessible to developing states can also be expected sooner or later to bring them within reach of terrorist groups.”<sup>154</sup> Such prognostications were not the sole domain of the CIA. The fear of non-state actors gaining access of nuclear materials had been on the rise since the early 1970s and would—in part—serve to provoke the flurry of Congressional non-proliferation legislation in 1976 and beyond. Taken together, these reports presented a downbeat picture. The barriers against proliferation were perceived as crumbling and in the case of Pakistan, there were obvious signs that nuclear weapons capability was high on the national agenda. They also demonstrated an institutional blind spot when it came to uranium enrichment as a means to gain nuclear weapons capability. This blind spot was not confined to the intelligence community. It would plague many functions of government, inhibiting strategies dedicated towards stopping the Pakistani nuclear weapons programme.

Such gloomy reporting was part of a trend in proliferation analysis that had existed since the earliest days of the atomic age. Ever since the 1950s, the CIA in particular had been pessimistic about the about the spread of nuclear weapons.<sup>155</sup> As John Mueller has pointed out, the pace of proliferation was much, much slower than even the most optimistic forecasts of the intelligence community, governments, and think tanks.<sup>156</sup> Moeed Yusuf makes the valid point that, as—with the cases of India and Pakistan—the “shift from developed-world proliferation to developing-world proliferation was accompanied by greater alarm regarding the impact of proliferation. It was felt that developing countries were more dangerous and irresponsible nuclear states than developed countries.”<sup>157</sup>

---

<sup>154</sup> Ibid, 9-14.

<sup>155</sup> See NIENP for examples of the persistence of this belief.

<sup>156</sup> Mueller, 89.

<sup>157</sup> Moeed Yusuf, *Predicting Proliferation: The History of the Future of Nuclear Weapons* (Boston, MA: Brookings Institution, 2009), [http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Research/Files/Papers/2009/1/nuclear%20proliferation%20yusuf/01\\_nuclear\\_proliferation\\_yusuf.PDF](http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Research/Files/Papers/2009/1/nuclear%20proliferation%20yusuf/01_nuclear_proliferation_yusuf.PDF) (accessed on November 28, 2013), 4.

Throughout 1975, American policy had done little—if anything—to prevent Pakistan from moving towards nuclear weapons. The lack of interest in the issue shown by Ford and Kissinger allowed the Pakistani government to continue their negotiations with France and the FRG with little interruption or criticism. This *laissez-faire* attitude led to the gloomy prognostications of December 1975.

### **Conclusion**

In spite of the dramatic events of May 1974, Britain and America did little to persuade Pakistan not to follow its neighbour down the nuclear path. Lack of US and UK criticism of India after the nuclear test, Washington's continued support of the Indian civilian nuclear programme, and London's willingness to sell New Delhi advanced aircraft implied that the political ramifications of becoming a member of the 'nuclear club' were slight. Faced with economic turbulence at home and aware of—but de-prioritising—proliferation considerations, Britain still pressed ahead with efforts to sell what were seen as nuclear-capable strike aircraft to the nation that had pushed Pakistan towards the nuclear option. In choosing to pursue the sale of Jaguar, the Wilson government took a compartmentalised view of the arms sales and nuclear issues, unwilling to acknowledge the serious impediment to non-proliferation created by the Jaguar deal. Ford and Kissinger's acquiescence to Pakistani demands for arms—while gaining nothing in return—demonstrated their belief that assuaging regional security concerns through concrete measures such as weapons sales would halt South Asian proliferation, despite all the signs that Pakistan was actively pursuing a weapons programme. Furthermore, there was little—if any—consideration of the deep-seated political and territorial issues that were driving South Asian proliferation. The years 1974 and 1975 laid the foundations for the future. In 1976, Washington and London fully woke up to the threat of the Pakistani nuclear project. Ford took the issue far more seriously when pushed towards an anti-proliferation stance by Congress, public opinion, and his presidential rival Jimmy Carter. In London, there were the first inklings that the reprocessing plant was not the only way the Pakistanis were trying to get the bomb; that there might be a second, more secretive strand to their efforts.

## Chapter 2: “An End to the First ‘Easy’ Phase”

### January 1976 to January 1977

---

On April 7, 1976 Henry Byroade, the American ambassador to Pakistan, sent a telegram to Henry Kissinger that encapsulated the veteran diplomat’s thoughts about US engagement with the Pakistani nuclear problem. Byroade—overcoming a stated reluctance to comment on State Department non-proliferation policy—characterised nuclear matters as central to the American-Pakistani relationship in the wake of Bhutto’s very public deal to purchase a nuclear fuel reprocessing plant from France. Most tellingly, the ambassador saw “an end to the first ‘easy’ phase of the exercise to lead Pakistan away from the nuclear option path.”<sup>1</sup> Byroade’s comments were both telling and prescient. From his vantage point in Islamabad, the ambassador saw that attempts to stop the putative Pakistani nuclear weapons programme were only going to become more difficult as the decade progressed.

In 1976, the Ford administration radically changed and reassessed its attitude towards non-proliferation. The years 1974 and 1975 had been a time of laxity on the non-proliferation front, with a stark absence of a critical response to the Indian test, Pakistan rewarded with a lifting of the US arms embargo despite offering no assurances about nuclear intentions, and gloomy prognostications about the prospects for further proliferation. For Ford and Kissinger, arms sales to Pakistan were a means of bribing or coercing the Pakistanis into abandoning their nuclear aspirations. By 1976 the Ford administration—realising that Pakistan was stubbornly determined to pursue the nuclear option, pressured by Congressional action on proliferation, and influenced by Jimmy Carter’s foregrounding of the issue during the presidential election campaign—engaged more directly with the proliferation problem. On the other side of the Atlantic, Britain rejected the opportunity to profit from the Franco-Pakistani reprocessing plant deal. More significantly for the future of British and American engagement with the Pakistani programme, evidence emerged that

---

<sup>1</sup> Byroade to Kissinger, ‘Pakistan and Non-proliferation,’ April 7, 1976, NARA AAD, 1976ISLAMA03497, 1-2.

clandestine Pakistani purchasing networks were feeding into a secret uranium enrichment programme.

The period from March 1976, when Pakistan and France finally sealed the reprocessing plant deal, to January 1977, when Carter assumed the presidency, represents a crossroads for non-proliferation policy towards Pakistan. Not only did it represent a bridge between the laxity of the Nixon and early Ford years and the non-proliferation determination of the Carter years, it was, as ambassador Byroade had succinctly stated, the end of the easy phase and a transition to the harder, more bitterly fought times to come.

### **The Reprocessing Plant**

Henry Kissinger met with Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in New York on February 26. However, the Secretary of State cut a diminished figure in foreign policy circles in 1976.<sup>2</sup> Kissinger retained power and influence though, and high on the agenda for his meeting was the Pakistani acquisition of a nuclear reprocessing plant from France. The Pakistani-French negotiations had been in progress for some time but—as highlighted in Chapter One—there had been little in the way of US criticism. Kissinger now attempted to dissuade Bhutto from going further along the nuclear path.<sup>3</sup> Influenced by intelligence reporting and pushed by Congress, the State Department and National Security Council (NSC) had concluded that Pakistan might genuinely be aiming for nuclear weapons capability, with dire consequences for South Asia. During 1975 and 1976, the United States managed to persuade its allies South Korea and Taiwan not to press ahead with their respective nuclear projects. Both of these states were dependent on the USA for their security in the face of communist ‘aggressors,’ giving America considerable leverage.<sup>4</sup> In the case of Pakistan—far less of a ‘client state’ than either South Korea or Taiwan—the US government had considerably less leverage and negotiations correspondingly promised to be a lot more difficult.

Prior to Kissinger’s meeting with Bhutto, a State Department memo outlined concerns about the reprocessing plant. “The reprocessing plant is particularly disturbing,”

---

<sup>2</sup> Jussi Hanhimäki, *The Flawed Architect: Henry Kissinger and American Foreign Policy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 443-444.

<sup>3</sup> Memcon, ‘The Secretary’s Meeting With Prime Minister Bhutto,’ February 26, 1976, DNSA, KT01902, 23-26.

<sup>4</sup> Clausen, 129-130.

the memo's author, Bureau of European Affairs staffer David H. Swartz, stated, "since there can be no present (or, probably, future) economic justification for such a capability." Swartz noted that even if Pakistan acquired many more reactors that could be fuelled by the reprocessing facility, it was still not economically viable.<sup>5</sup> The inference was, therefore, that the only possible reason for the plant was to provide plutonium for nuclear weapons. Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Joseph J. Sisco expressed these concerns to the Pakistanis in a meeting with Sahabzada Yaqub-Khan, Pakistani ambassador to the United States. Sisco had already made these points to Kissinger, reflecting on the need to talk with the Pakistanis and the French, and noting that intransigence over the nuclear issue could jeopardise the entire US-Pakistani relationship.<sup>6</sup> Sisco spoke to Yaqub-Khan about the reprocessing plant purchase and the potential deal with the FRG for a heavy water plant. Although the US had welcomed Bhutto's 1975 assurances that Pakistan was not pursuing a nuclear weapons programme, the Under Secretary noted mounting concern in America—and worldwide—over the spread of reprocessing facilities and their impact on proliferation.<sup>7</sup> Sisco did not intend these comments to cast aspersions on the assurances given by Bhutto, but the Under Secretary could see little economic reason for the purchasing of reprocessing and heavy water plants. Congressional pressure over the issue, Sisco added, could very well complicate bilateral arrangements—such as arms sales—between the US and Pakistan. Yaqub-Khan stuck to Islamabad's official line that, although there was no immediate need for the facilities, future power and development requirements necessitated nuclear expansion.<sup>8</sup>

In Kissinger's February 26 meeting with the Pakistani Prime Minister, the Secretary of State re-emphasised to Bhutto the points made by his subordinates about the danger of national reprocessing facilities and held out the prospect of enhanced arms supplies in exchange for Pakistani acquiescence to American non-proliferation demands. Bhutto reiterated the centrality of his request for the modern, long-range A-7 attack aircraft and—as

---

<sup>5</sup> Swartz to Hartman, 'Demarche [sic] to Pakistan on Nuclear Fuel Reprocessing,' January 30, 1976, IPNT, Doc. 21, 1-2.

<sup>6</sup> Sisco to Kissinger, Memorandum, February 12, 1976, DNSA, NP01450.

<sup>7</sup> State to USE Islamabad, 'Approach to Pakistan Concerning Sensitive Nuclear Facilities,' February 19, 1976, *FRUS* 69-76, Vol.E8, Doc.224, 1-2.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

was the case with the Ford-Kissinger-Ahmed meetings of late 1975—Kissinger demurred, unwilling to sponsor a high technology arms race on the sub-continent. The Secretary of State was sympathetic to the Prime Minister’s appeal, but asserted that a combination of election year attacks on Ford’s foreign policy from within the Republican Party, Congressional disquiet over lifting the arms embargo, and concerns that the reprocessing plant might constitute part of a bomb programme militated against a more forthcoming response. Sisco commented that the Ford administration was moving as fast as it could, “consistent with what Congressional and public opinion will bear.”<sup>9</sup> Once again, Bhutto argued that, if given strong enough conventional defences, Pakistan would not have to go down the nuclear route.<sup>10</sup> Kissinger, Ford, and their subordinates found themselves caught in a situation not unlike that of Captain John Yossarian in Joseph Heller’s *Catch-22*. In order to try to prevent Pakistan from going nuclear, conventional arms sales would be used to enhance Pakistani security and demonstrate US commitment. However, that drive for nuclear capability meant that Congress was reluctant to allow the very arms sales that would allegedly ameliorate the sense of insecurity at the heart of the Pakistani quest for the bomb.

There were also moves to utilise the trilateral relationship between the United States, Pakistan, and Iran—an NPT signatory—to persuade Islamabad to agree to a joint Iranian-Pakistani regional reprocessing plant that would bring the resultant plutonium under rigorous safeguards.<sup>11</sup> Although this eventually came to naught, early 1976 saw some false hopes engendered by the over-enthusiastic Aziz Ahmed that such a solution—where two issues could be dealt with at once—might be workable.<sup>12</sup> Finally, Kissinger brought diplomatic pressure to bear on France and the FRG, with mixed results. The West Germans—already under serious pressure from the US over their nuclear deal with Brazil—were happy to adopt a ‘wait and see’ attitude towards the heavy water plant’s sale. The French were far more

---

<sup>9</sup> ‘The Secretary’s Meeting With Prime Minister Bhutto,’ February 26, 1976, 23.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid*, 25.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid*, 25-26.

<sup>12</sup> Byroade to Kissinger, ‘Sensitive Facilities for Pakistan,’ March 13 1976, GRFPL, NSAF, Presidential Country Files for Middle East and South Asia, Box 27, Pakistan–State Department Telegrams To SECSTATE–NODIS (3) (hereafter Pakistan 3); Byroade to Kissinger, ‘Pakistan Nuclear Reprocessing Facility,’ March 17, 1976, GRFPL, NSAF, Presidential Country Files for Middle East and South Asia, Box 27, Pakistan 3,1.



intransigent and in his response to Kissinger, French Foreign Minister Jean Sauvagnargues made it abundantly clear that there was no going back.<sup>13</sup>

These early days of engagement with the reprocessing plant issue made it plain that the United States possessed little leverage where it really mattered. The hope that conventional arms shipments would shift Pakistan away from the nuclear path proved ill founded. Despite Bhutto's claims to the contrary, the Pakistanis themselves were unwilling to set aside their nuclear ambitions.<sup>14</sup> Additionally, the internal costs—in terms of intra-governmental friction, Congressional resistance to changes in arms supply policies, and election year public opinion—appeared to be substantial. France was also resisting pressure to cancel the reprocessing plant contract, but at the same time quietly offering the Pakistanis various options on the facility that Paris hoped would ensure it was only used for peaceful purposes. Islamabad refused, believing that the French were only acting under intense pressure from the United States.<sup>15</sup> From the American point of view, though, it seemed that there was little that could be done to persuade a nation that had been happy to sell nuclear technology to apartheid South Africa not to sell equipment to Pakistan.

Domestically, Henry Kissinger found Congress to be one of the most important factors inhibiting his freedom of action on Pakistan. Kissinger also used Congress as a means to shift the blame for a lack of aid to Pakistan away from the administration. As the Secretary noted to Bhutto, "It is important that we manage affairs so that Congress does not pass resolutions on arms sales which would inhibit us from doing the things we want to do." Kissinger's pungent turn of phrase and opinionated manner came to the fore: "One of our problems," he suggested, "is that we have some maniacs in Congress. They are violent anti-communists but at the same time reluctant to give arms to friends."<sup>16</sup> The President was also in a difficult position due to the on-going Republican presidential primaries. With Ford facing a challenge for the Republican presidential candidacy from Ronald Reagan, taking a firm stand against Congress—and thus potentially alienating key allies—was impossible until Ford was sure of his nomination. The primaries had become increasingly bitter during

---

<sup>13</sup> Kissinger to US Mission IAEA Vienna, 'Pakistan Reprocessing Plant,' April 11, 1976, DNSA, NP01461, 2.

<sup>14</sup> By 1976, Pakistani nuclear plans were far advanced, especially in regard to the clandestine uranium enrichment programme, the discovery of which shall be discussed later in this chapter.

<sup>15</sup> Khan, 131-132

<sup>16</sup> 'The Secretary's Meeting With Prime Minister Bhutto,' February 26, 1976, 25.

1976, with Reagan attacking the Presidency over Ford's perceived weakness on foreign policy and stating that if he became president, Kissinger would be "sent packing."<sup>17</sup> Thus, the domestic context of an increasingly anti-proliferationist Congress coupled to a bitter election campaign significantly influenced wider non-proliferation policy.

It had been the domestic and foreign events of 1974 and 1975 that had provoked Congress into dramatic action on non-proliferation. Numerous colliding factors triggered this flurry of legislation. The Indian nuclear test, a growing awareness of the dangers posed by the spread of reprocessing plants, and the realisation that civilian nuclear programmes could be turned to military purposes were three key reasons. The perceived laxity of domestic nuclear security and rising concerns about the potential for nuclear terrorism also prompted Congressional concern.<sup>18</sup> As Michael J. Brenner notes, "Congressional discovery that proliferation might be an imminent danger, and one encouraged by a less-than-vigilant U.S. government, prompted activists in both houses to make a lunge for the tail of the horse they visualized cantering out the open stable door. The action was frenetic, heroic in intention, and not always well-aimed, and it often sent the rescuers tripping over one another's feet."<sup>19</sup> Wrangling over non-proliferation between the legislature and the executive truly began in 1975 with the Export Reorganization Bill's introduction. Drafted by Senators Charles Percy (R-IL), Abraham Ribicoff (D-CT), and John Glenn (D-OH), the bill had a tortuous legislative history and would—after numerous alterations—finally be passed into law in 1978. The crucial questions that the bill posed—who had authority to make determinations over nuclear exports and what standards should govern those decisions—lay at the heart of Congressional interest in the proliferation problem and challenged the role of the executive branch in making foreign policy in the aftermath of the Vietnam War.<sup>20</sup> Ribicoff was a vocal critic of existing proliferation policy and the decision by so-called US allies to sell sensitive

---

<sup>17</sup> Yanek Mieczkowski, *Gerald Ford and the Challenges of the 1970s* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2005), 314.

<sup>18</sup> J. S. Walker, 'Nuclear Power and Non-proliferation,' 215.

<sup>19</sup> Brenner, 88.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid*, 92.

technology. Reflecting on the situation, Ribicoff characterised the French and German sales as a “direct threat to world peace.”<sup>21</sup>

The Congressional measures that ultimately affected the US-Pakistani relationship most significantly were the Symington Amendment to the International Security Assistance Act and Arms Export Control Act of 1976 and its sibling, the Glenn Amendment, both influenced by the Franco-Pakistani deal. The June 1976 Symington Amendment banned US economic and military assistance to countries that delivered, received or acquired nuclear enrichment technology outside of International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) regulations.<sup>22</sup> The Glenn Amendment—passed in 1977—was a companion piece, covering reprocessing.<sup>23</sup> The full impact of these measures— exactly the type of legislation that would “inhibit us from doing the things we want to do”—were not felt until well after Ford and Kissinger had departed, but they demonstrated that American lawmakers now fully appreciated the blurred line between civilian and military nuclear power illustrated by the Indian test of 1974.

Regarding the commercial arrangement that was influencing action taken by Congress, French and Pakistani officials finally signed off on the reprocessing plant deal at a meeting in Paris on March 17. Efforts at dissuading Bhutto had, rather obviously, been unsuccessful. Gerald Ford attempted to directly address this major proliferation issue with a letter to the Pakistani Prime Minister. National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft had advised Ford that Bhutto had rebuffed Kissinger’s overtures in February and argued that Pakistan was pursuing the nuclear weapons option.<sup>24</sup> Prompted by Kissinger, Ford attempted to use the example of South Korea as a point of leverage with Bhutto and dwelt upon perception, rather than reality. “My concern is not the reliability of the assurances of your Government,” he wrote, “It is that the establishment of sensitive nuclear facilities under national control inevitably gives rise to perceptions in many quarters that, under circumstances which perhaps cannot even be foreseen today, non-peaceful uses may be

---

<sup>21</sup> Ribicoff, Congressional Record–Senate, April 26, 1976, GRFPL, Glenn R. Schleede Files, Box 27, Nuclear Policy, 1976: Background Material (2), s5873.

<sup>22</sup> Brenner, 91.

<sup>23</sup> Clausen, 133.

<sup>24</sup> Scowcroft to Ford, ‘Letter to Bhutto on Pakistani Nuclear Issues,’ March 19, 1976, GRFPL, NSAF, Presidential Correspondence File, Box 3, Pakistan–Prime Minister Bhutto (3).

contemplated.”<sup>25</sup> Despite the President’s entreaties, Bhutto refused to postpone or cancel any aspects of the nuclear programme. The Prime Minister’s response, received by Kissinger in mid-April, was to repeat his previous assurances that nuclear facilities were for peaceful purposes only and to emphasise the stringent IAEA safeguards that applied to the facilities.<sup>26</sup> Turning to the necessity for the reprocessing plant, Bhutto played on Western fears about energy security in the wake of the 1973 oil crisis by reminding Ford that Pakistan was poor in terms of indigenous resources and could barely afford to keep up with the vast increases in oil prices that had been a global problem since 1973. Concluding, he attempted to reassure the President by mentioning his discussions with the Shah of Iran on regional reprocessing, but could not resist pointing out the fact that India had exploded a nuclear device and received little diplomatic criticism.<sup>27</sup> The lack of a stern response to the Indian test was coming back to haunt the US government in the form of Pakistani recalcitrance and Congressional determination.

One month later, Byroade submitted his ‘easy phase’ report to Kissinger. The ambassador saw the US as unable to shift Bhutto from his present course. Persistent US pressure, especially of a negative sort, could potentially do more harm than good to US-Pakistani relations. Byroade argued that bribery through conventional arms sales was pointless and it would take more than a “couple of squadrons of A-7s” to buy Bhutto off.<sup>28</sup> Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs Roy Atherton described the Byroade telegram as “thoughtful.”<sup>29</sup> Despite this thoughtfulness, Byroade never received a response from Kissinger as Bhutto’s letter to Ford and the Prime Minister’s hints to the media about a Pakistani nuclear weapons programme usurped the ambassador’s missive.<sup>30</sup>

---

<sup>25</sup> Ford to Bhutto, Letter, March 19, 1976, GRFPL, NSAF, Presidential Correspondence File, Box 3, Pakistan–Prime Minister Bhutto (3), 2.

<sup>26</sup> Bhutto to Ford, Letter, March 30, 1976, GRFPL, NSAF, Presidential Correspondence File, Box 3, Pakistan–Prime Minister Bhutto (3), 2.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 3-5.

<sup>28</sup> Byroade to Kissinger, April 7, 1976, 4.

<sup>29</sup> Atherton to Kissinger, ‘Response to Byroade Cable on Pakistan and Non-proliferation,’ April 8 1976 DNSA, NP01459, 1.

<sup>30</sup> Anon., ‘Bhutto Hint That Pakistan Seeks Nuclear Weapons,’ *TT*, April 8, 1976, 6.

Byroade was reduced months later to plaintively enquiring if his “very important message” ever reached Kissinger.<sup>31</sup>

### **The Regional Dimension and Internal Dissent**

The prospects for a regional reprocessing plant involving Iran and Pakistan, which had been raised in the early part of 1976, formed part of the continuing diplomatic efforts to persuade Pakistan not to develop a national reprocessing facility. Ford administration hopes that Bhutto could be brought round steadily diminished, despite the ‘carrot’ of arms supply—in particular the advanced A-7—being held out to the Pakistani Prime Minister. Within the US government, the Pakistani issue led to friction between Kissinger and his subordinates, especially the ACDA, who were vehemently opposed to any concessions to Pakistan while the reprocessing plant issue remained unresolved.

The suggestion that the Shah could be co-opted as a partner in preventing Pakistan from acquiring its own reprocessing plant was taken extremely seriously at the top level. The Iranian Atomic Energy Agency chief, Dr. Akbar Etemad, had visited the United States in April and confided to his hosts his suspicions over Pakistani nuclear intentions. Etemad noted that while the Shah was against a joint plant located in Pakistan (due to his personal suspicions about a Pakistani bomb programme and his desire not to associate Iran with such a venture), the Iranian ruler was willing to at least discuss some form of plant based in his country.<sup>32</sup>

Kissinger, however, was suspicious of, and doubtful about, the idea of a regional reprocessing centre. Not only did he repeatedly argue that the Pakistanis and Iranians could collude to divert nuclear material from a co-operated plant no matter where the plant was located, he characterised the entire endeavour as a “fraud.”<sup>33</sup> Kissinger claimed to find the entire idea baffling, stating, “We are the only country which is fanatical and unrealistic enough to do things which are contrary to our national interests. The Europeans are not so illogical. If you go around the world, where can you find a region where the multinational

---

<sup>31</sup> Byroade to Kissinger, ‘Pakistan and Nuclear Proliferation,’ June 8 1976, DNSA, NP01470.

<sup>32</sup> State to USDEL Secretary, ‘Action Memorandum—Consultation With the Shah On Pakistan’s Nuclear Program,’ May 5, 1976, DNSA, NP01466, 1-2.

<sup>33</sup> Memcon, ‘Proposed Cable to Tehran on Pakistani Nuclear Reprocessing,’ May 12, 1976, DNSA, WM00187, 1, 4.

concept would apply?”<sup>34</sup> The situation was made all the more urgent because Congress had approved the Symington Amendment only the day before. Kissinger thought that it was “a bit rough” to expect Pakistan to adhere to the Amendment’s requirements when India was expected to do no such thing, despite having already tested a nuclear device. Atherton added another factor to the discussion by noting that recent intelligence reports suggested that Libya had agreed to partially finance Pakistan’s reprocessing plant in exchange for some unspecified future nuclear cooperation.<sup>35</sup> This in itself was a fearful prospect due to the blustering pan-Arabism and anti-Americanism of Muammar al-Gaddafi.<sup>36</sup> Persuaded by the need to avoid having the new Symington Amendment damage US-Pakistani relations and despite his doubts about the wisdom of the regional option, Kissinger approved the sending of a telegram to the US ambassador in Tehran, former CIA director Richard Helms.<sup>37</sup>

Kissinger instructed Helms to gain an audience with the Shah and press the case for a regional reprocessing venture, given that the Pakistani arguments for purchasing a reprocessing plant were simply not convincing. Kissinger also opined that the Symington Amendment’s passage might well affect close cooperation between Pakistan and the United States in non-nuclear areas such as arms supply.<sup>38</sup> Helms reacted quickly, speaking with the Shah on May 15. The Iranian ruler agreed with the assessment that there was no economic justification for the Pakistani plant, even going so far as to state that the French had told him so when he recently visited Paris. The Shah mildly disparaged US efforts with Pakistan so far, “You give them a few TOW missiles and odds and ends of defensive weapons but no A-7 aircraft which they badly need. Pakistan has no air force. Do they really care if your Congress gets mad at them? Suppose I do put pressure on Bhutto. What will he say? It seems clear that he is determined to obtain a reprocessing facility.”<sup>39</sup> Regarding the regional reprocessing option, the Shah was more in favour of an Iranian-based multinational plant

---

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid, 3.

<sup>36</sup> Maddock, 289.

<sup>37</sup> Memcon, May 12, 4.

<sup>38</sup> ‘Action Memorandum–Consultation With the Shah On Pakistan’s Nuclear Program,’ May 5, 1976, 8-9. Despite a rigorous archival search, the exact cable sent to Helms remains unavailable. The version outlined in the May 5 telegram above remains the most complete and, cross-referencing with the May 12 Memcon and comparing it with the response from Helms, appears to be the version that was approved for transmission by Kissinger.

<sup>39</sup> USE Tehran to State, ‘Sensitive Nuclear Technology in Pakistan,’ May 16, 1976, NARA AAD, 1976TEHRAN04920, 2.

than a purely Pakistani-Iranian one. Nevertheless, there was an element of self-interest. As Helms stated, “The successful outcome of the current negotiations between USG [United States Government] and GOI [Government of Iran] on arrangements to build American nuclear power plants in Iran would seem to be a *sine qua non* if we expect any useful assistance from the Shah in dissuading Pakistan from its drive to obtain reprocessing facilities.”<sup>40</sup>

Henry Byroade, despite his confusion over whether or not his message on the Pakistani nuclear situation ever reached Kissinger, was instructed by the Secretary of State to make Bhutto aware of discussions with the Shah.<sup>41</sup> In his discussions with the Prime Minister where he “played the role of personal friend,” Byroade correctly surmised that there was no way to force Bhutto to publicly renounce the reprocessing plant.<sup>42</sup> The plant—and by extension Pakistan’s wider nuclear programme (both in its civilian and in its undeclared military guises)—had become a crucial part of political and public debate in Pakistan. For Bhutto especially, the entire programme was deeply connected to the morale and confidence of the Pakistani people, factors that were especially important to him in the run-up to national elections.<sup>43</sup> Byroade’s aim was to stress the increasing pressure from Congress and other domestic interests and to emphasise that the Symington Amendment was symptomatic of significant changes in Congressional attitudes towards proliferation.<sup>44</sup> Responding to Bhutto’s questioning, the ambassador expressed fears that the nuclear issue may well affect the entire bilateral relationship. Bhutto was aggrieved at the American stance, suggesting once more that India had suffered little from its nuclear test and that Pakistan was being discriminated against. Byroade suggested that the increased emphasis on Pakistan was as a direct result of the Indian test and that, given the region’s troubled history, it was only to be expected. Why, Bhutto asked, had the US not raised the reprocessing plant issue before 1976? To back down now would be a political disaster for him. Byroade was in agreement

---

<sup>40</sup> Ibid, 2-3.

<sup>41</sup> Kissinger to Byroade, ‘Sensitive Nuclear Technology in Pakistan,’ May 20, 1976, NARA AAD, 1976STATE123889. On Byroade’s personal relationship with Bhutto, see Kux, 216.

<sup>42</sup> Byroade to Kissinger, ‘Bhutto and Ambassador Discuss Nuclear Proliferation Issue,’ June 4, 1976, GRFPL, NSAF, Presidential Country Files for Middle East and South Asia, Box 27, Pakistan: State Department Telegrams to SECSTATE EXDIS, 1, 7-8.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid, 4.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid, 1-2.

with Bhutto on this and made his feelings known to Kissinger in the strongest possible terms.<sup>45</sup>

The response to the Byroade-Bhutto dialogue was a return telegram that stressed that the United States was not discriminating against Pakistan or attempting to retard its development. Kissinger couched his remarks in terms of the global non-proliferation situation, a stark change from his attitude in May 1974. Pakistani acquisition of “sensitive facilities” could harm the good relationship between the United States and Pakistan, mainly because of the intense Congressional and public pressure on the administration. While the reprocessing plant was still on the table it would, Kissinger argued, be impossible to consider arms exports.<sup>46</sup>

While the Iranian connection was being explored, the administration continued its attempts to use arms sales to coerce Bhutto into abandoning the French deal. Internal divisions—particularly between Kissinger and the ACDA—and Pakistani demands for advanced weapons made this a fraught process. Nominally, the ACDA was tasked with formulating and advocating for arms control and non-proliferation policies. During the Kissinger years, the agency was effectively sidelined and bypassed due to the centralisation of responsibility for foreign policy in the offices of the President and National Security Adviser.<sup>47</sup> On April 7, the ACDA demanded a halt to all decisions concerning arms transfers—from two *Gearing* class naval destroyers to anti-tank missiles—to Pakistan until the reprocessing and heavy water plant situations were resolved. “Such acquisitions [the reprocessing and heavy water plants] would clearly contribute to nuclear proliferation,” stated William L. Stearman, “a matter of major arms control concern.”<sup>48</sup> The May 13 State Department reaction to ACDA demands was one of barely contained fury. Kissinger and the State Department saw the agency as attempting to impose its desired outcomes onto the executive and State Department. George Vest (Director of the Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs) characterised

---

<sup>45</sup> Ibid, 3-4.

<sup>46</sup> Kissinger to Byroade, ‘Sensitive Nuclear Technology in Pakistan,’ June 10, 1976, GRFPL, National Security Council, Institutional Files, Box 96, Logged Documents–1976–Log Numbers 760388-7603801.

<sup>47</sup> Brenner, 74.

<sup>48</sup> Stearman to Vest, ‘Proposed Arms Transfers to Pakistan,’ April 7, 1976L, GRFPL, NSAF, Presidential Agency File, 1974-1977, Box 1, Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, 5/10/76-8/2/76.



the ACDA refusal to authorise arms transfers to Pakistan as “usurping the function of the Secretary of State to determine U.S. foreign policy.” Furthermore, the “ACDA’s arbitrary intervention in this matter can only complicate our diplomatic efforts to bring about in an orderly manner the result which we all wish to achieve, i.e., the cancellation of the Pakistani reprocessing plant.”<sup>49</sup> Matters reached the stage where senior NSC staffer Robert Oakley urged Scowcroft to contact Iklé and suggest that the destroyer sale would be passed to Congress over the ACDA’s objections with the hope that the Director respected the administration’s decision.<sup>50</sup>

By coincidence, presumptive Democratic Party presidential candidate Jimmy Carter laid out his non-proliferation platform on the same day that George Vest criticised the ACDA. The candidate-in-waiting argued that nuclear energy posed a dual threat to the world, through hazardous waste and the spread of weapons technology, dramatically referring to reprocessing plants as “bomb factories.”<sup>51</sup> Carter called for an immediate, worldwide moratorium on the purchase and sale of reprocessing and uranium enrichment plants, even going so far as to suggest the under-construction US reprocessing plant at Barnwell, North Carolina become the first multinational facility under the auspices of the IAEA.<sup>52</sup> Carter made a tough stance on proliferation a plank of his presidential campaign.<sup>53</sup>

The triple threat of Congressional pressure, Carter’s campaigning, and public opinion forced the Ford administration to conduct a hurried—but considered—study that became known as the Fri Report, after the study leader, the ERDA Deputy Administrator Robert W. Fri. Carter’s pronouncements certainly encouraged the review, but as Michael Brenner argues, the Ford administration “did not need a political fire set under it to feel the need for a strategic rethinking of proliferation policy.”<sup>54</sup> As well as Carter’s foregrounding of the issue, the report reacted to an already combative Congress where “the atmosphere on the Hill is still punitive as regards nuclear export policy and there is suspicion of the

---

<sup>49</sup> Vest to Maw, ‘ACDA’s “Hold” on Conventional Arms Transfers to Pakistan (GOP),’ May 13, 1976, GRFPL, NSAF, Presidential Agency File, 1974-1977, Box 1, Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, 5/10/76-8/2/76.

<sup>50</sup> Oakley to Scowcroft, ‘ACDA and Destroyers for Pakistan,’ June 25, 1976, GRFPL, National Security Council Institutional Files, Box 96, Logged Documents—1976—Log Numbers 7603688-7603801.

<sup>51</sup> Anon., ‘Carter’s Nuclear Ideas: Different,’ *NYT*, May 16, 1976, 139.

<sup>52</sup> William Claiborne, ‘Carter Enters Nuclear Arena,’ *The Washington Post* (hereafter *WP*), May 14, 1976, A12.

<sup>53</sup> Clausen, 132.

<sup>54</sup> Brenner, 113.

administration's dedication to nuclear non-proliferation." It also related to a broader public perception that the President and his administration were weak on proliferation issues, a perception that was leading many states of the union to enact prohibitive nuclear legislation.<sup>55</sup> Numerous bills and draft acts were flying around Capitol Hill long before Carter took the stage, many of which the State Department and ERDA thought diminished, rather than strengthened, the United States' position as a non-proliferation actor. A proposed amendment to the ERDA Authorization Bill that required Congressional review of nuclear exports to non-NPT states was a stark example of this. According to the State Department and ERDA, success in non-proliferation stemmed from global perceptions of the United States as a stable and reliable nuclear supply partner. Only by maintaining such a position—and thus discouraging potential purchasers from looking to other supplier states such as France and the FRG—could the US maintain its influence in the nuclear and non-proliferation fields.<sup>56</sup>

ERDA Director Robert C. Seamans pushed Ford for a major review, arguing, "I believe there is an opportunity and a need for the United States to take a major initiative to resolve uncertainties that now exist in the nuclear fuel cycle and to reduce the risk of international proliferation of special nuclear materials."<sup>57</sup> Not only was the proliferation of nuclear weapons an issue, but the spectre of terrorists gaining access to plutonium through diversion from national reprocessing plants in the developing world—a point raised by the CIA in the 'Politics of Limited Choice' paper at the end of 1975—appeared on the scene. In conclusion, Seamans urged the president to take the initiative and permit the formulation of a new non-proliferation policy.<sup>58</sup> All of this input contributed to Ford's decision—encouraged by National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft—to authorise a major, inter-agency study that the administration hoped would take the initiative, domestic and foreign, back from Ford's

---

<sup>55</sup> Evening Report (Scientific Affairs), 'Possible Presidential Message on Non-Proliferation and U.S. Nuclear Export Policy,' June 17, 1976, GRFPL, NSAF, Situation Room, Evening Reports from the NSC Staff: June 1976–January 1977, Box 1, June 17, 1976; Scowcroft and Cannon to Ford, 'Possible Presidential Statement and New U.S. Initiatives to Reduce Proliferation Due to Commercial Nuclear Power Activities,' June 22, 1976, GRFPL, James M. Cannon Files, 1975-1977, Box 24, Nuclear Policy Statement June–July 1976.

<sup>56</sup> 'Proposed Amendment to the ERDA Authorization Bill Requiring Congressional Review of Nuclear Exports to States Not Party to the NPT,' May 25, 1976, GRFPL, Glenn R. Schleede Files, Box 27, Nuclear Policy, 1976: Exports, January-May, 1-2.

<sup>57</sup> Seamans to Ford, Letter, June 9, 1976, GRFPL, Philip W. Buchen Files, 1974-1977, Box 35, Nuclear Regulatory Commission (2), 1.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid, 3-4.

political opponents in Congress and the Presidential race.<sup>59</sup> Therefore, it was a combination of Congressional pressure, public opinion, and the exigencies of a Presidential election campaign that in concert drove the Ford administration towards a re-assessment of its non-proliferation policy.

In the midst of all of this debate over a new initiative to combat proliferation, Kissinger's anger with the obstacles that his subordinates were erecting against arms transfers to Pakistan came to a head on July 9 when he gave a furious dressing-down to Alfred Atherton and Fred Iklé. After expressing increasing disillusionment with the proposed Pakistan-Iran reprocessing plant, Kissinger said that he had "some sympathy for Bhutto in this. We are doing nothing to help him on conventional arms, we are going ahead and selling nuclear fuel to India even after they exploded a bomb and then for this little project, we are coming down on him like a ton of bricks."<sup>60</sup> Iklé argued that there were significant differences between the Indian and Pakistani nuclear projects. India had an extensive nuclear power network for which a reprocessing plant made sense. In the case of Pakistan, it made neither economic nor logical sense to purchase a reprocessing plant at this stage of its nuclear development.<sup>61</sup> Regarding engaging in discussions with the Pakistanis over the economic and technical details surrounding the plant, Kissinger argued that Bhutto knew the technological details and knew what he wanted, to which Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Philip Habib responded, "That's right. And what he wants is to build a bomb." Once again, Kissinger's fatalistic opinion of the potential for, and risks of, nuclear proliferation rose to the surface: the Secretary of State had sympathy for the Pakistani leader; "If you were in his place, you would do the same thing."<sup>62</sup>

It was on arms sales that Kissinger launched into his most vitriolic attack on the State Department and the ACDA. Reflecting on his discussion with the Yaqub-Khan, he commented that the way in which arms sales to a valued ally were being held up was "indecent." Iklé attempted to justify his position with reference to the Symington

---

<sup>59</sup> Scowcroft et al to Ford, 'Nuclear Policy—Issues and Problems Requiring Attention and Potential Policy Statement,' July 10, 1976, GRFPL, Glenn R. Schleede Files, Box 27, Nuclear Policy, 1976: Presidential Decision Memo, July 10 (1).

<sup>60</sup> Memcon, 'Pakistani Reprocessing Issue,' July 9, 1976, *FRUS* 69-76, Vol.E8, Doc.231, 3.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid*, 3-4.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid*, 4-5.

Amendment, but Kissinger refused to agree: while A-7s were not the totality of what should be offered, they must be included in the package, as it was perfectly possible that the Pakistanis could go to Britain or France to buy equivalent machinery. Similar to Kissinger's reaction to the Indian test, non-proliferation was not the only objective in this case. His main concern was regional political stability. The Secretary did not want the US to be party to creating an imbalance of power that dramatically favoured India, a nation whose leader he harboured an intense dislike for. In the end, Kissinger concluded that Franco-American—as well as Pakistani-American—relations would need to be considered. “We have to find a package which is conceivably acceptable to France, such as substituting a reactor sale for the reprocessing plant.” he stated, “If we give Bhutto A-7's in return for giving up the reprocessing plant, there would be unshirted hell to pay in France. If we can get them to switch a reactor for reprocessing, this could be completed with an overall agreement like that between the FRG and Iran.”<sup>63</sup>

The NSC contended that Kissinger was giving mixed messages about proliferation. The NSC staff pointed out that the Secretary had approved a deal whereby the FRG and Iran would jointly operate a reprocessing plant constructed after a certain number of reactors were in operation. Writing to Scowcroft, NSC staffers David Elliot and Robert Oakley wondered if there was there an opportunity to persuade France and Pakistan to accede to a similar deal? To “sweeten the deal,” Elliot and Oakley suggested Kissinger could offer the sought-after A-7s to Bhutto in order to gain his agreement.<sup>64</sup> The NSC staffers concluded:

It is not clear that this new approach will offer the French and the Paks enough of a carrot (i.e., USG agreement to facilitate early reactor sales, withdraw our objection to eventual reprocessing along the lines of the FRG/Iran agreement, and A- 7 s) or a stick (i.e., withhold approval for the A- 7, though continuing with other military equipment) to modify their present agreement on an early reprocessing facility. Pakistan clearly wants to have, in the near term, a nuclear capability comparable to that of India, including the possibility of making a nuclear explosive device.<sup>65</sup>

The fact that Kissinger was broadly against an Iranian-Pakistani joint reprocessing plant but in favour of a German-Iranian facility speaks of the existence of the Secretary of State's

---

<sup>63</sup> Ibid, 8-11.

<sup>64</sup> Elliot and Oakley to Scowcroft, 'Kissinger's Interim Decisions Regarding Pakistan's Nuclear Acquisition,' July 12, 1976, GRFPL, NSAF, Presidential Country Files for Middle East and South Asia, Box 27, Pakistan (6), 1-2.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid, 3.

known attitudes about the developing world. Developing world nations were susceptible to unstable regimes and too likely—according to that vision—to cheat, lie and divert to make inter-state nuclear cooperation a viable option.

### **Kissinger in Pakistan, a Presidential announcement, and the End of the Line**

Under Congressional and Democratic party pressure to show that the administration was doing something to prevent Pakistan from going nuclear, Kissinger flew to Lahore in August to personally attempt to persuade Bhutto to abandon the reprocessing plant, carrying with him a package of pressures and inducements.<sup>66</sup> Byroade briefed the Secretary of State before his arrival, noting that the Prime Minister was in something of a troubled mood. Any effort at further persuasion on the reprocessing plant front would, the ambassador suggested, come up against Bhutto's personal involvement in the deal. Not only did Bhutto believe that his handshake with French President Valery Giscard d'Estaing constituted a binding agreement between two statesmen, but that there was no way he could admit to his people that he had made a mistake. The only way out was to get a package that could be positioned as an alternative, but still highly beneficial, deal for Pakistan.<sup>67</sup> The strategy that Kissinger took with him to Pakistan was, as Dennis Kux points out, a combination of 'carrots and sticks.' Kissinger planned to offer the long-awaited A-7s as the carrot, and the stick was the suggestion that if Jimmy Carter won the upcoming election, the incoming president might well decide to make an example of Pakistan.<sup>68</sup>

Kissinger and Bhutto met privately on August 9 to discuss the nuclear issue. According to Kissinger aide Robert Oakley, the Secretary informed Bhutto he ran the risk of suffering far harsher treatment at the hands of Carter than if he agreed with the Ford administration proposals.<sup>69</sup> Bhutto refused to back down, but in the coming months his diplomatic representatives strove to get Kissinger and Ford to adopt a compartmentalised

---

<sup>66</sup> Kux, *Disenchanted Allies*, 222.

<sup>67</sup> Byroade to Kissinger, 'Secretary's Visit—Nuclear Matters,' August 2, 1976, NARA AAD, 1976ISLAMA07858, 2-3.

<sup>68</sup> Kux, *Disenchanted Allies*, 222.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid*, 223.

approach, de-linking the A-7s from the nuclear issue.<sup>70</sup> Indeed, subsequent diplomatic contacts in Washington emphasised the deep-seated commitment to the reprocessing plant in Pakistan. “Once the agreement [with France] had been signed, however,” stated ambassador Yaqub-Khan, “the GOP [Government of Pakistan] was locked in not only with France, but with third world public opinion.”<sup>71</sup> Kissinger gave a press conference at Lahore airport before his departure from Pakistan where he reflected on his discussions with Bhutto. In the manner of such events, the Secretary said as little as possible. Proliferation was not a Pakistan-focused issue, but a global issue, there was no dichotomy in the treatment of India and Pakistan, and the US was not blackmailing Pakistan regarding arms sales.<sup>72</sup> The press reported that Kissinger seemed unconvinced by Pakistani claims that they were buying the reprocessing plant with peaceful intent, but he later explained his visit as an attempt to inform the Pakistanis about the Symington Amendment’s implications.<sup>73</sup> While Kissinger was on his way back to the United States, Scowcroft approved the sale of a range of military equipment such as armoured personnel carriers, missiles, and small arms—but not the A-7s—to Pakistan.<sup>74</sup> And when Kissinger finally arrived back in Washington, he expressed his regret to Ford over his demands on Bhutto but was cognisant of the good it would do for Ford’s public standing on the non-proliferation issue: “I had to take Bhutto on on the non-proliferation issue. It was too bad to do that to him, but if we didn’t take a stand, it would get out of control. Actually it should be good for you for me to have been tough on it.”<sup>75</sup> Toughness aside, the American stance was creating waves in France, touching on deeply held ideas of sovereignty and independence. Outgoing French Prime Minister Jacques Chirac sharply criticised the perceived “hegemonic tendencies” of the United States and the French

---

<sup>70</sup> Kissinger to Byroade, ‘Nuclear Reprocessing–A-7 Sales: Call by Pakistani Ambassador,’ September 8, 1976, GRFPL, NSAF, Presidential Country Files for Middle East and South Asia, Box 27, Pakistan–State Department Telegrams, From SECSTATE NODIS (2).

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>72</sup> State to USDEL Secstate, ‘Dr Kissinger’s August 9 Lahore Press Conference Text,’ August 10, 1976, DNSA, NP01482, 2-4.

<sup>73</sup> ‘Pakistan resists pressure from Dr Kissinger to cancel purchase of French nuclear Plant,’ *TT*, August 10, 1976, 5; Richard Burt, ‘Conventional Arms Sales and the Nuclear Push,’ *WP*, August 15, 1976, C7; Paul Martin, ‘Dr. Kissinger explains move to stop nuclear deal,’ *TT*, August 11, 1976, 4.

<sup>74</sup> Granger to Scowcroft, ‘Foreign Military Sales to Pakistan,’ August 11, 1976, GRFPL, NSAF, Presidential Country Files for Middle East and South Asia, Box 27, Pakistan (6).

<sup>75</sup> Memcon, Ford, Kissinger, Scowcroft, August 13, 1976, GRFPL, NSAF, Memoranda of Conversations, online collection, [www.fordlibrarymuseum.gov/library/document/0314/1553529.pdf](http://www.fordlibrarymuseum.gov/library/document/0314/1553529.pdf) (accessed on April 25, 2013), 3.

press almost universally condemned Kissinger for trying to ride roughshod over French independence and credibility.<sup>76</sup>

By mid-September, things were coming to a head for the Ford administration. With Carter confirmed as the Democratic Party's presidential candidate and Fri having submitted his findings, Ford needed to make major decisions about the proliferation issue. Fri argued that the oil crisis of the 1970s had created a wider global interest in—and market for—nuclear power. Coupled to this were a range of nuclear supplier states, not all of whom the US was in agreement with. Furthermore, this increased choice of nuclear technology suppliers coincided with a loss of US influence in the market because of restrictive domestic legislation. Reprocessing, Fri contended, was a central issue. It was both a substantive issue in that the plutonium fuel cycle raised genuine proliferation worries, but it was also hugely symbolic. In light of these factors, US policy must devise more rigorous international controls over plutonium inventories, establish more effective safeguards against theft and diversion, try to persuade states to forswear reprocessing, and be prepared to invoke sanctions should the rules be broken.<sup>77</sup> Fri offered a graduated range of policy outlines, from 'business as usual,' through the acceptance of reprocessing as a fact of life, to a conservative stance that reprocessing should not go ahead until it was judged to be safe to do so, to a "very tough line" that positioned reprocessing as a serious danger to world peace.<sup>78</sup>

In the wake of Fri's report, there were still serious divisions over what the eventual policy should be. Unsurprisingly, ACDA wanted the administration to make the strongest possible stand against domestic and foreign nuclear reprocessing. The State Department, ERDA, and the Department of Defense (DoD) all opted for a less confrontational option where reprocessing could proceed as long as appropriately stringent safeguards accompanied it.<sup>79</sup> Kissinger had pre-empted these departmental views by submitting his own thoughts to Ford the day *before* Fri sent his memo to the President announcing the review's completion.

---

<sup>76</sup> USE Paris to State, 'Chirac Statement on Franco-Pakistani Nuclear Sale,' August 11, 1976, NARA AAD, 1976PARIS23376; USE Paris to USDEL Secretary Aircraft, 'More Press On the French/Pakistan Nuclear Plant Deal,' August 9, 1976, NARA AAD, 1976PARIS23116; USE Paris to State, 'Press Reports US "Blackmail" Over Pakistan's Planned Purchase of French Nuclear Plant,' August 9, 1976, NARA AAD, 1976PARIS23034.

<sup>77</sup> Fri to Ford, 'Nuclear Policy Review,' September 7, 1976, DDRS, DDRS272464i1-13, 1-7.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, 9-12.

<sup>79</sup> Scowcroft et al to Ford, 'Nuclear Policy,' September 15, 1976, GRFPL, James M. Cannon Files, Box 24, Nuclear Policy Statement, September 15-30, 1976, 9.

Kissinger sought to place his own personal stamp on matters, in particular regarding relationships with allies. In addition to advising advanced consultation with Canada, France, the FRG, Japan, the UK, and the USSR, he cautioned against statements that might place the US in a serious strategic dilemma. Kissinger noted, "It should be recognized that if the [nuclear] suppliers, many of whom are also our allies, do not wish to follow a U.S. initiative voluntarily, then we will either have to coerce them or jeopardize our non-proliferation policy. Clearly, we should not select a strategy which could so easily trap us in such a dilemma."<sup>80</sup> The corollary to this potential strategic dilemma was obviously that non-supplier allies could pose the same problems. Pakistan was a case in point. Either Bhutto would have to be coerced into conforming or the on-going situation would pose a serious challenge to non-proliferation. To head off such potential problems, Kissinger advised a policy that forced "sensitive facilities" such as reprocessing plants to be located only in supplier countries, all of which were developed world states.<sup>81</sup>

Presidential candidate Carter pre-empted Ford's nuclear policy announcement by amplifying and expanding his position on non-proliferation. Ford, Carter contended, was "failing miserably" to set an example that would encourage other nations not to seek nuclear weapons.<sup>82</sup> In light of Carter's stance, Ford's advisers began suggesting to the press that the President was about to make a major announcement on nuclear policy. The *Washington Post* believed that Ford intended these suggestions to reduce Carter's advantage in the upcoming debate between the candidates on foreign policy.<sup>83</sup> That debate saw Ford and Carter clash over a range of issues. Carter was particularly scathing on non-proliferation, arguing, "only with the election approaching has Ford taken an interest" and citing the cases of Pakistan and Brazil as particularly alarming. If the Ford policy was continued, the Georgian contended in an alarmist tone, twenty new nuclear weapon states would emerge by 1985 or 1990.<sup>84</sup>

The reprocessing plant, the upcoming election, and arms sales were all problems that collided in the last meeting between Kissinger, Aziz Ahmed, and Sahabzada Yaqub Khan

---

<sup>80</sup> Kissinger to Ford, 'Nuclear Policy Review and Non-Proliferation Initiatives,' September 6, 1976, GRFPL, Glenn R. Schleede Files, Box 27, Nuclear Policy, 1976: Agency Comments on Fri Report, 3.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid, 4.

<sup>82</sup> Bill Richards, 'Carter: Sharp Criticism of Atom Policy,' *WP*, September 26, 1976, A1.

<sup>83</sup> Don Oberdorfer, 'Ford Plans Strict Curbs on Atom Fuel,' *WP*, October 3, 1976, 1.

<sup>84</sup> Anon., 'Transcript of Foreign Affairs Debate Between Ford and Carter,' *NYT*, October 7, 1976, 36-37.



before Ford's major nuclear policy statement. Kissinger had convinced the Pakistanis that should Carter win the election, the new president would make an example of them. Furthermore, Yaqub-Khan tacitly admitted that a nuclear weapons programme was, at least in part, the reason for the reprocessing plant deal. Kissinger had stated, "But I don't think he [Bhutto] would need reprocessing now if he had only the intention of peaceful uses," to which Yaqub-Khan responded, "Your understanding of the Prime Minister's attitude was correct. I was wrong. The Prime Minister confirmed the understanding was as you had stated it."<sup>85</sup> This dramatic revelation, which contradicted all Bhutto's statements that his intentions were purely peaceful, led Kissinger into a discussion of the strategic dilemma he had outlined in his September 6 memo to Ford. Kissinger argued that he was against much of the Congressional legislation on proliferation because it harmed allies more than hurt enemies, and the more punitive action the United States took, the *more* proliferation would take place.<sup>86</sup> Finally, Kissinger stressed that he was doing what he could over the A-7 issue, even though he was fighting a "reluctant bureaucracy" and Congress, both of which took a dim view of advanced weapon sales to South Asia.<sup>87</sup> In the face of a tacit admission that Pakistan was seeking the A-bomb, Kissinger stuck to his vision of security—not any of the other reasons that might be driving Pakistan towards nuclear capability—being paramount.

On October 28, four days before the presidential election, Ford made his long-awaited statement on nuclear policy, a statement that was the most extensive and detailed review of nuclear energy and proliferation policy yet made by a US president.<sup>88</sup> The statement was in itself groundbreaking and reflected many of the recommendations made in the Fri Report, in particular the 'conservative' option on reprocessing. For the first time the chief executive acknowledged the fundamental links between domestic and foreign nuclear policy, the United States needing to be seen to lead the way on non-proliferation and nuclear safety.<sup>89</sup> Ford explicitly stated that this was not just a US responsibility, but also a

---

<sup>85</sup> Memcon, Ahmed, Yaqub-Khan, Kissinger, Habib, et al, October 6, 1976, DNSA, KT02102, 6-7.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid, 8.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid, 11.

<sup>88</sup> Brenner, 113.

<sup>89</sup> 'Statement by the President on Nuclear Policy,' October 28, 1976, GRFPL, Glenn R. Schleede Files, Box 30, Nuclear Policy, 1976: Presidential Statement—Press Release October 28, 5.

responsibility of the “world community.”<sup>90</sup> The spread of reprocessing plants and their production of plutonium, a resource for power *and* weapons, must be arrested until the global community could guarantee the safety and security of both the process and the product. However, core to nuclear policy must also be an understanding of the developed and developing world’s energy needs, “For unless we comprehend their real needs, we cannot expect to find ways of working with them to ensure satisfaction of both our and their legitimate concerns.”<sup>91</sup> In order to achieve the lofty goals set out in the statement, the United States needed to maintain its position as a reliable supplier of nuclear technology and resources. US plutonium-producing reprocessing efforts would be placed on hold for three years but balanced by an expansion of uranium enrichment facilities in order ensure reliable global supplies.<sup>92</sup> The statements that potentially had the greatest impact on Pakistan were contained within the section on export policies. Although adherence to the NPT was the favoured option, there were a number of get-out clauses. The United States would look favourably upon non-NPT states adhering to full safeguards on their nuclear fuel cycle and foregoing or postponing national reprocessing or uranium enrichment facilities.<sup>93</sup> At the same time as Ford was outlining his plans, British officials from the ACDD—under the aegis of ambassador Ramsbotham—were meeting with Carter supporters to discuss non-proliferation issues.<sup>94</sup> The brave new world of non-proliferation outlined by Ford never came into being under his control. Four days later, he lost the presidential fight and the former nuclear engineer, peanut farmer, and Georgia governor Jimmy Carter became President-elect.

In the interregnum between the election and Carter’s inauguration on January 20, 1977, Ford’s outgoing administration continued to work on the Pakistani issue. By the middle of December, the French government had committed not to sell any more

---

<sup>90</sup> Ibid, 1.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid, 2.

<sup>92</sup> It should be noted, however, that domestic reprocessing efforts were already in a parlous state when Ford outlined his new policy. Environmental legislation, changes in government policy, and lobbying by pressure groups such as the Natural Resources Defense Council had already hobbled the nascent developments by the time Ford’s statement put the final nail in the coffin of American reprocessing. See John L. Campbell, *Collapse of an Industry: Nuclear Power and the Contradictions of U.S. Policy* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1988), 118-119.

<sup>93</sup> ‘Statement by the President on Nuclear Policy,’ October 28, 1976, 10.

<sup>94</sup> John C. Edmonds, interview by Malcolm McBain, May 21, 2009, Churchill College Cambridge British Diplomatic Oral History Programme (hereafter BDOHP), [www.chu.cam.ac.uk/archives/collections/BDOHP/Edmonds.pdf](http://www.chu.cam.ac.uk/archives/collections/BDOHP/Edmonds.pdf) (accessed on May 3, 2013), 25.

reprocessing plants, but remained wedded to the Pakistani contract and the Canadian government suspended all nuclear cooperation with Pakistan.<sup>95</sup> Kissinger was determined to make a watertight arrangement to deliver the A-7s regardless of the future Carter administration's desires, if Bhutto would even postpone the reprocessing plant. Kissinger promised to speak to incoming Secretary of State Cyrus Vance in an effort to ensure Pakistani arms supplies.<sup>96</sup> The outgoing Secretary of State later suggested that Vance would have "six heart attacks" when he saw the proposed arms package for Pakistan. Despite this, Kissinger displayed a misplaced confidence that he could persuade the new administration that the A-7s for reprocessing deal was valid and valuable.<sup>97</sup>

Thirteen days after Kissinger expressed confidence that he could bring the incoming administration round to his position, Jimmy Carter was inaugurated and took charge of United States policy. Bhutto was still stubbornly adamant that he must have the reprocessing plant *and* the promised A-7s. The issue was far from dead but, as administrations were transitioning in the United States, junior officials in the British government made a startling discovery that placed the Pakistani situation in a whole new light.

The Ford administration was never at any point wholly committed to a non-proliferation strategy. Gerald Ford and Henry Kissinger only adopted a non-proliferation stance when Congressional, electoral, and public pressure made it unwise to ignore the issue and even then, Kissinger's response lacked clarity, often blaming Congress for the problematic nature of proliferation policy. His lack of commitment concerning Pakistan is amply demonstrated by the continued efforts to supply A-7s, even when it became apparent that the nuclear programme was military in nature and that Bhutto was unlikely to give up the reprocessing plant. The Ford administration—like many other governments the world over—viewed proliferation through a realist lens, seeing Pakistani ambitions as solely driven by the imperatives of national security. If Pakistan were reassured—so the thinking went—then Bhutto would cast aside his nuclear ambitions. However, as Jacques Hymans and Peter

---

<sup>95</sup> Anon., 'France Bans Sale of Atom Fuel Plants,' *TT*, December 17, 1976, 5; Anon., 'Canada Ends Nuclear Links With Pakistan,' *TT*, December 24, 1976, 4.

<sup>96</sup> Memcon, Kissinger, Robinson, Byroade et al, 'Pakistan Nuclear Reprocessing,' December 17, 1976, DNSA, KT02151, 1-2.

<sup>97</sup> Memcon, Kissinger, Robinson, Sonnenfeldt, et al, 'Non-Proliferation: Next Steps on Pakistan and Brazil,' January 7, 1977, DNSA, KT02157, 1-2.

Lavoy contend, insecurity is never the *sole* driver in the quest for the bomb.<sup>98</sup> Domestic politics, the ephemeral notion of ‘prestige,’ and the proclivities of individual leaders all feed into a complex network of factors.<sup>99</sup> The administrations’—and particularly Kissinger’s—attitude towards Pakistan was informed by a view of the developing world that had evolved during the Nixon years. As Michael Hunt argues, “Washington continued to see it [the developing world] as a collection of nations that were backward, plagued by turbulence, and led by touchy, stubborn men.”<sup>100</sup> Few developing world leaders could be as touchy and stubborn as Bhutto, especially when it came to the nuclear issue.

### **Britain, Reprocessing, and Jaguar (again)**

Direct British involvement with Pakistani nuclear affairs in 1976 was—in comparison to the United States—limited. However, the economic situation in Great Britain continued to be an issue that significantly influenced non-proliferation relations with the sub-continent. It was also a time of political tumult when Harold Wilson announced his resignation on March 16 and the contest to succeed him as Prime Minister began.<sup>101</sup> Wilson’s resignation took place, as Ben Pimlott observes, at a time of gathering crisis brought on by the plummeting value of sterling from early March onwards.<sup>102</sup> James Callaghan—considered by senior civil servants in the FCO to be very astute on foreign policy matters—won the leadership contest and moved from the FCO to Downing Street.<sup>103</sup> His choice as Foreign Secretary was Anthony Crosland, a heavyweight intellectual of the Labour party, who remained in the job for a mere ten months before his death in February 1977.<sup>104</sup>

---

<sup>98</sup> See Hymans, 1-15; Peter Lavoy, ‘Nuclear myths and the causes of nuclear proliferation,’ *Security Studies*, 2:3 (1993), 192-212; Stephen M. Meyer, *The Dynamics of Nuclear Proliferation* (Chicago, IL; University of Chicago Press, 1984); Scott Sagan, ‘Why do states build nuclear weapons? Three models in search of a bomb,’ *International Security*, 21:3 (Winter, 1996/97), 54-86.

<sup>99</sup> Nick Ritchie, ‘Relinquishing nuclear weapons: Identities, networks and the British bomb,’ *International Affairs*, 86:2 (2010), 465.

<sup>100</sup> Michael H. Hunt, *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1987), 183.

<sup>101</sup> Kenneth O. Morgan, *Callaghan: A Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 475.

<sup>102</sup> Ben Pimlott, *Harold Wilson* (London: HarperCollins, 1993), 724.

<sup>103</sup> Sir Bryan G. Cartledge, interview by Jimmy Jamieson, November 14, 2007, BDOHP, <http://www.chu.cam.ac.uk/archives/collections/BDOHP/Cartledge.pdf> (accessed on July 10, 2013), 34.

<sup>104</sup> Vickers, 111; Sir Michael Palliser, interview by John Hutson, April 28, 1999, BDOHP, [www.chu.cam.ac.uk/archives/collections/BDOHP/Palliser.pdf](http://www.chu.cam.ac.uk/archives/collections/BDOHP/Palliser.pdf) (accessed on July 26, 2013), 43.

British reactions to the French-Pakistani deal's signing were of a markedly different nature to those of the US government. Some quarters saw the contract as a potential opportunity for British industry, despite misgivings about the nuclear programme's true nature. The Americans had informed their British allies about the forthcoming February 26 Kissinger-Bhutto meeting, suggesting that there was "a 20% chance" of persuading the Pakistanis to back away from the deal.<sup>105</sup> In the aftermath, communications from the British Embassy in Washington re-emphasised American concerns about the potential use of a reprocessing plant as part of a nuclear weapons programme. This had enough of an impact on British officials to make them think twice about potentially providing reprocessing technology to allies such as Iran.<sup>106</sup> Information collected by the Cabinet-controlled Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC) accurately assessed that the Pakistanis had embarked upon a nuclear weapons programme before India's test, New Delhi's actions merely reinforcing the Pakistani decision.<sup>107</sup> Like American assessments in January, the JIC argued that there was absolutely no economic need for the reprocessing plant, even in the long term, and its only purpose was to extract plutonium for use in nuclear weapons, although this was an almost impossible task due to Pakistani acceptance of international safeguards on the plant and reactor facilities.<sup>108</sup> In the final analysis, the reprocessing plant was seen more as a means of accessing technology and gaining expertise, rather than a direct route to the bomb. However, in the long term, Pakistan might well repudiate safeguards agreements and make use of the French plant to produce weapons-grade material.<sup>109</sup> Within the report were seeds of what was to come. Although the intelligence analysts could not possibly have known, their comments on natural uranium reserves and the potential for a Pakistani uranium refining plant hinted at the clandestine uranium enrichment programme discovered at the end of the year.

---

<sup>105</sup> Reeve to Wilmshurst, Letter, February 26, 1976, TNA FCO96/575.

<sup>106</sup> UKE Washington to FCO, 'Reeve's Letter of 26 February to Wilmshurst: Sale of Reprocessing Plant to Pakistan,' March 2, 1976, TNA FCO96/575; Wilmshurst to Edmonds and Thomson, 'Sale of Reprocessing Plants: US Views,' March 8, 1976, TNA FCO96/575.

<sup>107</sup> Cabinet: JIC, 'Pakistan's Nuclear Programme,' March 18, 1976, TNA FCO96/575, 1.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid, 2-4.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid, 4.

British commercial interest was truly piqued when world wide concern about the reprocessing plant's seemingly unnecessary nature caused Islamabad to announce a raft of new nuclear investment. This led to a remarkable British discussion of the potential for UK companies to profit from Pakistan's new-found nuclear largesse. Dr. Munir Ahmad Khan of the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC) held a press conference on March 22 where he outlined plans for twenty-four new nuclear power stations in Pakistan by the end of the 1990s. The British Embassy in the Pakistani capital noted that that this announcement was obviously linked to the reprocessing plant issue and was intended for international, rather than domestic, consumption.<sup>110</sup> Commercial Secretary Harry Turner of the Islamabad embassy sought out Khan in order to quiz him in more detail about the massive nuclear power expansion plan. Khan appealed to his visitor's commercial instincts by outlining the opportunities available for British business in the expanding world of Pakistani atomic power. British interest in tendering for parts of the reprocessing plant and the new power reactor at Chashma would, Khan suggested, be welcomed.<sup>111</sup> Turner handed the matter over to the Department of Trade (DoT) in Whitehall with the recommendation that the state-owned British Nuclear Fuels Limited (BNFL) contact Khan to express interest in exploratory meetings.<sup>112</sup> As expected, the FCO were immediately involved and wrote to Turner about potential constraints on British involvement in the nuclear power programme, enclosing a recent statement from the Foreign Secretary. Callaghan had given a written answer to a question in the House of Commons emphasising that when considering the export of sensitive technology, non-proliferation issues must always be a top priority for the British government and senior figures in the diplomatic service viewed Britain as having a key influence in Pakistan.<sup>113</sup>

Other elements can be linked to British reticence to involve itself too deeply in dissuading Pakistan at this stage. The Labour government was in the midst of secretly undertaking a reversal of its previous policy not to develop new weapons. As the United

---

<sup>110</sup> Turner to Ashwood, 'Pakistan's Nuclear Power Programme,' March 25 1976, TNA FCO96/575.

<sup>111</sup> 'British Embassy-Commercial Section-Islamabad: Visit Report,' April 1, 1976, TNA FCO96/575, 1-2.

<sup>112</sup> Turner to Ashwood, 'Pakistan's Nuclear Power Programme,' April 5, 1976, TNA FCO96/575.

<sup>113</sup> James Callaghan, Written Answer, 'Nuclear Equipment and Technology,' March 31, 1976, *Hansard Online* [hansard.millbanksystems.com/written\\_answers/1976/mar/31/nuclear-equipment-and-technology](http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/written_answers/1976/mar/31/nuclear-equipment-and-technology) (accessed on April 21, 2013); Robin Fearn, Transcript, interview by Malcolm McBain, November 18. 2002, BDOHP, [www.chu.cam.ac.uk/archives/collections/BDOHP/Fearn.pdf](http://www.chu.cam.ac.uk/archives/collections/BDOHP/Fearn.pdf) (accessed on May 3, 2013), 29.

States was pressuring the Pakistanis, the British government authorised the conversion of Chapel Cross nuclear power station in Dumfriesshire to a tritium production plant for a new generation of nuclear warheads. This, and the improvements to the Polaris missile system being planned under the codename *Chevaline*, was hidden from parliamentary scrutiny by disguising the new developments as ‘maintenance.’<sup>114</sup>

Not only were upgraded nuclear weapons under development, but also plans were in train to build a massive new reprocessing plant—which became known as the Thermal Oxide Reprocessing Plant (THORP)—at Windscale in Cumbria. The apparently casual disregard for the wider implications of this new facility was challenged in the House of Commons in late 1976. The reasons for objections were many and varied, from the risk of radioactive pollution to the competence of the planning officers who judged the application to build the facility.<sup>115</sup> The Conservative MP Nigel Forman, in a speech lambasting the British desire for a reprocessing plant, linked the Pakistani situation directly to Western commercial desires, stating:

[T]here is the distinct danger that this lethal technology will spread to Brazil and Pakistan, unless steps can be taken at the highest international level to undo the damage already done by cut-throat commercial competition with its ruthless disregard for the long-term survival chances of mankind—and I put it no lower than that. All this adds up to a disturbing picture of a world drunk on the prospect of nuclear power and desperate for a slice of the Faustian bargain so thoughtlessly entered into by the Americans, the British and the Canadians more than 30 years ago.<sup>116</sup>

This questioning by MPs eventually led to a lengthy public enquiry and, in 1977, collision with the new Carter administration’s non-proliferation policy objectives.<sup>117</sup> Western double standards came round repeatedly in the relationship with Pakistan, as did the specific case of British hypocrisy regarding reprocessing, a hypocrisy rooted in the conflict between wider political and narrower commercial interests.

---

<sup>114</sup> Roger Ruston, *A Slay In The End of the World: Morals and British Nuclear Weapons Policy, 1941-1987* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 176-177.

<sup>115</sup> See questions by Nigel Forman, David Steel, and Robin Cook, November 3, 1976, *Hansard Online* [hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1976/nov/03/windscale-nuclear-reprocessing](https://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1976/nov/03/windscale-nuclear-reprocessing) (accessed on April 25, 2013); David Penhaligon, Speech, December 14, 1976, *Hansard Online* [hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1976/dec/14/nuclear-fuel-reprocessing-windscale](https://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1976/dec/14/nuclear-fuel-reprocessing-windscale) (accessed on April 25, 2013).

<sup>116</sup> Nigel Forman, Speech, December 20, 1976, *Hansard Online* [hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1976/dec/20/nuclear-power](https://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1976/dec/20/nuclear-power) (accessed on April 25, 1976).

<sup>117</sup> William Walker, *Nuclear Entrapment: THORP and the Politics of Commitment* (London: Institute for Public Policy Research, 1999), 13-14.

By the end of May, the question of whether or not Britain should, or could, participate in the Pakistani reprocessing plant led to a vigorous debate between the FCO, DoT, and the Department of Energy (DoE) that lasted until the end of the year. The DoE argued that it was doubtful whether Britain had anything to sell the Pakistanis anyway.<sup>118</sup> The FCO challenged this assertion, but pointed out that it was the political difficulties of selling nuclear equipment and services to Pakistan that were the main issue.<sup>119</sup> Finally, officials at the Export Credits Guarantee Department (ECGD) pointed out that Pakistan's balance of payments with the UK and her substantial debt were not conducive to Islamabad spending even more money on nuclear equipment.<sup>120</sup>

Michael Wilmshurst of the FCO Joint Nuclear Section (JNS) also contacted Christopher 'Kit' Burdess at the embassy in Islamabad. As the resident nuclear expert and a colleague of Harry Turner, who had started the ball rolling with his March and April missives, Burdess was asked to keep a close eye on the embassy's commercial department and to make sure his consular colleagues were aware of the situation's many political implications.<sup>121</sup> Wilmshurst recognised the potential importance of British nuclear sales, but the non-adherence to the NPT by Pakistan created something of a problem. Moreover, he added:

Our doubts about the peaceful intentions of the Pakistan nuclear programme must make us very wary of any cooperation. Should the Pakistan programme at a later stage become blatantly directed at achieving a military nuclear capability, even if our contribution had not in practice assisted this, we should be liable to embarrassing allegations of collaboration and irresponsibility. Regional considerations too dictate a policy of caution towards nuclear cooperation with Pakistan; we must be careful to consider possible repercussions, not only in India but also, for example, in Iran.<sup>122</sup>

By July, Pakistani representatives were enquiring with BNFL about "projected plans for Pakistan" but it was Kit Burdess in Islamabad who concisely encapsulated the problems in the first of two letters he submitted on July 13.<sup>123</sup> He boiled the situation down to three questions: what was politically acceptable for Britain to export; what would UK suppliers

---

<sup>118</sup> Chew to Hamilton, 'Pakistan's Nuclear Power Programme,' June 4, 1976, TNA FCO96/575; Holt to Hamilton, 'Pakistan,' June 16, 1976, TNA FCO96/575.

<sup>119</sup> Cox to Broughton, 'Nuclear Power in Pakistan,' June 23, 1976, TNA FCO96/575.

<sup>120</sup> Coggins, ECGD Memo, June 16, 1976, TNA FCO96/575.

<sup>121</sup> Wilmshurst to Burdess, 'Nuclear Power in Pakistan,' June 23, 1976, TNA FCO96/575, 2.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid, 1.

<sup>123</sup> Bourke to Wilmshurst, 'Nuclear Energy in Pakistan,' July 15, 1976, TNA FCO96/575.



actually be able to physically provide; what credit terms could the UK offer to Pakistan?<sup>124</sup>

In his second letter, much less widely circulated around government departments, the diplomat went into more detail about intelligence that pointed to Pakistani nuclear ambitions. Burdess did not want the situation to evolve the same way as the embarrassing Pakistani interest in British warplanes, where the Pakistanis felt they had been encouraged while Britain had little intention of actually allowing them to purchase the aircraft.<sup>125</sup>

Spurred on by Anglo-Indian wrangling over the Jaguar deal and seemingly barred from purchasing the sought-after A-7 from the United States, Pakistani ministers had turned a speculative eye towards a Jaguar deal of their own. It was an issue bound up in rumour and misunderstanding. Agha Shahi—labouring under the convenient misapprehension that India was being offered generous credit terms for its potential purchase—had boldly asked for £100 million of credit to purchase the aircraft. British representatives in Islamabad quite angrily rejected the Pakistani request for credit.<sup>126</sup> Despite Whitehall officials having to speak “firmly” to Pakistani representatives in London, there was, the FCO noted, no political reason why the aircraft could not be sold to Pakistan as well as to India, but both sales must be on equal but far from generous terms.<sup>127</sup> By May the Pakistanis were still interested in Jaguar but with Indira Gandhi mired in a ‘state of emergency’ and her ministers repeatedly modifying their requirements and failing to make a decision on the British, Swedish, or French option and the British government unwilling or unable to offer more generous credit terms, Foreign Secretary Crosland did not pursue the potential Pakistani deal with any enthusiasm.<sup>128</sup> Here was a stark example of the radically different ways America and Britain viewed conventional arms sales. For the US, conventional arms were either a stick or carrot to push Pakistan away from the nuclear option. In London, conventional arms sales were only ever a commercial matter. Indeed, the Indian Jaguar negotiations were only ever an impediment to non-proliferation, rather than a means of positively influencing nuclear attitudes.

---

<sup>124</sup> Burdess to Wilmshurst, ‘Nuclear Power in Pakistan,’ Letter 1, July 13, 1976, TNA FCO96/575, 1.

<sup>125</sup> Burdess to Wilmshurst, ‘Nuclear Power In Pakistan,’ Letter 2, July 13, 1976, TNA FCO96/575, 1.

<sup>126</sup> Pumphrey to O’Neill, ‘Jaguars for India,’ February 16, 1976, TNA FCO37/1791, 1.

<sup>127</sup> ‘Note for the File: Call on Mr Cortazzi by the Minister, Pakistan Embassy, 2<sup>nd</sup> March,’ March 5, 1976, TNA FCO37/1791, 1; O’Neill to Pumphrey, ‘Jaguars for India,’ March 3, 1976, TNA FCO37/1791, 1.

<sup>128</sup> FCO to UKE Islamabad, ‘Jaguars and India,’ May 6, 1976, TNA FCO37/1791.

The second Burdess letter contained ominous speculation about Pakistani intentions. There was the chance that if ostensibly civilian equipment was offered and then withdrawn, there could be considerable—and highly public—political embarrassment.<sup>129</sup> There were also rumours, expressed to Burdess by one of his Australian counterparts that Britain had already assisted in the design and construction of a very small reprocessing facility in Pakistan. It was later confirmed that this facility dated from the 1960s and Britain had only contributed some consultancy for an “active chemistry” laboratory.<sup>130</sup> Burdess’s Australian source also volunteered the information that D.A.V. Fischer, the Director of External Relations at the IAEA, had suggested that Pakistan’s motives were “clearly dishonourable.”<sup>131</sup> All of this pointed to a murky and complicated picture of what was actually happening on the sub-continent. In response to this, Michael Wilmshurst reiterated the centrality to British non-proliferation policy of the March 31 statement by Callaghan. In light of this policy, it was vital that unrealistic expectations must not be raised in Islamabad.<sup>132</sup> Indeed, the Callaghan statement became the “basic political framework for our nuclear exports to all countries.”<sup>133</sup>

The MoD had also weighed into the debate over exports to Pakistan, suggesting that the possibility of Pakistan reaching for nuclear weapons “cannot be discounted.” There was minimal scope for any nuclear exports to Pakistan, especially with the looming shadow of the French reprocessing plant deal. “If this deal comes off,” argued the MoD’s Dennis Fakley, “it is difficult to see how any significant nuclear co-operation with Pakistan could be politically justifiable. Safeguards apart, Pakistan will have an indigenous capability to produce plutonium for explosive device purposes and I do not believe we should help them with this capability by, for example, providing fuel fabrication services.”<sup>134</sup>

Regardless of how justifiable participation in the Pakistani nuclear programme was, there was a scramble amongst European nuclear suppliers to carry out feasibility studies to

---

<sup>129</sup> Burdess to Wilmshurst, Letter 2, July 13, 1976, 1.

<sup>130</sup> Maclean to Wilmshurst, Letter, August 4, 1976, TNA FCO96/575, 1.

<sup>131</sup> Burdess to Wilmshurst, Letter 2, July 13, 1976, 2.

<sup>132</sup> Wilmshurst to Burdess, ‘Nuclear Power In Pakistan,’ July 23, 1976, TNA FCO96/575, 1.

<sup>133</sup> Bourke to Broughton, ‘Nuclear Power in Pakistan,’ August 9, 1976, TNA FCO96/575.

<sup>134</sup> Fakley to Bourke, ‘Nuclear Exports to Pakistan,’ August 11, 1976, TNA FCO96/575.

see if they could profit from Bhutto's nuclear bonanza.<sup>135</sup> There was the problem that Britain had nothing to sell. Back home on leave from Islamabad, Harry Turner was summoned to the FCO and after a briefing on nuclear matters agreed that pressing for nuclear business in Pakistan was pointless.<sup>136</sup> There was also the matter of Pakistani enquiries via a third party (presumed to be the Belgian company Belgonucléaire) about CANDU-type reactor fuel.<sup>137</sup> The Canadians, who had originally supplied the reactor and its fuel, were engaged in heated discussions with the Pakistanis about safeguards, discussions that ended with the complete suspension of Canadian nuclear cooperation with Pakistan in December of 1976. After lengthy discussions, it was decided that BNFL should not respond to further enquiries for reactor fuel from Pakistan.<sup>138</sup>

In the end, the decision not to participate in the Pakistani nuclear programme was, for Britain, a complex network of Callaghan's stated non-proliferation ideals, suspicion about Pakistan intentions, fear of a loss of international credibility, and the bald fact that British industry had little to sell Islamabad. By October, the FCO was advising Burdess that London strongly suspected Pakistan wished to acquire a nuclear explosive capability. Furthermore, Pakistan was seen as such a bad economic risk that sales must be declined on those grounds as well. That aside, Martin Bourke concluded, "Even if these difficulties did not exist we would be reluctant on proliferation grounds to sell anything but the most innocuous items to the Pakistanis."<sup>139</sup> Despite some further desultory back and forth, this missive represented a final decision on British involvement in the reprocessing plant, coinciding as it did with Ford's policy statement on October 28. What Bourke, Burdess, and their colleagues could not possibly know was that just over a month later, it was "innocuous items" that opened a whole new chapter in the story.

---

<sup>135</sup> Burdess to Bourke, 'Pakistan Nuclear Power Programme,' September 14, 1976, TNA FCO96/575.

<sup>136</sup> Holt, File Note, October 15, 1976, TNA FCO96/575.

<sup>137</sup> Delooze to Holt, Letter, October 12, 1976, TNA FCO96/575; Makepeace to Wilmshurst, 'Supply of CANDU-type Fuel to Pakistan,' November 2, 1976, TNA FCO96/575; The CANDU reactor was the CANadian Deuterium-Uranium nuclear reactor, the type used at the sole Pakistani commercial reactor, located in Karachi (KANUPP).

<sup>138</sup> Wilmshurst to Herzig, 'Supply of CANDU Fuel for Pakistan,' November 15, 1976, TNA FCO96/575.

<sup>139</sup> Bourke to Burdess, 'Nuclear Power in Pakistan,' October 27, 1976, TNA FCO96/575, 1-2.

## Discovering the Clandestine Programme

Late 1976 and early 1977 saw increasing awareness within the British government that the reprocessing plant was not the only route to the bomb the Pakistanis were following.

Seemingly innocent electrical components ordered by West German engineering consultants indicated that Pakistan was also pursuing a uranium enrichment strategy. The discovery was the cause of much debate and, significantly, the United States was not involved until many months later.

The first indications of a clandestine uranium enrichment programme came when BNFL contacted the DoE to inquire if there were any non-proliferation issues regarding items called ‘inverters.’<sup>140</sup> Inverters (sometimes referred to as “power inverters”) are electrical components used as part of the controlling machinery for high-speed alternating-current (AC) electric motors. In this case, BNFL had received an inquiry from E.S. Harris, the managing director of Emerson Electric Industrial Controls Limited (EEIC) in Swindon, Wiltshire. Harris had himself been contacted by TEAM Industries of Leonberg, West Germany, a company working as consultants on behalf of the government ordnance factory in Rawalpindi, Pakistan.<sup>141</sup> Harris was under the impression that the inverters were for use in controlling a centrifuge system, although TEAM had not confirmed this to him.<sup>142</sup> In his submissions to BNFL and the DoE, Harris had flagged up the point that his was a small company and such a contract provided £400,000 worth of badly needed business, thus preventing redundancies. Michael James, the official in the DoE’s Atomic Energy Division tasked with dealing with the situation, was convinced that the most likely use for the inverters was in a centrifuge system “with military purposes in mind.” It was suggested, however, that getting hold of such equipment was not that difficult and if EEIC did not supply them, someone else somewhere in Europe would.<sup>143</sup> The FCO’s Michael Wilmshurst had already set out to make urgent enquiries with Bonn to see if FRG non-proliferation

---

<sup>140</sup> Throughout the lengthy correspondence on this subject, two spellings are used, ‘invertor’ and ‘inverter.’ Outside of quotations, the spelling ‘inverter’ shall be used.

<sup>141</sup> James to Butler, ‘Centrifuge Equipment: Possible Export of Invertor to Pakistan,’ December 3, 1976, TNA FCO96/575, 1; Khan, 169.

<sup>142</sup> James to Butler, December 3, 1976, 1.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid, 2.

restrictions prevented the export of these items from Germany to Pakistan and it was suggested that ministers be informed of the new developments in the Pakistani saga.<sup>144</sup>

This first-ever indication of the Pakistani enrichment programme set off a debate that brought together BNFL, the DoE, DoT, FCO, and MoD. It was assumed that BNFL was the best judge of whether or not these inverters were of a type suitable for a gas centrifuge, having purchased similar items from EEIC in the past. Other officials within the DoE urged that the case be taken “very seriously unless or until we are reassured by the information as to end use.”<sup>145</sup> Not all government departments shared this view, however. Denis Fakley was less convinced that there were sinister implications to the inverter order. Although he agreed with the enquiries being made in West Germany, he suggested that it could be the case that “this affair is wholly innocent” and that Michael James had made more of the available evidence than was warranted.<sup>146</sup> James responded by noting that it was the managing director of EEIC himself who had made the link between the Pakistani order and uranium enrichment centrifuges and that, after examining the specifications given to the government in confidence by Harris, BNFL agreed that their only use could be in a centrifuge (and expressed some disbelief that nothing could be done to address the export issue).<sup>147</sup> Responding to this, Fakley agreed that action should be taken if it were shown that TEAM Industries were involved in helping to build a uranium enrichment plant for Pakistan.<sup>148</sup>

James gave an update to the situation—and a scathing assessment of the British intelligence community—on December 20. He reiterated that BNFL had verbally confirmed that the inverters were of a type specifically intended for a centrifuge power supply and the DoT had informed him such products would come under the Export of Goods (Control) Order when it was revised in two or three months’ time. At the moment, however, little

---

<sup>144</sup> Wilmshurst to Cromartie, ‘Nuclear Suppliers: Exports to Pakistan,’ December 3, 1976, TNA FCO96/575; James to Butler, December 3, 1976, 2-3.

<sup>145</sup> Nichols to Herzig, ‘Centrifuge Equipment: Possible Export of Invertor to Pakistan,’ December 6, 1976, TNA FCO96/575; Herzig to Butler, ‘Centrifuge Equipment: Possible Export of Invertor to Pakistan,’ December 7, 1976, TNA FCO96/575.

<sup>146</sup> Fakley to Wilmshurst, ‘Nuclear Supplies: Exports to Pakistan,’ December 9, 1976, TNA FCO96/575.

<sup>147</sup> James to Fakley, ‘Export of Invertors to Pakistan,’ December 14, 1976, TNA FCO96/575; Coleman to Turner, Letter, December 7, 1976, Department of Energy Files (hereafter EG) 8/269; James to Butler, ‘Centrifuge Equipment,’ December 1, 1976, TNA EG8/269, 1; The information that BNFL had confirmed the possible use for the inverters is contained in a hand-written note by James on his letter to Fakley and on the hand written transcript of his telephone conversation attached to his December 1 memo to Butler.

<sup>148</sup> Fakley to James, ‘Export of Invertors to Pakistan,’ December 17, 1976, TNA FCO96/575.

could be done. Any further action should be taken at the ministerial level and the political consequences of such action must be assessed very carefully.<sup>149</sup> James then went on to comment, “I find it very strange if the Pakistanis really are building a centrifuge plant with military intentions in Rawalpindi, this is the first we have heard about it. Do we not have some sort of Intelligence Service or are they all writing spy novels?” In concluding, the DoE was already preparing to assign blame elsewhere if the entire fracas turned out to be nothing more than a mistake: “We should look pretty silly if we prevented the export of these invertors on our present assumptions, only to find they really had been intended for a paper mill or something equally innocent and that BNFL had got the story wrong.”<sup>150</sup> Though a seemingly throwaway comment, this particular statement is significant. It illustrates the confusion over inverters and—at least in part—explains why it took so long for the British government to take serious action against the Pakistani enrichment programme. As will be demonstrated in the subsequent chapters, it took almost two years for sustained diplomatic action to take place. This was mostly due to the situation’s opacity—James described the situation as confused, noting that, “we are not clear what is going on”—and an unwillingness to suffer public embarrassment by creating a diplomatic ‘scene.’<sup>151</sup>

During his visit to Pakistan in January of 1977, Callaghan hardly mentioned the nuclear issue and certainly did not touch on British suspicions about the enrichment programme. Agha Shahi was interested in discussing the issue of nuclear security guarantees for Pakistan, a topic that still had currency even though two and a half years had passed since the Indian test. In his discussions with Callaghan, the Pakistani Army chief, General Muhammad Zia ul-Haq, had seemingly expressed a vague willingness to adhere to the NPT and there were suggestions that Pakistani officials might visit London to discuss disarmament and security issues.<sup>152</sup>

In the new year, Ian Cromartie at the British Embassy in Bonn finally got back to Michael Wilmshurst regarding the situation’s German component. Cromartie urged that the British government be as full and open as possible in order that his discussions with the

---

<sup>149</sup> James to Butler, ‘Centrifuge Equipment: Possible Export of Invertor to Pakistan,’ December 20, 1976, TNA FCO96/575.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid.

<sup>151</sup> James to Ellerton, ‘Proposed Export of Invertors to Pakistan,’ December 22, 1976, TNA FCO96/575.

<sup>152</sup> O’Neill to Mallaby, ‘Pakistan: Disarmament,’ January 17, 1977, TNA FCO37/2112.

Auswärtiges Amt (the West German foreign ministry) could be structured in order to avoid any future bad feeling about matters.<sup>153</sup> Cromartie was instructed to proceed in his discussion with the West Germans in as open and informative a manner as possible.<sup>154</sup> The position of inverters as regards the NSG and Zangger Committee ‘trigger lists’ started to come to the fore, with the assertion that if the items were on the list, the strictures applied to the FRG just as much as they did to the UK.<sup>155</sup> Even more evidence came to light when information from a British employee at the multi-national Urenco uranium enrichment plant at Almelo in the Netherlands indicated that the Pakistanis had requested ten kilogrammes of uranium hexafluoride (the form of uranium used in the enrichment process) and had been buying substantial quantities of hexafluoride-resistant valves from a Swiss firm.<sup>156</sup> On the day that Jimmy Carter was being inaugurated as president of the United States, Cromartie wrote back to Wilmshurst confirming that his West German counterparts would get back to him with all possible speed.<sup>157</sup>

Although taking place below the ministerial level and involving a collection of civil servants, junior diplomats, and businesspeople, this brief episode from early December 1976 to January 1977 is hugely significant in the story of British, and more widely American, involvement with the Pakistani nuclear weapons programme. Connecting to the agreement that Pakistan was pursuing the nuclear weapons option, it demonstrated there were two strands directed at obtaining materials to make a nuclear bomb. It also illustrates the situation’s confusion and murkiness at this stage. Many works on the subject have—without having access to these newly declassified documents—suggested incompetence or conspiracy (and at times a combination of the two) as the reasons for Western inaction over the Pakistani enrichment programme.<sup>158</sup> In reality, the reasons for a lack of real action on the Pakistani nuclear issue were multifaceted and multi-layered. Domestic politics, the brutal economic environment of the 1970s, inter-departmental political squabbles, fear of public

---

<sup>153</sup> Cromartie to Wilmshurst, ‘Nuclear Suppliers: Exports to Pakistan,’ January 5, 1977, TNA FCO96/728.

<sup>154</sup> Wilmshurst to Cromartie, ‘Nuclear Suppliers: Exports to Pakistan,’ January 11, 1977, TNA FCO96/728.

<sup>155</sup> James to Wilmshurst, ‘Proposed Export of Invertors to Pakistan,’ January 5, 1977, TNA FCO96/728.

<sup>156</sup> Brown to James, ‘Proposed Export of Invertors to Pakistan,’ January 7, 1977, TNA FCO96/728.

<sup>157</sup> Cromartie to Wilmshurst, ‘Nuclear Suppliers: Exports to Pakistan,’ January 20, 1977, TNA FCO96/728.

<sup>158</sup> Frantz & Collins, Krosney & Weissman, Levy & Scott-Clark, and Venter all combine these two explanations to a greater or lesser extent.

embarrassment, and the outlooks of individual policymakers all contributed to the lack of immediate response. Suggesting—as, for example, Levy and Scott-Clark do—that there was a massively complicated conspiracy at work overlooks the *actual* complexity of the situation.

### **Conclusion**

The months from the signing of the French-Pakistani nuclear processing plant deal to the inauguration of Jimmy Carter were a period of confusion and change. The complexity of international nuclear diplomacy and the difficulty of reconciling the needs of American and Pakistani domestic and foreign policy made it an intensely complicated time for policymakers. Electoral and Congressional pressure forced Ford and Kissinger to reassess US non-proliferation policy, as perceptions in Washington and London hardened around the belief that Pakistan *was* pursuing the nuclear weapons option. Yet, there was little practical communication between the US and UK on ways and means to combat the problem. The Americans unsuccessfully attempted to bribe or coerce Bhutto with arms sales. Britain stubbornly pursued the Indian Jaguar deal, but chose not to seek commercial advantage from the Pakistani reprocessing plant deal when it became apparent that any involvement in nuclear exports to Islamabad would be politically untenable and limited in profitability. The period was also revelatory in that with remarkable suddenness, it became apparent to British officials that they were dealing with two Pakistani efforts to acquire fissile materials. For the United States, the United Kingdom, and Pakistan, 1976 was indeed the end of the “first ‘easy’ phase” and the beginning of what promised to be an intensely challenging period in international nuclear relations.



## Chapter 3: “The omens are scarcely encouraging”

### February 1977 to March 1978

---

By the middle of 1977, things were looking bleak for American and British efforts to discourage Pakistan’s quest for nuclear capability. Robin Fearn—British *chargé d’affaires* in Islamabad—commented, regarding efforts to restrain Pakistani nuclear ambitions, that, “the omens are scarcely encouraging.”<sup>1</sup> Fearn’s take on the situation was prescient, as US-Pakistani relations dropped to their lowest ebb and British efforts to exercise influence came to naught. The year 1977 was one of change in political leadership in the US, the UK, and Pakistan. Despite personnel changes, these thirteen months are a story of continuity in policy rather than dramatic transformation.

Jimmy Carter had come to the presidency promising to address the problems of human rights violations, the superpower arms race, conventional arms sales, and nuclear proliferation. Carter’s stance on proliferation created tensions between the United States and its European allies that were less to do with a change in policy—Carter’s pronouncements from the Oval Office were little different from his predecessor’s late-period change of heart on non-proliferation—but rather more to do with what William Glenn Gray describes as a “jarring change in style.”<sup>2</sup> Carter’s far-reaching, global policies affected the foreign and domestic nuclear interests of states such as the UK, the FRG, and France with little intra-alliance consultation.

In the case of Pakistan, efforts to halt or retard the nuclear programme faced numerous barriers. Although the UK and US hoped that a change of government in Islamabad might usher in a regime more pliable on nuclear issues, the switch from civilian rule under Zulfikar Ali Bhutto to military rule under General Muhammad Zia ul-Haq saw continuity in the Pakistani nuclear quest. In attempting to balance non-proliferation and conventional arms control policies, Carter only succeeded in driving Pakistan further away from the United States. The one partial non-proliferation success was the French acceptance

---

<sup>1</sup> UKE Islamabad to FCO, ‘Pakistan: Reprocessing Plant: Nye’s Visit,’ August 9, 1977, TNA FCO96/728, 2.

<sup>2</sup> Gray, 468.

that non-proliferation mattered more than the reprocessing plant contract with Bhutto. This was also mired in problems, as Valéry Giscard d'Estaing's government displayed a marked unwillingness to go public with its decision or to definitively break their contract with Pakistan.

Carter's non-proliferation strategy and its interactions with Pakistan faced a British government struggling to understand and react to discoveries about nuclear arms and the sub-continent. British policy also demonstrated that domestic interests could influence responses to the proliferation problem. Even though James Callaghan's government had a greater commitment to non-proliferation than other Western European states—such as the FRG—arms sales and the avowed British requirement for a commercially lucrative domestic nuclear reprocessing industry were the most prominent examples of economic imperatives interfering with non-proliferation policy. The Callaghan government's attitude towards British domestic reprocessing starkly illustrated a division between the nuclear 'haves' and have nots', as David Owen justified the THORP on the grounds of economic and energy needs—identical justifications to those emanating from Islamabad.

Significantly for the future of non-proliferation policy against Pakistan, new evidence came to light about the late 1976 discovery of a clandestine Pakistani purchasing programme supplying a uranium enrichment project. Callaghan's government—in particular the new Foreign Secretary David Owen—did not lack willingness to tackle this issue even though it would affect British businesses. It is important to emphasise that this economic impact was several orders of magnitude smaller than the effect of abandoning arms sales or domestic reprocessing. However, British efforts to combat the clandestine purchasing programme were hampered by the incomplete nature of existing proliferation controls, the dubious legal basis of action to prevent suspicious exports, and the recalcitrance of fellow nuclear technology supplier states.

By March 1978, the "omens" for future anti-proliferation activities focused on the sub-continent were "scarcely encouraging." The evidence of a well planned, skilfully executed clandestine purchasing programme by Pakistan was mounting and efforts to halt Pakistani nuclear development had broadly failed. Although there would be some hope engendered by a change of heart in Paris on nuclear exports, the outlook remained grim.

## Enter Carter

Jimmy Carter came to the Presidency having positioned non-proliferation as a key plank of his foreign policy platform. A devout Southern Baptist possessed of a strong Christian conscience, the new President sought to bring morality and humanitarianism—qualities notably lacking during the Nixon-Ford-Kissinger years—back to the centre of US foreign policy.<sup>3</sup> In an inaugural address involving George Washington’s bible and frequent quotations from scripture, Carter vouchsafed that his ultimate goal was “the elimination of all nuclear weapons from this Earth.”<sup>4</sup> As Andrew Preston has pointed out, Carter attempted to govern as *both* a moralist *and* a realist.<sup>5</sup> Carter identified, as Betty Glad argues, US national interests with moral righteousness.<sup>6</sup> Unlike late-period Ford, driven towards non-proliferation by a combination of Congressional and electoral pressure, Carter founded his passion for non-proliferation in a vision of a moral foreign policy driven by a personal commitment to human rights. Human rights, arms control, conventional arms sales, and non-proliferation were all tied together. Spending on conventional arms and nuclear weapons meant less for states to spend on curing social ills such as poverty, which in turn led to frustration and instability. Reducing expenditure on arms and preventing the spread of nuclear weapons would result in a safer and more peaceful world with more money to spend on combating societal problems.<sup>7</sup> Reflecting on the 1974 Indian nuclear test, Carter noted in his memoirs that he “wanted to do everything possible to prevent this capability from spreading to any additional nations.”<sup>8</sup> While the motivations for Carter’s policy may have been different from those of Ford, the ends and means were broadly similar. The fundamentals of the Carter proliferation policy were little different from the Fri Report and Ford’s October 1976 statement: a halt to domestic reprocessing, increased pressure on other

---

<sup>3</sup> See Kaufman, 11-17 for a sketch of Carter’s background and policy ideals as he prepared for the presidency.

<sup>4</sup> Carter, ‘Inaugural Address,’ January 20, 1977, *The American Presidency Project*, Public Papers of the Presidents: Jimmy Carter (hereafter PPPJC), [www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=6575](http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=6575) (accessed on July 16, 2013).

<sup>5</sup> Preston, 575.

<sup>6</sup> Glad, 281.

<sup>7</sup> Kaufman, 14-15.

<sup>8</sup> Jimmy Carter, *Keeping Faith: Memoirs of a President* (London: Collins, 1982), 215-216.

states—such as Pakistan—to halt their own reprocessing plans, greater international discussion of the nuclear fuel cycle, and closer attention to multinational means of curbing access to sensitive technologies. However, the emphasis on morality and humanitarianism created more problems than it solved, with human rights and nuclear proliferation issues antagonising enemies and allies alike.<sup>9</sup>

Although Carter drove the non-proliferation policy agenda, he was surrounded by advisers—such as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Nuclear Energy and Energy Technology Affairs Louis V. Nosenzo—who had been sidelined during the Nixon and Ford years, but who now found themselves working for a President espousing genuine enthusiasm for non-proliferation.<sup>10</sup> Problems that plagued Carter’s time in office arose from the administration’s very start. Disorganisation in decision-making, a managerial style that often initiated policies without a full understanding of their ramifications, and the increasingly rancorous relationship between his two key foreign policy advisers—Secretary of State Cyrus Vance and National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski—led to confusion, misunderstanding, and in some cases, disaster.<sup>11</sup>

With explicit focus on non-proliferation as a policy objective, Pakistan was on Carter’s agenda from day one, but there was little change from the Ford approach during the first three months of the new administration. The twin measures of exerting pressure on France to renege on the reprocessing plant deal and using conventional arms sales to persuade Bhutto to give up his nuclear ambitions remained in place as Carter’s administration formulated broader non-proliferation strategies. However, the use of conventional arms as an inducement for Bhutto not to pursue his nuclear aspirations represented a major flaw in Carter’s human rights-led policy platform. The administration wanted to prevent proliferation *and* reduce sales of advanced weapons to the developing world. In the case of Pakistan, either non-proliferation would have to subordinate itself to arms sales restraint or vice versa. Lucy Benson (Under Secretary of State for Security Assistance) made the point

---

<sup>9</sup> Preston, 576.

<sup>10</sup> Brenner, 123-124.

<sup>11</sup> Burton I. Kaufman and Scott Kaufman, *The Presidency of James Earl Carter*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, revised (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2006), 46-47.

to her British counterparts that the new administration was making an effort to compartmentalise the issues of the Pakistani nuclear weapons programme and conventional arms supplies, but it was unclear how to achieve this difficult aim.<sup>12</sup> The State Department favoured an early approach to Bhutto, before the March Pakistani elections.<sup>13</sup> In the end, Vance took the decision to wait until it was clear whether Bhutto would remain in charge or if the Americans would have to deal with a new Pakistani leader.<sup>14</sup>

On Pakistan's attempt to purchase the core of a nuclear fuel cycle, Vance's subordinates viewed the French reprocessing plant deal's completion as increasingly unlikely, and argued that the emphasis should be on how to mollify Bhutto and persuade him that he would never have the facilities.<sup>15</sup> The French government bore much of the responsibility for this reduced chance of completion, having concluded that the proliferation risks of the deal were too great.<sup>16</sup> Giscard had commented that the entire deal was a "bad mistake" but did not want to lose 'face' by appearing to succumb to American pressure.<sup>17</sup> Giscard feared that Washington would state publicly that a French policy change was the result of American pressure on Paris, affecting his domestic political standing at a critical time.<sup>18</sup>

Vance wrote to his French counterpart Louis de Guiringaud in February, seeking confirmation of the deal's cancellation. Not only would cancellation be a major step forward for sub-continental non-proliferation efforts, it would also boost the chances of stopping the huge FRG-Brazil nuclear deal.<sup>19</sup> Paul C. Warnke, Vance's appointee as ACDA Director, also pointed out to Deputy Secretary of State Warren Christopher the connections between the two nuclear deals, stating that, "unless we obtain some kind of gain [on the FRG-Brazil deal], our prospects of obtaining success will be substantially reduced in Pakistan (where,

---

<sup>12</sup> UKE Washington to FCO, 'US Nuclear Non-proliferation Policy,' February 9, 1977, TNA FCO37/2066, 1-2.

<sup>13</sup> Action Memorandum to the Secretary, 'Further Steps on Brazil and Pakistan,' January 28, 1977, NARA, Record Group 59: General Records of the Department of State (hereafter RG59), Records of Anthony Lake (hereafter RAL), Box 17, Pakistan, 11.

<sup>14</sup> Vance to USE Paris, 'Letter to Foreign Minister,' February 14 1977, NARA, RG59, RAL, Box 17, Pakistan, 3.

<sup>15</sup> Action Memorandum to the Secretary, January 28, 1977, 2.

<sup>16</sup> Gray, 468.

<sup>17</sup> Brzezinski to Carter, 'Info Items: Brzezinski to Carter,' March 12, 1977, Jimmy Carter Presidential Library (hereafter JCPL), Remote Archives Capture system (hereafter RAC) NLC-1-1-2-67-4, 1; USE Paris to State, 'Elysee on Schmidt Visit,' February 8 1977, NARA, RG59, RAL, Box 17, Pakistan.

<sup>18</sup> Brzezinski to Carter, 'NSC Weekly Report #24,' February 17, 1977, JCPL, RAC NLC-28-63-3-1-8, 4.

<sup>19</sup> Vance to USE Paris, February 14, 1977, 1-3.

unlike Brazil, the evidence on current weapons intentions is unambiguous).”<sup>20</sup> The problem was not that the French were unwilling to cancel the deal—Giscard had made his feelings plain in private—but that such were French and Pakistani sensitivities that the final cancellation required circumspect, discreet handling. French ministers had publicly and repeatedly emphasised the sanctity of a contract made in good faith and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto had—with equal vigour—publicly underscored his commitment to the reprocessing plant.

However, the disputed March elections in Pakistan caused Bhutto—at least in his diplomatic communications—to adopt an attitude more amenable to negotiation over the nuclear issue, prompting discussions within the Carter administration regarding the Ford-era offer of advanced A-7 attack aircraft to Pakistan.<sup>21</sup> The Pakistani elections had become mired in accusations of vote rigging, religious intolerance, and political violence. Bhutto reached out to the powerful conservative clerical leader of the multi-party Pakistan National Alliance (PNA), Maulana Mufti Mahmood, in an attempt to avert strikes and violent protests in the streets.<sup>22</sup> In a move aimed at quelling the calls for change emanating from the more radical Islamic elements of Pakistani society, the embattled Prime Minister announced the enforcement of Sharia law and declared prohibitions on alcohol and gambling.<sup>23</sup> While Bhutto was in this vulnerable position, Brzezinski criticised a State Department plan for a wide-ranging package of economic and military incentives—including substituting the advanced A-7s for lightweight, far less capable F-5E fighters and perhaps a few aging A-4 fighter-bombers—as threatening Carter’s policies on arms sales and South Asia. Furthermore, the National Security Adviser contended that rewarding Pakistan would set a “tempting precedent” for other proliferators. However, an overly tough stand with Bhutto might well cause him to adopt an even more “strident nuclear policy,” damaging Carter’s wider non-proliferation objectives. Brzezinski recommended entering into negotiations demanding restraint in the Pakistani nuclear programme, gradually offering incentives and

---

<sup>20</sup> Cyrus Vance, *Hard Choices: Critical Years in America’s Foreign Policy* (New York, NY: Simon & Shuster, 1983), 43; Warnke to Christopher, ‘Memorandum for the Deputy Secretary: The FRG-Brazil Deal,’ March 25, 1977, JCPL, RAC NLC-132-36-3-2-0, 1.

<sup>21</sup> Brzezinski to Carter, ‘Evening Report: Brzezinski to Carter,’ March 10, 1977, JCPL, RAC NLC-1-1-2-54-8.

<sup>22</sup> Husain Haqqani, *Pakistan: Between Mosque and Military* (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2005), 121.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 123.

only if it became apparent that Bhutto “would not fold.”<sup>24</sup> Carter favoured the stance suggested by his hawkish National Security Adviser, a stance that coincided with the President’s views on arms sales, proliferation, and human rights. Responding to suggestions made by Acting Secretary of State Warren Christopher, Carter wanted a minimal arms package, opposed the substantial aid programme suggested by the State Department, and questioned Christopher’s suggestion that the US could finance the Pakistani purchase of a French nuclear reactor.<sup>25</sup>

While the State Department and NSC were getting to grips with the Pakistani situation, Carter unveiled his non-proliferation policy. Carter made his announcement on April 7, arguing that while nuclear power was a vital resource—particularly against the background of the 1970s oil crises—there were dangerous consequences to the spread of certain technologies. Carter called for an international effort to curb the spread of plutonium (created through reprocessing) and uranium enrichment technology (although the focus was very firmly on the former), recognising that the United States could not act unilaterally. Where Ford had opted for a three-year moratorium on US reprocessing, Carter announced an indefinite deferral of commercial reprocessing in the United States, an expansion of enriched uranium production to meet expected global needs, legislative steps to permit foreign nuclear fuel supply contracts that would remove the requirement for other countries to reprocess, and continued international discussions on energy needs. The President carefully pointed out that he was in no way attempting to impose his will on France, Japan, the UK, and West Germany, which had already embarked on extensive reprocessing projects and which did not have the ready access to domestic supplies of oil similar to the US. This approval of European and Japanese reprocessing came as a surprise to Carter’s advisers, whom the President had not informed about this aspect of his speech. Finally, Carter called for the

---

<sup>24</sup> Brzezinski to Carter, ‘Pakistan: Reprocessing and Arms Sales Negotiations,’ April 1977 (exact date unknown), JCPL, Records of the National Security Staff, North-South, Box 95, Pakistan 4/77–12/78 (hereafter NSS-NS Box 95), 2.

<sup>25</sup> Christopher to Carter, ‘Reprocessing Negotiations With Pakistan: A Negotiating Strategy,’ April 2, 1977, NSAEBS ‘The United States and Pakistan’s Quest for the Bomb,’ (hereafter USPQB), [www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nukevault/ebb333](http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nukevault/ebb333) (accessed on July 16, 2013), Doc.2, 2-4. Carter’s thoughts are outlined in his handwritten marginalia. Regarding the sale of fighter aircraft, Carter confuses the designations of the warplanes Christopher is suggesting. Carter’s note states “A-5s only.” As the A-5 *Vigilante* was a sophisticated nuclear bomber and reconnaissance aircraft operated in limited numbers by the US Navy, Carter must have meant the F-5 fighter and simply mixed up the designations of the A-4 (a light attack aircraft) and F-5.

establishment of an evaluation programme looking at all aspects of the nuclear fuel cycle, a call that eventually led to the International Nuclear Fuel Cycle Evaluation Program (INFCE).<sup>26</sup>

Carter's dramatic emphasis on reprocessing implicitly made the situation in Pakistan part of a major, very public US policy announcement. The post-speech press conference confirmed this when a journalist pointedly asked if "some of the smaller nations that are now seeking reprocessing technology are doing so in order to attain nuclear weapon capability as well as or in addition to meeting their legitimate energy needs?" Carter was circumspect, reiterating that his policies were aimed at stopping a situation similar to that of India, where civilian atomic supplies had been used to create a nuclear explosive. The Carter presumption was that if the global community only used light water reactors and low-enriched uranium fuel, coupled with restrictions on breeder reactor and reprocessing technology, it would be much harder to divert nuclear facilities and materials to military nuclear projects.<sup>27</sup> Furthermore, the President—whether he intended to or not—had broadened the debate from a discussion of nuclear *exports* to fundamental energy strategies, thus confronting a far greater number of potentially interested parties.<sup>28</sup> Confusion ensued when Robert Fri and Joseph Nye held a press conference to 'clarify' the President's statements. Contrary to the impression given by Carter, Fri and Nye claimed that the President's statement referred only to domestic considerations, the international aspects not having been fully agreed. Their answers did anything but clarify, producing further confusion and consternation amongst foreign observers who were attempting to decipher the meaning of Carter's policy.<sup>29</sup>

Further consternation was provoked when Carter exhibited what became a hallmark of his presidency. After placating other nuclear suppliers by his willingness to allow continued reprocessing in those countries that already had facilities, he executed something

---

<sup>26</sup> Carter, 'Nuclear Power Policy Remarks and a Question and Answer Session With Reporters on Decisions Following a Review of U.S. Policy,' April 7, 1977, PPPJC, [www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=7315](http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=7315) (accessed on July 4, 2013); Brzezinski recalls that Carter intended to announce the new policy two weeks earlier, but that the National Security Adviser persuaded him that the consequences of such an announcement—with only a few hours notice for allies—would be a foreign relations disaster. See Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Power and Principle: Memoirs of the National Security Adviser, 1977-1981* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1983), 130-131.

<sup>27</sup> Ronald E. Powaski, *March to Armageddon: The United States and the Nuclear Arms Race, 1939 to the Present* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), 182.

<sup>28</sup> Gray, 464.

<sup>29</sup> J.S. Walker, 'Nuclear Power and Nonproliferation,' 238.



of a *volte-face* on April 27 with the first draft of the Nuclear Non-proliferation Policy Act (NNPA.) The core of the controversy was the proposal that the United States should be able to renegotiate existing nuclear supply contracts and retain the right of approval over foreign reprocessing of spent US-origin fuel.<sup>30</sup> This placed commercial reprocessing facilities—such as the proposed British THORP and French UP<sub>3</sub> facilities—in danger, as reprocessing contracts had been entered into with nations using US-supplied fuel when there was now no guarantee that the Americans would permit the transfer of that fuel for recycling. Indeed, the primary reason for the proposed construction of the controversial THORP was to reprocess foreign spent fuels and thus operate as a revenue earner.<sup>31</sup> The reservation by the United States of the dramatic powers of intervention enshrined in the NNPA posed a direct threat to British economic and energy policy.

The first three months of the Carter administration's non-proliferation activity highlight several factors that became hallmarks of the President's time in office. The tension between the State Department and the National Security Adviser was already becoming apparent as Carter adopted Brzezinski's tougher line on negotiations with Pakistan. More broadly, relative foreign enthusiasm for the new non-proliferation initiatives foundered on the rocks of the sudden and jarring shift outlined in the proposed NNPA. One of the countries most worried by the proposals was America's closest ally in dealing with the Pakistani proliferation problem—the United Kingdom.

### **The UK and Pakistani Reprocessing**

The FCO was undergoing a smaller transition of its own as the United States moved from Ford to Carter. On February 13, Foreign Secretary Anthony Crosland suffered a massive stroke and died in hospital six days later. The surprising choice as Crosland's replacement was David Owen, a committed Atlanticist from the right of the party, and at thirty-eight the

---

<sup>30</sup> 'Nuclear Non-proliferation Fact Sheet on the Proposed Nuclear Non-proliferation Policy Act of 1977,' April 27, 1977, PPPJC, [www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=7409](http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=7409) (accessed on July 9, 2013); Carter, 'Nuclear Non-proliferation—Message to Congress,' April 27, 1977, PPPJC, [www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=7408](http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=7408) (accessed on July 9, 2013).

<sup>31</sup> William Walker, 'Destination Unknown: Rokkasho and the International Future of Nuclear Reprocessing,' *International Affairs*, 82:4 (July, 2006), 745.

youngest foreign secretary since Anthony Eden in 1935.<sup>32</sup> Superiors, colleagues, and friends saw him as energetic, imaginative and full of initiative, but imperious and difficult to work with.<sup>33</sup> Christopher Mallaby, ACDD chief during Owen's time at the FCO, recalled that Owen displayed great enthusiasm for arms control and non-proliferation matters, issues that the new Foreign Secretary saw as vote winners for Labour and a means of increasing his own popularity and standing.<sup>34</sup> In particular, Owen was deeply concerned about proliferation, particularly in the cases of Pakistan and South Africa.<sup>35</sup> By 1977, British public activism on nuclear matters was reinvigorated after languishing in the doldrums for most of the early 1970s, with the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) calling attention to the dangers of proliferation and Friends of the Earth protesting against the THORP.<sup>36</sup> There were inherent tensions in Owen's stance, including the matter of balancing popular arms control measures and the demands of the developing world signatories of the NPT for genuine progress in arms reduction, with the requirements of British defence and foreign policy. This fine balancing act would be apparent in the British approach to the Pakistani proliferation problem, where UK domestic, commercial, and foreign policies were in constant tension.

After Carter's inauguration, several US delegations travelled to London. Vance, Warnke, and Vice President Walter Mondale all journeyed across the Atlantic to meet with Callaghan and his ministers to discuss non-proliferation matters.<sup>37</sup> Mondale homed in on the Pakistani and Brazilian situations as the immediate problems, stating that the United States would be willing to give up commercial advantage in order to combat the proliferation problem. Callaghan was well aware of this position from Carter's campaign speeches and

---

<sup>32</sup> Vickers, 112; Dominic Sandbrook, *Seasons in the Sun: The Battle for Britain, 1974-1979* (London: Penguin, 2013), 644.

<sup>33</sup> James Callaghan, *Time and Chance* (London: Collins, 1987), 448; Paul Lever, interview by Malcolm McBain, November 7, 2011, BDOHP, [www.chu.cam.ac.uk/archives/collections/BDOHP/Lever.pdf](http://www.chu.cam.ac.uk/archives/collections/BDOHP/Lever.pdf) (accessed on July 10, 2013), 8; David Gillmore, interview by Jane Barder, March 17, 1996, BDOHP, [www.chu.cam.ac.uk/archives/collections/BDOHP/Gillmore.pdf](http://www.chu.cam.ac.uk/archives/collections/BDOHP/Gillmore.pdf) (accessed on July 10, 2013), 11; Contained within the many interviews of the BDOHP are references too numerous to list attesting to the difficult relationship many officials had with the Foreign Secretary.

<sup>34</sup> Christopher Mallaby, interview by John Hutson, December 17, 1997, BDOHP, [www.chu.cam.ac.uk/archives/collections/BDOHP/Mallaby.pdf](http://www.chu.cam.ac.uk/archives/collections/BDOHP/Mallaby.pdf) (accessed on July 10, 2013), 11-12.

<sup>35</sup> David Owen, *Time To Declare* (London: Penguin, 1992), 336.

<sup>36</sup> Lawrence S. Wittner, *The Struggle Against the Bomb, Volume 3: Toward Nuclear Abolition* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003), 22.

<sup>37</sup> John C. Edmonds, interview by Malcolm McBain, May 21, 2009, BDOHP, [www.chu.cam.ac.uk/archives/collections/BDOHP/Edmonds.pdf](http://www.chu.cam.ac.uk/archives/collections/BDOHP/Edmonds.pdf) (accessed on May 3, 2013), 25-26.

shared the American viewpoint. The Prime Minister was “frankly terrified about what was happening on nuclear proliferation.” Mondale agreed and noted Carter’s great interest in following through on his early non-proliferation comments.<sup>38</sup>

As the new administration in Washington was putting its campaign promises into action, London was still dealing with the intertwined issues of the French reprocessing plant, inverter exports, and Jaguar sales to India. The ACDD briefed Owen on the Pakistani and Brazilian situations during his first day in office, suggesting that Britain should offer support for the US, while being careful not to offend any of the four main parties involved in the Pakistan and Brazilian nuclear deals. Regardless of the public or private nature of the diplomacy, the fundamental UK interest was that the reprocessing plant not be supplied to Pakistan.<sup>39</sup>

British unwillingness to become overtly involved in the reprocessing plant problem was a constant throughout 1977 and into 1978. Despite a flood of information, the UK preferred to let the US continue to take the lead. British ambassador to the United States Peter Ramsbotham (who was immensely popular and respected amongst the American government) made it clear to Warren Christopher that although US and UK non-proliferation policies were in alignment, he preferred that secret contacts between London, Paris, and Bonn not become public.<sup>40</sup> Meanwhile, Michael Wilmshurst of the FCO’s JNS opined that leaking suspicions about Pakistani nuclear weapons intentions might persuade the French (perceived as having no compelling commercial reasons for pursuing the reprocessing plant) to finally cancel the contract.<sup>41</sup>

Information from Islamabad indicated that the cancellation of the reprocessing plant could benefit British commercial interests in Pakistan. The FCO’s SAD was curious about connections between the reprocessing plant deal and the building of a huge truck manufacturing facility by the French company Saviem that might threaten the British firm

---

<sup>38</sup> ‘Extract from PM’s Meeting with US Vice President Mondale, 27-1-77,’ January 27, 1977, TNA PREM16/1182, 1.

<sup>39</sup> Edmonds to Moberly, ‘The France-Pakistan and FRG-Brazil Reprocessing Deals,’ January 21, 1977, TNA FCO37/2066, 1.

<sup>40</sup> UKE Washington to FCO, ‘US Nuclear Non-proliferation Policy,’ February 9, 1977, TNA FCO37/2066, 1-2.

<sup>41</sup> Wilmshurst to Burdess, ‘Pakistan’s Nuclear Activities: Safeguards,’ February 16, 1977, TNA FCO37/2066, 2.

Bedford, which made large sums of money from exports to Pakistan.<sup>42</sup> The disquieting news from the British Embassy in Paris was that the French government had agreed to part-fund the construction of the vast new production plant. John Macrae in Paris doubted that there was a *direct* tie-up between the nuclear and automotive facilities, but believed that the reprocessing plant was *generally* beneficial to French commercial interests in Pakistan. The cancelling of the reprocessing plant could, Macrae suggested, negatively influence wider French interests in Pakistan.<sup>43</sup> Thus, there was a specific British interest in the cancellation of the reprocessing plant contract in order to preserve markets for UK manufacturers.

Despite this obvious self-interest in France's abrogation of the reprocessing agreement, several factors caused a *lack* of British government action on the issue. From within Pakistan, Bhutto showed no signs of giving up on acquiring the facilities, while in London the FCO worried that Islamabad might view overt attempts by Britain to intercede as the UK merely acting on behalf of the Americans. Kit Burdess at the British Embassy in Islamabad contended that Bhutto had done nothing to alter the Pakistani population's belief that the reprocessing plant was intimately associated with a national nuclear weapons programme.<sup>44</sup> Burdess also argued that the long-term political consequences of the nuclear effort for Pakistan were unclear, although pressure from the Western powers over the nuclear issue could tilt Pakistan more towards the 'Islamic world' and China.<sup>45</sup> The Pakistani press reported that the French government had committed to honouring the reprocessing plant contract, while in the aftermath of the disputed March elections, Bhutto reiterated his pledge to the nuclear programme but indicated a willingness to discuss matters with the United States and France.<sup>46</sup> US diplomats gave such reports credence, suggesting that Bhutto would do anything to keep the plant. This information prompted the FCO to question exactly what—other than sophisticated military equipment—would persuade Bhutto to give up his

---

<sup>42</sup> Fursland to Macrae, 'Pakistan: French Nuclear and Vehicle Exports,' January 31, 1977, TNA FCO37/2066.

<sup>43</sup> Macrae to Fursland, 'Pakistan: French Nuclear and Vehicle Exports,' March 16, 1977, TNA FCO37/2066.

<sup>44</sup> Burdess to Fursland, 'Pakistan's Nuclear Intentions,' February 19, 1977, TNA FCO37/2066, 2.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>46</sup> Burdess to Findlay, 'Press Reports of French Government Statements on Reprocessing Plant Deal,' February 24, 1977, TNA FCO96/728; Burdess to Wilmshurst, 'Work on Chashma Nuclear Complex at Kundian (including French reprocessing plant),' March 31, 1977, TNA FCO37/2066, 1-2; UKE Islamabad to FCO, 'Pakistan Elections,' March 11, 1977, TNA FCO96/728, 2.

nuclear ambitions.<sup>47</sup> Diplomats also worried about the UK getting too involved in the reprocessing plant fracas, with Robin Fearn arguing that any overt British efforts to intervene would simply be seen as “a stalking horse for the Americans and [the Pakistani government] would be disinclined to treat us as serious interlocutors.”<sup>48</sup> Fearn doubted that the UK could exert any leverage on Pakistan and endorsed the overall FCO position that efforts should be left to the Americans or to the NSG.<sup>49</sup> Indo-US relations were also warming in the wake of the defeat of Indira Gandhi and the lifting of the state of emergency.<sup>50</sup> Kit Burdess claimed that this return by India to the status of ‘world’s largest democracy’ might make it difficult to overlook human rights and other violations in Pakistan.<sup>51</sup> Confusing messages were emanating from Paris, making the situation even more opaque. Diplomatic discussions failed to show a change in French attitudes towards the Pakistani deal as staff at the Quai d’Orsay argued that, despite the nuclear weapons implications, the Pakistanis were justified in buying the facility.<sup>52</sup> Burdess speculated that the Carter administration was delaying taking any decision due to the deteriorating situation in Pakistan, suggesting that a change of regime might be on the cards and that the Americans may be waiting for a more pliable administration to come to power.<sup>53</sup>

### **The UK and the Carter Agenda**

While the FCO attempted to formulate a policy regarding the Pakistani nuclear programme, the government as a whole strove to understand the implications for Britain of Carter’s stand on non-proliferation. Callaghan instructed Owen to form a high-level ministerial group to assess non-proliferation issues as indications of the new turn in non-proliferation policy made their way across the Atlantic. The Prime Minister instructed the group—which included Owen and the Secretaries of State for Energy, Industry, Environment, and

---

<sup>47</sup> Burdess to Fursland, ‘Pakistan and the US,’ March 26, 1977, TNA FCO37/2066, 1; Fursland to Burdess, ‘Pakistan and the US,’ April 7, 1977, TNA FCO37/2066.

<sup>48</sup> Fearn to Wilmshurst, ‘Pakistan: Nuclear Intentions,’ April 1, 1977, TNA FCO37/2066, 1.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>50</sup> Kux, *Disenchanted Allies*, 234-235.

<sup>51</sup> Burdess to Fursland, March 26, 1977, 2.

<sup>52</sup> Wright to Fursland, ‘France and Pakistan,’ March 16, 1977, TNA FCO37/2066.

<sup>53</sup> Burdess to Fursland, ‘The US and the French Reprocessing Plant,’ April 12, 1977, TNA FCO37/2066, 2; ‘Conclusions of a Meeting of the Cabinet held at 10 Downing Street on Thursday 21 April at 10.30am,’ TNA Records of the Cabinet Office (hereafter CAB) 128/61 Meetings 1-22, 3.

Defence—“to keep under review problems arising from the transfer of civil nuclear plant and technology, to consider their implications including the need to avoid the proliferation of nuclear weapons, and to report to the Ministerial Committee on Energy (ENM).”<sup>54</sup> The first task of the new ‘GEN 74’ committee was to evaluate the potential policy from Washington and provide feedback on Carter’s upcoming nuclear statement.

GEN 74 examined the likely outcomes of Carter’s review, briefed by an inter-departmental committee of advisers on the commonality of non-proliferation concern between the US and UK *and* the major differences between the two nations. The FCO argued that because of British energy needs, environmental concerns, the technical aspects of Britain’s nuclear power programme, and worries that a general moratorium on reprocessing would *drive* further proliferation, any policy that attacked the UK’s existing reprocessing programme could not receive wholehearted British support.<sup>55</sup> For one, the fuel element design of the British Magnox nuclear power stations meant that reprocessing or safe disposal would have to take place within a few years of removing the elements from the reactors. GEN 74 also contended that the transfer of reprocessing technology to Brazil and Pakistan dominated American thinking.<sup>56</sup>

Shortly after GEN 74’s formation, the State Department gave the British, French, and West German governments three days to respond to a draft of Carter’s nuclear policy statement.<sup>57</sup> This sudden request for input was not entirely surprising to the British government, as Carter had warned Callaghan that it might be on the horizon during the Prime Minister’s visit to the US in early March.<sup>58</sup> The West Germans refused to comment on such a short timescale and hurried through the dispatch of key blueprints to Brazil before the United States could impose a moratorium on reprocessing plant exports.<sup>59</sup>

---

<sup>54</sup> Callaghan to Owen, Memorandum, March 21, 1977, TNA FCO66/934, 1.

<sup>55</sup> Ministerial Group on Non-proliferation (hereafter GEN 74), ‘US Non-proliferation Policy: Note by the Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office,’ March 28, 1977, TNA CAB130/963, 1-2.

<sup>56</sup> GEN 74, ‘US Non-proliferation Policy,’ March 28, 1977, TNA CAB130/963, 1.

<sup>57</sup> GEN 74, ‘US Message on Non-proliferation: Note by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office,’ March 30, 1977, TNA CAB130/963, 1. According to Brzezinski, this brief notice was an improvement—after pleading from Joe Nye—on the original plan to give only a few hours notice to the nations of Western Europe and Japan (Brzezinski, 130-131).

<sup>58</sup> GEN 74, ‘Minutes of a meeting held in Conference Room A, Cabinet Office on Thursday 31 March, 1977 at 9.30am,’ March 31, 1977, TNA CAB130/963, 7.

<sup>59</sup> Gray, 462-467.

The British government's most serious worry was that American efforts to curb reprocessing could have economically damaging effects on the British nuclear industry and public opinion. If Carter were to ban the reprocessing of US-origin nuclear fuels, this would destroy the commercial basis for the THORP. Not only that, but the on-going public enquiry into the plant was at a delicate stage and an American announcement regarding reprocessing could seriously affect British public opinion.<sup>60</sup> The UK sought to move the United States away from what Owen and his cabinet colleagues saw as a very rigid stance on reprocessing. This was not simply a domestic issue for Britain, and it was pointed out to Carter's people that in the 1960s the USA had raised expectations in the developing world about the benefits of nuclear technology. These expectations required careful management lest Carter's changes in policy accelerate, rather than retard, proliferation by reducing access to reprocessing services (such as those potentially provided by the UK), thus forcing states that had invested in nuclear power to set up their own reprocessing facilities.<sup>61</sup>

The British reaction to Carter's April 7 speech involved welcoming the new policy while protecting UK interests. The official public response articulated broad support for the new US non-proliferation policy, while the 'off-the-record' elements expressed more doubt. Officially, the UK would play an "active and constructive" role in global non-proliferation activity and press comment stated that the government "intends to give non-proliferation consideration [sic] their full weight, together with commercial considerations."<sup>62</sup> Off the record, the policy required further study.<sup>63</sup> The government argued there were strong non-proliferation, economic, and environmental reasons for offering reprocessing services, statements that must be seen in the context of the massive THORP project.<sup>64</sup> Callaghan wanted a more in-depth analysis of how far the UK could identify itself "with all or any

---

<sup>60</sup> GEN 74, 'US Message on Non-proliferation: Note by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Annex 'B', March 30, 1977, TNA CAB130/963, 1-2.

<sup>61</sup> 'Minutes of a meeting,' March 31, 1977, 7-8.

<sup>62</sup> 'Draft No.10 Statement in Reaction to President Carter's Non-proliferation Statement,' April 7, 1977, TNA FCO66/934, 1.

<sup>63</sup> Work on reprocessing and breeder reactor technologies had accelerated in the 1960s and early 1970s when estimates suggested that global uranium supplies were running out. Carter's speech drew upon the more positive estimates of uranium supplies, especially those offered by the Ford-MITRE study published in early 1977.

<sup>64</sup> GEN 74, 'Agenda Item 1: World Uranium Supply and Demand,' April 27, 1977, TNA FCO66/935, 2; 'Draft No.10 Statement,' April 7, 1977, 2.

aspects of President Carter's policy without endangering our commercial interests and, in so far as our commercial interests are endangered, what is at stake for us."<sup>65</sup>

GEN 74 meetings and briefings emphasised the fissures between the US and UK. Ministers had hoped that ground had been gained after the feedback to the Carter administration before the April 7 announcement, but after Carter's confusing introduction of the draft NNPA on April 27 statement, GEN 74 participants felt such optimism was groundless. FCO analysts saw the upcoming May 7-8 Group of Seven industrialised nations (G7) summit in London as a forum for engaging with Carter for the purposes of persuading him to change tack.<sup>66</sup> British analysts argued—presciently as it turned out in the case of Pakistan—that it was the cheaper, smaller, and easier to build gas centrifuge uranium enrichment technology that posed the greater global proliferation risk, contrary to the American position where reprocessing was the *bête noire* of a proliferation-free world.<sup>67</sup> R. Scott Kemp argues that it was centrifuge-based enrichment and not giant, industrial scale processes such as gaseous diffusion or reprocessing, that invalidated the technology-based non-proliferation controls that were the foundation of the NPT, NSG, and Carter's new anti-proliferation strategy.<sup>68</sup> A centrifuge plant was exactly the kind of nuclear facility that the more junior figures in the British government suspected Pakistan was attempting to build. Owen suggested a negotiating strategy that was predicated on British commercial interests, but couched within a framework of supporting non-proliferation. Rather than emphasising economic interests, Owen suggested, "we might point out that the provision of reprocessing services by nuclear weapons states could have the non-proliferation benefit of reducing the incentives for non-nuclear weapons states to acquire this capability."<sup>69</sup> With the THORP in the pipeline, the nuclear weapon states in question obviously included Britain.

Behind the veil of non-proliferation, reprocessing had serious commercial implications, thus British attitudes towards reprocessing in general—and the Pakistani case

---

<sup>65</sup> Rose to Moberly, 'President Carter's Statement on Non-proliferation,' April 25, 1977, TNA FCO66/934.

<sup>66</sup> GEN 74, 'Nuclear proliferation Implications of the Reprocessing of Irradiated Fuel and the Storage of Spent Fuel Elements,' May 2, 1977, TNA FCO66/935.

<sup>67</sup> GEN 74, 'Nuclear proliferation Implications of the Enrichment of Nuclear Fuel,' April 27, 1977, TNA CAB130/963, 1-3.

<sup>68</sup> R. Scott Kemp, 'The End of Manhattan: How the Gas Centrifuge Changed the Quest for Nuclear Weapons,' *Technology and Culture*, 53:2 (April, 2012), 274-75, 298.

<sup>69</sup> GEN 74, 'Minutes of a Meeting Held in Conference Room C, Cabinet Office,' May 2, 1977, TNA CAB130/963, 4.



in particular—were based on a strategy designed not to prejudice wider British economic interests. Aside from the fact that British analysts suggested that reprocessing technology was “a door that was already jammed open,” US plans to have oversight over the reprocessing of US-origin fuel threatened the entire THORP programme. If the THORP did not go ahead, the economic implications were vast: loss of a multi-million pound Japanese contract; loss of future contracts; loss of wider infrastructural investment; loss of thousands of new jobs; and irretrievable damage to BNFL’s financial situation.<sup>70</sup> This was to inform Callaghan’s position at the G7 summit.<sup>71</sup> The Prime Minister was briefed to display a positive attitude towards Carter’s non-proliferation agenda while still making it clear that further study of both the proposals and their underlying assumptions was required. The FCO argued that a small, expert group should undertake such a study before the organising of INFCE even got underway.<sup>72</sup>

Carter arrived in the UK on May 6.<sup>73</sup> Callaghan saw the new President as a man whom he could get on with, in part because of their shared naval experience and Baptist upbringings. The Prime Minister believed that Carter was a neophyte in foreign policy who would need to turn to a wiser, more experienced head of state for advice.<sup>74</sup> Callaghan hoped, somewhat parochially, that he could use this rapport to act as an intermediary between the American President and other European leaders, particularly the West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, whose relationship with Carter became increasingly difficult as the 1970s progressed.<sup>75</sup> Callaghan had, with the consent of Giscard and Schmidt, persuaded Carter to add non-proliferation to the summit’s agenda. Before the summit, the State Department extensively briefed Carter on the appropriate approach to his fellow leaders, appealing to Carter the pragmatic politician rather than Carter the moralist, urging him to see the British,

---

<sup>70</sup> GEN 74, ‘The Implications of President Carter’s Statement on Non-proliferation,’ April 29, 1977, TNA CAB130/963, 4-5.

<sup>71</sup> ‘Downing Street Summit—7-8 May 1977: Non-proliferation; Brief by Foreign and Commonwealth Office,’ May 5, 1977, TNA FCO66/935, 6.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>73</sup> Jimmy Carter, *White House Diary* (New York, NY: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2010), 46.

<sup>74</sup> Morgan, 590-591.

<sup>75</sup> Kaufman, 110. See also Gray and Hilfrich for detailed analyses of the difficult relationship as it pertained to non-proliferation diplomacy.

French, West German, and Japanese points of view.<sup>76</sup> However, the President still saw European anger over reprocessing as rooted in ruffled national pride over perceived US intrusion into their domestic and economic affairs.<sup>77</sup> In viewing the allied positions through this particular lens, Carter failed to recognise that states such as Britain might have a genuine economic *and* physical need for reprocessing. However, the State Department appeals to reason prevailed and Carter was accommodating, reasonable, and pragmatic during the summit. Nowhere was this more apparent than in the summit's non-proliferation session, where European leaders attacked Carter's policy.<sup>78</sup>

After testy exchanges between Schmidt, Giscard, and Canadian Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau, the British delegation finally offered their views. Owen supported the INFCE project but formally called for the prior investigation by a small group of experts that had been suggested before the summit, and reiterated the distinct problems Britain faced in dealing with spent nuclear fuel.<sup>79</sup> Callaghan observed that negative perceptions of Carter's policies stemming from America's wealthy, energy-rich status and not from concerns about non-proliferation made the President's position more difficult. Of course, Callaghan noted, he fully accepted that the President founded his stand in a deep concern about nuclear proliferation. It was important, however, not to give the appearance of attempting to deprive other countries of the full benefits of nuclear technology.<sup>80</sup> On the margins of the meeting, Patrick Moberly of the FCO spoke to Joe Nye, and the American had worried that a non-proliferation communiqué from the summit might make it look to the rest of the world that INFCE was being 'fixed' by a cartel of the advanced nuclear supplier nations.<sup>81</sup>

Notwithstanding the fractious nature of the debate, the overall outcome of the non-proliferation discussions at the summit was positive. Callaghan recounted in his memoirs that despite the meeting's at times acrimonious nature, it eased bilateral difficulties, lessened misunderstandings, and found "a useful method of carrying forward policy on a matter of

---

<sup>76</sup> Brenner, 164.

<sup>77</sup> Carter, *White House Diary*, 48.

<sup>78</sup> Owen, 320.

<sup>79</sup> 'Note of the Second Session of the Downing Street Summit Conference,' May 7, 1977, TNA PREM16/1223, 13.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid*, 14.

<sup>81</sup> 'Downing Street Summit: Non-proliferation,' May 11, 1977, TNA FCO66/935.

vital importance to the world's future."<sup>82</sup> INFCE had been broadly agreed upon and the proposal for a smaller, two-month preparatory study was welcomed. What was particularly apparent were the differing perceptions of what posed the greater proliferation danger. In Carter's eyes reprocessing and the plutonium economy were the main proliferation threats. For Britain, more heavily invested in reprocessing for domestic needs and as a source of revenue, centrifuge-based uranium enrichment programmes were far more dangerous in non-proliferation terms. The GEN 74 pre-summit briefings also starkly illustrated the point made by British analysts: that giant industrial reprocessing mega-projects such as the THORP were not the way forward for states seeking weapons-grade fissile material. It was because of centrifuge-based enrichment that countries such as the People's Republic of China and Pakistan could pursue (and in both cases successfully gain) nuclear capability. The Carter administration's near obsession with reprocessing as a source of weapons-usable fissile material would—over the coming eighteen months—cause mounting evidence of the clandestine Pakistani enrichment programme to be sidelined, even when allies in London pointed out the existence of that programme. Britain's discoveries about inverters pointed at the real direction in which Pakistan was heading to obtain the bomb. However, there was also a British interest in de-prioritising reprocessing because of the economically important THORP.

### **The Transition from Bhutto to Zia**

One month after the G7 meetings took place in London, on July 5, the Pakistani military under the command of army Chief of Staff General Muhammad Zia ul-Haq ousted Bhutto, promising to hold new elections within ninety days. Military rule eventually lasted eleven years. Zia was a different sort of leader to Bhutto, seen by some British diplomats as taking action because of the corruption of the incumbent government.<sup>83</sup> Like Carter, Zia was a man of profound religious faith, envisaging Pakistan as an ideological state founded on Islamic principles where the Muslim religion was a key part of civil and political life. He dreamt of

---

<sup>82</sup> Callaghan, *Time and Chance*, 484.

<sup>83</sup> (Patrick) Robin Fearn, interview by Malcolm McBain, November 18, 2002, BDOHP, [www.chu.cam.ac.uk/archives/collections/BDOHP/Fearn.pdf](http://www.chu.cam.ac.uk/archives/collections/BDOHP/Fearn.pdf) (accessed on July 17, 2013), 25.

Pakistan holding a leadership position within the Islamic world, a dream that would come to encompass the nuclear weapons programme.<sup>84</sup>

Before Bhutto's ousting, there had been further American efforts to gain concessions on the reprocessing plant. Despite indications by Bhutto that he would be willing to take part in constructive negotiations, US-Pakistani relations were sliding towards their lowest ebb yet. Bhutto accused the United States of conspiring against him by interfering in the recent election and argued once more that the Soviets were attempting to penetrate South Asia.<sup>85</sup> Although Bhutto made conciliatory noises in late May, Peter Constable—*chargé d'affaires* at the US embassy in Islamabad—expressed doubts about his sincerity.<sup>86</sup> Such doubts were proved right in a meeting on the margins of the May Conference on International Economic Cooperation (CIEC) in Paris, when Vance avoided open confrontation with Aziz Ahmed over the nuclear issue. Ahmed, briefed extensively by Bhutto, again accused the Americans of electoral interference, of lacking commitment to Pakistan, and of discriminating against his nation's nuclear energy programme. Vance backed away from the allegation of electoral interference, but sought to emphasise that the United States had itself chosen to forego reprocessing in favour of "less dangerous alternatives."<sup>87</sup> Consequently, Joe Nye was anxious not to give the impression that any French decision—should such a decision have been taken—was the result of American pressure. The Quai d'Orsay was conspicuously quiet, even going so far as to rebuff British enquiries about the status of the reprocessing plant deal.<sup>88</sup> The contradictory messages coming from Paris and the Pakistani accusations of electoral interference all amounted to a continuation of the confusing situation surrounding the reprocessing plant.

Relations between Washington and Islamabad were deteriorating because of several factors. The two main contributors to this decline were mounting US suspicions that the Pakistanis had military intentions for their nuclear programme and Bhutto's belief that

---

<sup>84</sup> Haqqani, 131-136.

<sup>85</sup> Bhutto to Vance, Letter, May 3, 1977, JCPL, Records of the Office of the National Security Adviser (Carter Administration), 1977-1981, Zbigniew Brzezinski's Country Files: Pakistan, (hereafter Brzezinski: Pakistan), Box 59.

<sup>86</sup> Memorandum, May 24, 1977, JCPL, RAC NLC-1-2-7-19-1.

<sup>87</sup> USDEL Secretary in Paris to White House, 'Evening Report for the President,' May 31, 1977, JCPL, RAC NLC-128-12-8-20-6.

<sup>88</sup> Macrae to Wilmshurst, 'Reprocessing Plant for Pakistan,' June 6, 1977, TNA FCO96/728.

America was conspiring with his political opponents to remove him from power. By the beginning of June, Carter caused outrage in Pakistan by rescinding the Ford-era offer of A-7 attack aircraft. The withdrawal of the offer came about because of mounting evidence that Pakistan was purchasing the reprocessing plant as part of a nuclear weapons programme and Carter's evolving policies on conventional arms sales. These policies were given concrete form by Presidential Directive 13 (PD-13), which established a policy of conventional arms sales restraint and—significantly for the Pakistan situation—stated, “[T]he United States will not be the first supplier to introduce into a region an advanced weapons system which creates a new or significantly higher combat capability.”<sup>89</sup> The A-7 announcement caused a furore not only because of its nature, but also because of the exceptionally poor handling of the information release. Carter had made the decision on April 9 in a marginal note for Brzezinski. The National Security Adviser had held onto the information for over a month. There was, it transpired, never any formal Presidential notification of the decision and leaks to the media forced the official announcement out of the administration.<sup>90</sup> Carter demanded that Vance explain how the debacle had occurred and it transpired that a State Department press officer released the information before any official decision on the date of the announcement from the DoD and NSC.<sup>91</sup>

The withdrawal of the A-7 offer was a strand of a much harder-line stance on the Pakistani nuclear programme that attempted to tread a fine line between a lack of action and the imposition of Congressionally mandated sanctions. There was, however, considerable confusion over the application of various legal restrictions on aid to near-nuclear nations. Newspapers had recently carried stories about technology transfers from France to Pakistan, giving rise to administration worries about a run-in with Congressional representatives who asked why the administration had not applied the Symington Amendment, terminating all

---

<sup>89</sup> Presidential Directive/NSC-13, ‘Conventional Arms Transfer Policy,’ May 13, 1977, JCPL, PD-PRM, [www.jimmycarterlibrary.gov/documents/pddirectives/pd13.pdf](http://www.jimmycarterlibrary.gov/documents/pddirectives/pd13.pdf) (accessed on July 21, 2013), 2.

<sup>90</sup> Aaron to Thornton, ‘Aircraft Purchase by Pakistan,’ June 24, 1977, JCPL, White House Central Files, Subject File, CO119: Pakistan, Box CO48.

<sup>91</sup> ‘Meeting With the Democratic Members of the Arkansas, Illinois, Missouri, Kentucky, Texas, and Oklahoma Congressional Delegations,’ June 9, 1977, JCPL, Records of the Office of the Staff Secretary, Presidential Files, Box 30, 1.

economic assistance.<sup>92</sup> Government legal advisers had stated that the Amendment need not be applied, due to “negotiations in good faith” being conducted by the US, France, and Pakistan.<sup>93</sup> The State Department wanted to discuss the issue with key Congressional figures to avoid an immediate and damaging imposition of the Symington Amendment.<sup>94</sup>

Vance decided to wait for six to eight weeks before making a decision on the Symington Amendment, to quietly brief key Congressional figures on the situation, and to try and obtain concessions from the new military government in Pakistan.<sup>95</sup> Vance argued that over-enthusiasm in the application of the law—which Pakistan would interpret as a “slap” at the new government—could retard efforts to successfully conclude the nuclear negotiations with Islamabad.<sup>96</sup> Intelligence indicated that Pakistan might be attempting to obtain nuclear raw material and technology supplies from China, Niger (who, as a majority Islamic country, would become more prominent in 1979), and South Africa.<sup>97</sup> It was clear to Vance that Pakistan would be able to do nothing with uranium supplies unless it had access to fuel fabrication services, services that the French had declined to offer. Here was a key pressure point in the non-proliferation campaign: “By constraining Pakistani access to nuclear fuel services wherever possible, pressure can be built up to encourage Pakistan to adopt and follow responsible non-proliferation policies, including cancellation or indefinite deferral of its reprocessing project.”<sup>98</sup> Vance argued that, in a climate of warming Sino-US relations, the PRC could be a useful ally in Pakistani-focused non-proliferation activity.<sup>99</sup>

---

<sup>92</sup> Anon., ‘Pakistan Sticks to French Nuclear Deal,’ *WP*, January 4, 1977, A9; Don Oberdorfer, ‘U.S., Pakistan Plan Talks to Resolve Dispute Over Nuclear Reprocessing,’ *WP*, March 25, 1977, A2; James M. Markham, ‘U.S.-Pakistan Rift On Atom Fuel Grows,’ *NYT*, May 8, 1977, 9; Anon., ‘France Denies Shift On Pakistan A-Plant,’ *NYT*, June 2, 1977, 11.

<sup>93</sup> Atherton and Bennet to Christopher, ‘Pakistan’s Purchase of a Nuclear Fuel Reprocessing Plant: The Symington Amendment and Consultations with Congress,’ June 23, 1977, USPQB, Doc.3, 1-2.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, 2; There was, and remained, a great deal of misunderstanding in the diplomatic correspondence regarding whether it was the Symington or Glenn Amendment that applied. This confusion has percolated into the literature on non-proliferation. Mitchell Reiss offers a succinct clarification of the situation, noting that technically the Glenn Amendment is the appropriate citation for either reprocessing or uranium enrichment technology transfers. See Mitchell Reiss, *Bridled Ambition: Why Countries Constrain Their Nuclear Capabilities* (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 1995), 214fn14.

<sup>95</sup> Vance to Carter, Memorandum, July 9, 1977, JCPL, RAC NLC-128-12-10-1-5, 1.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>97</sup> Gelb to Vance, ‘Nuclear Safeguards—Pakistan, South Africa, China,’ July 12, 1977, NSAEBB, ‘China, Pakistan, and the Bomb’ (hereafter CP&B), [www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB114](http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB114) (accessed on July 21, 2013), Doc.4.

<sup>98</sup> Vance to Brzezinski, ‘Nuclear Safeguards—Pakistan, South Africa, China,’ July 14, 1977, CP&B, Doc.4, 2.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

When Vance visited Beijing, the Secretary of State noted that the nuclear issue was the main obstacle to continued good relations with Pakistan. The hope was that a new government would finally set aside reprocessing ambitions in favour of a nuclear fuel supply agreement with the US.<sup>100</sup> Despite all of this, the President had agreed to authorise in principle the cash sale of 40 F-5E fighter aircraft to Pakistan, a move intended to dampen Pakistani demands for the much more powerful and advanced A-7.<sup>101</sup>

Joe Nye was dispatched to Islamabad at the end of July to engage in a two-pronged assault on Pakistani nuclear ambitions: to try and get at least a delay in the reprocessing plant deal; and to get Pakistan to join the inaugural INFCE meeting due to take place on October 19-21.<sup>102</sup> Nye's mission used coercion, rather than bribery, but with little expectation of demonstrable results.<sup>103</sup> Like Kissinger before him, Nye hid behind Congress, telling Agha Shahi and Munir Khan that unless they withdrew from the reprocessing plant deal, the US would have no option but to cut off all economic assistance under the terms of the Symington or Glenn Amendments. As Dennis Kux contends, the fact that Pakistan had agreed to special international safeguards on its nuclear facilities made little impression on the US nuclear specialists. Shahi and Khan informed Nye that the reprocessing plant would go ahead and the American left Islamabad with nothing to show for his efforts.<sup>104</sup> Robin Fearn reflected on Nye's sojourn and Pakistani recalcitrance surrounding the reprocessing plant. "On the evidence of the Nye visit, there is little scope for further US pressure until after October [the proposed timing of Pakistani elections]," he noted "But the omens are scarcely encouraging."<sup>105</sup>

With these discouraging omens hanging in the air, Carter decided in September to cut off economic aid without invoking the Symington or Glenn Amendments, a decision that was an outcome of Nye's fruitless July mission. The CIA had argued that success in obtaining conventional military aid *or* gaining nuclear capability might reduce Pakistan's determination to acquire the other. However, the administration's non-proliferation and

---

<sup>100</sup> Memcon, August 22, 1977, *FRUS* 1977-1980 (hereafter *FRUS* 77-80), Vol.XIII, China, Doc.47, 153-154.

<sup>101</sup> Brzezinski to Vance, 'Military Assistance for Pakistan,' July 10, 1977, JCPL, Brzezinski: Pakistan, Box 59.

<sup>102</sup> Christopher to Carter, Memorandum, August 12, 1977, JCPL, RAC NLC-128-12-11-10-3, 2.

<sup>103</sup> UKE Islamabad to FCO, 'Pakistan: Reprocessing Plant: Nye's Visit,' August 9, 1977, TNA FCO96/728, 1.

<sup>104</sup> Kux, *Disenchanted Allies*, 237.

<sup>105</sup> UKE Islamabad to FCO, August 9, 1977, 2.

conventional arms control policies mutually frustrated both objectives simultaneously. Thus, the Carter administration seriously undermined its own 'sticks and carrots.' The intelligence agency suggested that Pakistani anger might translate into encouragement—within limits necessary to maintain the support of friendly Muslim states—for the more outspoken developing world nations to reject the whole spectrum of US policies, including human rights.<sup>106</sup> The US government cut off of aid was enforced without any formal announcement in the hope that the diplomatic fallout could be minimised. This was a forlorn hope as US-Pakistani relations reached their lowest ebb.

In light of this collapse in relations, Arthur Hummel in Islamabad argued that, after Zia's postponement of elections, the US needed to re-think its Pakistan strategy. The ambassador asked permission to engage in private, backchannel discussions with the Pakistani military leader.<sup>107</sup> Hummel also called for the lifting of the aid embargo as the French government was attempting to work out how it could gracefully and finally back out of the reprocessing contract. For Hummel, this represented the "virtual achievement of our objective of assuring that the existing contract for a reprocessing plant in Pakistan will not be carried out."<sup>108</sup> Hummel argued that there had been no violation of the appropriate US legislation and that to perpetuate a tough stance on aid only served to further damage US-Pakistani relations.<sup>109</sup> In Paris, Hummel's counterpart Arthur Hartman expressed serious reservations about an early end to the aid cut-off, arguing that it would send the wrong message and make it appear to the French that the administration was not genuinely serious about non-proliferation. Hartman argued there would also be a negative domestic impact, with Congress assuming that a French decision had been made on the reprocessing plant that tallied with US objectives when that was clearly not the case.<sup>110</sup>

While Washington digested the Hummel and Hartman telegrams, it was clear that the Pakistani military government had lost none of the Bhutto-era desire for the nuclear option. Brzezinski observed that Pakistani diplomats were trying to reduce the impact of the

---

<sup>106</sup> CIA, 'Possible Collision Points for US-LDC Relations,' August 19, 1977, JCPL, RAC NLC-31-53-2-6-1, 4.

<sup>107</sup> White House Memorandum, October 5, 1977, JCPL, RAC NLC-1-4-1-21-2.

<sup>108</sup> Hummel to Vance, 'Economic Assistance to Pakistan,' October 14, 1977, USPQB, Doc.4, 1.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid, 2-3.

<sup>110</sup> Hartman to Vance, 'Economic Assistance to Pakistan,' October 18, 1977, USPQB, Doc.4, 1-2.



upcoming inaugural INFCE organising conference that Pakistan saw as a “vehicle to threaten the agreement [between France and Pakistan].” Furthermore, Brzezinski argued that the Pakistani government had been making it clear that “the issue has become one of national sovereignty and honor, making it impossible for any Pakistani leader government or leader to give up the plant or to acquiesce in non-implementation of the agreement with France.”<sup>111</sup> Pakistan had been reticent to get involved in the INFCE discussions, claiming that the ‘interim’ government could not take any major decisions on the nuclear issue.<sup>112</sup> Because of the lack of progress on the reprocessing front, Zia was under pressure from Bhutto’s Pakistan People’s Party (PPP). While Bhutto languished in a Rawalpindi jail, his party claimed that the Martial Law Administrator had secretly “knuckled under” to the Americans. This was, Foreign Secretary Shahanawaz stated, a major reason why the Pakistani government could not participate in INFCE at this time, despite the fact that Pakistan was the only country that had replied in the negative.<sup>113</sup> Pakistani refusal to attend the opening INFCE meetings was, for the British Embassy in Islamabad, not entirely unexpected. The Pakistanis were seen as making political capital from the reprocessing plant and INFCE situations, claiming that “industrialised countries are intent on hindering third world development” and that the way to control proliferation lay in “negotiated and enlightened self-restraint rather than manipulating or withholding nuclear technology.”<sup>114</sup>

In the meantime, Pakistan had rejected a French proposal to restructure the reprocessing plant, making its output useless for weapons production—so-called ‘co-processing.’ This confirmed to US observers that the plant was primarily a component of a nuclear weapons programme. This turn of events was also persuasive for the French, who promised not to supply any further “sensitive” components to their customer and were seeking ways to abrogate the contract. According to the State Department’s Alfred Atherton and George Vest, it was vital, if for nothing more than French domestic stability, that news

---

<sup>111</sup> Brzezinski to Carter, ‘Information Items,’ October 12, 1977, JCPL, RAC NLC-1-4-1-41-0, 1.

<sup>112</sup> Hummel to Vance, ‘GOP Participation in INFCEP Organising Conference Unlikely,’ September 21, 1977, National Security Archive Nuclear Non-proliferation Unpublished Collection, Box 6 (hereafter NSANNUC Box 6), 1.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

<sup>114</sup> Burdess to Wilmshurst, ‘Pakistan Nuclear Affairs,’ October 3, 1977, TNA FCO96/728, 1-2.

of this change in posture not be leaked.<sup>115</sup> The Pakistani domestic situation was also volatile, making it difficult for the Zia administration to renege on the deal. Likewise, for the State Department, immediate discussions with Congress on a resumption of aid were impossible because of the publicly stated intentions of France and Pakistan to go through with the deal. Such was Carter's desire to pass the NNPA that anything that could harm the fragile relationship between administration and Congress must be kept under wraps.<sup>116</sup> Because of this, Vance instructed Hummel to open a channel to Zia in order to maintain good relations, but observed that nothing could be done on aid for at least two to three weeks. Hummel was also asked to emphasise sensitivity to Pakistani security concerns, express support of a South Asian joint declaration on nuclear weapons, explain the ramifications of US laws (such as the Symington and Glenn Amendments) to Zia, and to reiterate the domestic context of the US position.<sup>117</sup> Vance instructed Hartman to keep pressure on the French, and to remind Giscard's government of the statements that, if Pakistan rejected the restructuring offer, France would quit the contract.<sup>118</sup>

While Pakistan was kept under pressure, Carter was about to inaugurate one of the cornerstones of his wider anti-proliferation policy: the INFCE conference. American scrutiny of British nuclear policy before the INFCE meeting highlights the contours of agreement and disagreement between the US and UK on non-proliferation. The US embassy in London argued that Callaghan's government were a good deal more sceptical about the usefulness of technological solutions to the proliferation problem and comfortable with far more ambiguity in non-proliferation policy. A key factor was the importance that Britain attached to reprocessing—typified by the THORP—as a vital part of both its energy and economic plans. Despite all of this, US diplomats in London did not question Britain's dedication to the cause of non-proliferation and contended that the UK was ready to act with

---

<sup>115</sup> Atherton and Vest to Vance, 'The Nuclear Reprocessing Issue With Pakistan and France: Whether to Resume Aid to Pakistan,' October 18, 1977, USPQB, Doc.4, 2.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid, 3.

<sup>117</sup> Vance to Hummel, 'Reprocessing Plant and the Question of Aid,' October 18, 1977, USPQB, Doc.4, 1-2.

<sup>118</sup> Vance to Hartman, 'French/Pakistan Reprocessing Deal,' October 18, 1977, USPQB, Doc.4, 2.

the USA as long as its national interests were not threatened.<sup>119</sup> Three weeks after the submission of this report, Callaghan admitted to visiting Congressmen that UK signals on reprocessing might be confusing. According to the recollections of Callaghan's American guests, the Prime Minister stressed that he "would be ready to meet with the US if UK actions seemed to stand in the way of arrangements following from INFCE," but he also firmly believed that there was plenty of time to ensure that non-proliferation took hold.<sup>120</sup>

In advance of the INFCE conference, British ministers and officials were expressing concerns about both the conference and non-proliferation in general. David Owen's view was that the US non-proliferation gaze was almost wholly focused on INFCE, an undertaking that the United Kingdom must not passively allow the USA to dominate.<sup>121</sup> Owen outlined the British government's non-proliferation stance in a warmly praised speech to the Royal Institute of International Affairs. Speaking before a receptive audience, the Foreign Secretary argued that Britain had a major voice, significant standing, and a duty to be involved in international nuclear affairs.<sup>122</sup> Using a memorable turn of phrase, Owen stated that when it came to nuclear proliferation, "there are savage risks in doing nothing."<sup>123</sup> In a move deliberately calculated to publicise British commercial interests, Owen also made the case for a strong, well-regulated reprocessing industry, an industry that would, of course, be dominated by countries such as Britain and France.<sup>124</sup> For the GEN 74 meeting on May 20, FCO analysts made clear that the government should use the fuel cycle evaluation discussions as a means to defend British commercial interests by ensuring it could enter into international reprocessing contracts. Just like France and its Pakistani contract, British officials had concluded that selling reprocessing services was more profitable than selling the technology itself. Furthermore, if the UK were to join INFCE, then the discussions

---

<sup>119</sup> USE London to Vance, 'British Nuclear Policy on the Eve of the INFCE Meeting,' October 18, 1977, NSANNUC Box 6, 1-5.

<sup>120</sup> USE London to Vance, 'Primin Callaghan's Meeting with CODEL Ribicoff/Bellmon,' November 11, 1977, JCPL, RAC NLC-10-16-5-24-2, 2.

<sup>121</sup> Palliser to Hunt, 'Downing Street Summit: Non-proliferation,' May 11, 1977, TNA FCO66/935.

<sup>122</sup> 'Speech Prepared for Delivery by the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, The Right Honourable Dr David Owen MP, to the Royal Institute of International Affairs,' May 19, 1977, TNA PREM16/1182, 1-2.

<sup>123</sup> Patrick Keatley, "'Need to act' on A-power,' *TG*, May 20, 1977, 8.

<sup>124</sup> 'Speech Prepared for Delivery by the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary,' May 19, 1977, 10.

should be based on the UK view of the reality of the nuclear world, rather than US theorising about it.<sup>125</sup>

The inaugural INFCE conference finally took place on October 19-21 in Washington, Carter opening the discussions with a broad reflection on its aims, purposes, and his hopes for a productive—although doubtless argumentative—discussion on the global dimensions of the nuclear fuel cycle, including those who were “unfortunately” nuclear weapon states.<sup>126</sup> Joe Nye, writing for the journal *Foreign Affairs* in 1978, explained the purpose of INFCE as an environment where “the supplier countries and the consumer countries [can] come together to study the technical and institutional problems of organizing the nuclear fuel cycle in ways which provide energy without providing weapons.”<sup>127</sup> The final communiqué of the first meeting noted that non-proliferation action should be taken without jeopardising international energy supplies and that special consideration must be given to the needs of developing nations.<sup>128</sup> In the wake of the conference, Pakistan finally acceded to US demands and joined INFCE on a limited basis.<sup>129</sup>

### **Britain: Reprocessing, Inverters, and Jaguars**

Concurrent with the American wrangling over the reprocessing plant, arms sales, and Pakistan’s involvement in INFCE, Britain’s government maintained roles in combating *and* encouraging the Pakistani nuclear programme. In terms of combating the nuclear programme, there were on-going British efforts to ascertain the nature of the inverter order and its connections to a clandestine Pakistani enrichment programme. A constellation of problems meant that British efforts to hinder Pakistani purchasing actually achieved little during this period. Additionally, the ongoing British attempts to gain massive arms contracts from the sub-continent and the continuing debates over the THORP exerted a negative influence on non-proliferation efforts. These two strands were the mainstay of UK

---

<sup>125</sup> ‘Ministerial Group on Non-proliferation: 20 May: Item 1: Study Group on Fuel Cycle Evaluation,’ May 19, 1977, TNA FCO66/935, 1-2.

<sup>126</sup> Carter, ‘International Nuclear Fuel Cycle Evaluation, Remarks at the First Plenary Session of the Organising Conference,’ October 19, 1977, PPPJC, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=6809&st=&st1> (accessed on July 25, 2013).

<sup>127</sup> Joseph S. Nye, ‘Nonproliferation: A Long-Term Strategy,’ *Foreign Affairs* 56 (April 1978), 615.

<sup>128</sup> R. Skjoldbrand, ‘The International Nuclear Fuel Cycle Evaluation–INFCE,’ *The IAEA Bulletin*, 22:2, 30-33.

<sup>129</sup> USE Islamabad to Vance, ‘Pakistan Chooses INFCE Committees,’ November 1977, NSANNUC, Box 6.

involvement in the Pakistani nuclear problem through the second half of 1977 and into 1978. Arms sales and domestic reprocessing highlight the level at which British commercial interests superseded non-proliferation interests.

The main British worry throughout this period remained the EEIC inverter order. Discussions continued about the possible Pakistani uranium enrichment programme while the UK stayed in the background of the reprocessing plant fracas. Ian Cromartie's belief that the West German government would shortly get back to him on the issue of inverters being funnelled to Pakistan by a West German consultancy was tragically optimistic. By the end of February the *Auswärtiges Amt* (Federal Foreign Office) and the *Bundesministerium für Forschung und Technologie* (Federal Ministry of Research and Technology) had made vague assertions that there were no grounds for believing the inverters were intended for a centrifuge enrichment plant.<sup>130</sup> The confusion and inertia surrounding the inverter sale meant that the British government took no action by the time Islamabad accepted the EEIC tender in the middle of March.<sup>131</sup> The FCO thought that stopping the export was impossible, but all the interested departments thought it worthwhile getting Cromartie in Bonn to again contact the *Auswärtiges Amt*.<sup>132</sup>

Throughout April and May Cromartie kept pressure on the West German government with the aim of getting a final decision on whether or not the inverters fell under German export restrictions.<sup>133</sup> By June, Cromartie had lost patience with Georg-Heinrich von Neubronner (his contact in the *Auswärtiges Amt*) whom he described as “stonewalling”, and took advantage of an absence to approach Werner Rouget, Neubronner's head of department, who appeared to take the case far more seriously.<sup>134</sup> Despite this approach, Cromartie was now pessimistic about a speedy answer from the Germans.<sup>135</sup>

---

<sup>130</sup> Cromartie to Wilmschurst, 'Nuclear Suppliers: Exports to Pakistan,' February 24, 1977, TNA FCO96/728.

<sup>131</sup> Makepeace to Wilmschurst, 'Export of Invertors to Pakistan,' March 14, 1977, TNA FCO96/728, 1.

<sup>132</sup> Wilmschurst to James, 'Nuclear Suppliers: Exports to Pakistan,' March 14, 1977, TNA FCO96/728; James to Wilmschurst, 'Nuclear Suppliers: Exports to Pakistan,' March 15, 1977, TNA FCO96/728.

<sup>133</sup> Makepeace to McCulloch, 'Nuclear Suppliers: Exports to Pakistan,' May 9, 1977, TNA FCO96/728; James to Wilmschurst, 'Proposed Export of Invertors to Pakistan,' May 23, 1977, TNA FCO96/728.

<sup>134</sup> *Akten zur Auswärtigen Politik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, 1977 1 Januar bis 30 Juni* (Munich: Oldenburger Wissenschaftsverlag GmbH, 2008).

<sup>135</sup> Cromartie to Wilmschurst, 'Nuclear Suppliers Exports to Pakistan,' June 10, 1977, TNA FCO96/728.

By September, the Bundesamt für Gewerbliche Wirtschaft (BAGW, Federal Office for Industrial Economics—the department that made decisions on whether German goods were permitted to be exported) had informed Cromartie that, although they believed the inverters were indeed for use in an enrichment centrifuge facility, the inverters in question were not covered by German export laws because they were produced and exported by a British company.<sup>136</sup> Although the FRG had, in the words of Ian Cromartie, “put the ball firmly back in our court,” the Germans still felt that the British had discovered a loophole in the nuclear suppliers guidelines that required discussing in the near future.<sup>137</sup>

After a hiatus of nearly nine months, German disavowal of any responsibility for the inverter order re-invigorated debate in London. The export of the first shipment of inverters was due to take place in September, placing the government in a legal quandary. If the inverters were “trigger listable”, the export should be stopped, an action that would leave the government open to a compensation claim from EEIC.<sup>138</sup> The government’s legal advisors regarded the entire situation as opaque, both in terms of the chain of export *and* in the inverters’ relationship to the NSG trigger list.<sup>139</sup> Legal advice was inconclusive and the corresponding adviser suggested obtaining more technical expertise from BNFL and the DoE.<sup>140</sup>

By September 30, the DoE were determined to have the export stopped, while leaving EEIC “in the best possible position” to make a claim for compensation to the Pakistani, rather than the British, government.<sup>141</sup> However, the export went through, determination to prevent the dispatch of inverters to Pakistan hamstrung by a dubious legal case and the inadequate nature of the NSG trigger list. By this stage, EEIC had shipped the first batch of inverters to Rawalpindi, with the next batch due to go sometime towards the

---

<sup>136</sup> Cromartie to Wilmshurst, ‘Nuclear Suppliers: Exports to Pakistan,’ September 8, 1977, TNA FCO96/728, 1. The FCO Joint Nuclear Section underwent a name change to ‘Joint Nuclear Unit’ some time in mid to late 1977.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid, 2.

<sup>138</sup> Falconer to Berman, ‘Proposed Export of Invertors to Pakistan,’ September 13, 1977, TNA FCO96/728, 1.

<sup>139</sup> Berman to Falconer, ‘Proposed Export of Invertors to Pakistan,’ September 14, 1977, TNA FCO96/728, 2-3. The FCO legal advisers judged that EEIC were the supplier to the German firm TEAM Industries and that TEAM were the supplier to the Pakistani government. That being the case, the responsibility for the order fell within the purview of the West German government.

<sup>140</sup> Berman to Falconer, September 14, 1977, 3.

<sup>141</sup> Butler to Ellerton, ‘Centrifuge Equipment: Export of Invertors to Pakistan,’ September 27, 1977, TNA FCO96/728.

end of November. The DoE wondered about asking the Pakistanis about end-uses, although this could result in a situation where the government must either believe the Pakistanis' statement that the inverters were not for enrichment centrifuges, or create a diplomatic incident by accusing Islamabad of lying.<sup>142</sup> A situation where EEIC might have a moral or legal claim for compensation from the British government was also something best avoided, even if TEAM Industries turned out to be "men of straw."<sup>143</sup> In opposition to the DoE stance, the DoT was sceptical about the end use of the inverters, but the consensus between the interested parties of the FCO, MoD, DoE, and BNFL was that they *could* be used to drive uranium enrichment centrifuges.<sup>144</sup> If the view was taken that the inverters were not covered by the NSG trigger list, the FRG government would need to be informed and was thought likely to blame the UK for not stopping the export. An interdepartmental meeting suggested that the ideal rejoinder would be to remind the West Germans that their failure to respond to British enquiries for nine months left "insufficient time for mutual consideration of the trigger list definition, and for executive action here if the export was to be prevented."<sup>145</sup> The eventual decision was that there were very poor grounds for stopping the export because of an insufficient legal basis and the FCO opinion that inverters were *not* on the NSG trigger list. A cross-departmental decision was taken to look at modifying export controls to catch such items in the future, to inform the FRG, and to inform the British Embassy in Islamabad of the background, asking consular officials to report any information that might come to light on the end use of the inverters.<sup>146</sup> Here, the British government found itself caught between an obvious case of proliferation, a dubious legal case for stopping an export, and the inadequacies of existing international non-proliferation agreements. In this instance, the government erred on the side of caution. However, this was only just the beginning. Over the next few years, Britain—unlike other supplier states such as West Germany—would take a strong stance on the export of 'grey area' technology, repeatedly upgrade export restrictions, and place considerable diplomatic pressure on other nuclear technology supplier states.

---

<sup>142</sup> James to Butler et al, 'Centrifuge Equipment: Export of Invertors to Pakistan,' September 28, 1977, TNA FCO96/728, 1-3.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid, 5.

<sup>144</sup> 'Possible Export of Invertors to Pakistan,' September 30, 1977, TNA FCO96/728, 1.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid, 4.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid, 5-6.

The conclusions reached in September did not curtail further discussion. The UK informed the US for the first time about the suspected clandestine Pakistani enrichment efforts. Over dinner in Vienna, Michael Wilmshurst informally acquainted a surprised Lou Nosenzo with the case as an example of the complexities inherent in interpreting the NSG trigger list. Nosenzo claimed this was the first time he had heard suggestions that Pakistan had embarked on a centrifuge programme, and advised Wilmshurst that he would investigate further upon his return to Washington and pass on any US information.<sup>147</sup> This dinner conversation is doubly significant. As noted, it is the first documentary evidence showing British communication with the United States on the issue of the clandestine programme. More importantly, archival research has not revealed evidence of American reaction to the news. Indeed, US officials would not react to the Pakistani uranium enrichment programme until the late summer of 1978.

The late September decisions also bore little fruit in terms of further retarding the export of inverters to Pakistan. The West German government was adamant that Germany held no responsibility for the export and that British arguments in favour of new restrictions would have to be particularly convincing. Michael Wilmshurst angrily noted on the dispatch from Bonn “Indeed—the FRG kept us waiting 9 months for an answer!”<sup>148</sup> By this point, the MoD had made further expert enquiries and had concluded that the *only* possible use for the inverters was in a centrifuge-based uranium enrichment programme. MoD analysts believed that each inverter was able to control a cascade of 1,000 centrifuges, with the total order able to drive enough of the machines to produce enriched uranium for ten or more nuclear weapons per year. Reflecting on long-held suspicions that Pakistan was aiming for nuclear weapons capability, Dr. M. H. Dean of the MoD stated, “We regard this development as a most disturbing one. Our advice is to stop the export if at all possible.”<sup>149</sup> Dean’s advice was too little, too late.

There were further inconclusive exchanges between the FCO and DoE centred on an exchange of “suppliers notes”—essentially written assurances as to the end uses of the inverters—with the Pakistanis. The Pakistanis might well lie about the end uses of the

---

<sup>147</sup> Wilmshurst to Bourke, ‘Exports of Invertors to Pakistan’, October 4, 1977, TNA FCO96/728.

<sup>148</sup> Cromartie to Wilmshurst, ‘Export of Invertors to Pakistan,’ October 5, 1977, TNA FCO96/728.

<sup>149</sup> Dean to Wilmshurst, ‘Export of Invertors to Pakistan,’ October 14, 1977, TNA FCO96/728.



inverters, the FCO's Martin Bourke noted, but at least their response would be on record, hedging against future embarrassment.<sup>150</sup> Michael James of the DoE supported an exchange of suppliers' notes, but argued that such action should only be taken if it was possible to prevent exports.<sup>151</sup> James put the ball back in the FCO's court, causing confusion for Bourke, who noted, "Surely it is D/En [Department of Energy] who make the policy decision on whether or not to export[?]"<sup>152</sup> Wilmshurst argued that although stopping the export would be nearly impossible, "that is not really the point of my suggestion that we try such an Exchange of Notes; the point is that if we propose such an exchange and the Pakistanis accepted, our requirements would be met; if they refused, we should then have good grounds for informing the Nuclear Suppliers Group that the refusal suggests that the Pakistanis might be building an illicit enrichment plant."<sup>153</sup>

After this exchange, discussion of the inverter problem petered out until it dramatically resurfaced in March 1978. The entire episode—from discovery of the order in late 1976 to the failure to prevent the export one year later—is hugely significant for the story of British and American attempts to frustrate Pakistani nuclear aspirations. The widely accepted narrative on the Pakistani enrichment programme popularised in the work of Armstrong and Trento, Frantz and Collins, Weissman and Krosney, and others posits that Pakistan was able to build its enrichment facilities due to the incompetence, blindness, or willingness to allow Pakistani nuclear weapons development on the part of the United Kingdom and the United States.<sup>154</sup> This narrative does not benefit from the evidence that the British government was deeply concerned about a Pakistani uranium enrichment programme and took the prospect extremely seriously. The issues in play were not incompetence, blindness, or an obscure desire to permit nuclear proliferation, but the confused and incomplete nature of the NSG trigger list, the complexities of international diplomacy regarding such a sensitive subject as proliferation, fear of being blamed for damaging the economic prospects of British companies (even though the government accepted that some

---

<sup>150</sup> Bourke to Butler, 'Export of Invertors to Pakistan,' October 17, 1977, TNA FCO96/728, 1-2.

<sup>151</sup> James to Bourke, 'Export of Invertors to Pakistan,' November 1, 1977, TNA FCO96/728.

<sup>152</sup> Marginal Note, James to Bourke, November 1, 1977.

<sup>153</sup> Wilmshurst to James, 'Export of Invertors to Pakistan,' November 16, 1977, TNA FCO96/728.

<sup>154</sup> For example, see Weissman and Krosney, 174-194, and Frantz and Collins, 83-90.

economic sacrifices would have to be made), and the difficulty of being absolutely certain of the end uses of the inverters. All of this made for a situation where the British government found itself in an extremely difficult position and largely had little success in its attempts to hinder the clandestine Pakistani programme. The difficulty would not ease as more evidence of clandestine Pakistani purchasing came to light. However, Britain would take a leading role in diplomatically combating the Pakistani enrichment programme but—as had been the case in 1977 and early 1978—would find itself hampered by the non-proliferation stances of other states and the complexities of maintaining a relationship with Islamabad while secretly trying to frustrate Pakistan's national nuclear ambitions.

Britain continued its attempts to juggle commercial and non-proliferation priorities when reinvigorated Jaguar negotiations came under increasing pressure from the United States. Discussions at the British High Commission in New Delhi underscored that there was potential for a Jaguar sale to India *and* Pakistan. Although the Indians had repeatedly delayed negotiations, Britain saw them as the better commercial prospect. British diplomats who discussed the issue in New Delhi argued that efforts to stimulate Pakistani interest, limited as it was, should be concealed from the Indians.<sup>155</sup> During Anglo-American discussions in Islamabad that covered arms sales and the nuclear issue, Hummel attempted to pressure the British delegation into not selling Jaguar to either India or Pakistan. The British side, knowing the stipulations of the Carter position on conventional arms sales, argued that Jaguar was not an improvement on weapons already in the region.<sup>156</sup> When Vance briefed Carter for an upcoming visit to India, British arms sales loomed large on the agenda. Following on from the US policy of restraint in arms sales to South Asia—typified by the A-7 decision—Vance urged Carter to request that India show similar restraint in its own arms purchases. Tacitly, this meant Jaguar.<sup>157</sup>

In a meeting on December 2 in Washington, the issues of the Pakistani nuclear programme and British arms sales collided again when American officials implied that the

---

<sup>155</sup> Pakenham to O'Neill, 'Jaguars for India and Pakistan,' October 6, 1977, TNA FCO37/1971.

<sup>156</sup> Cortazzi to O'Neill, 'Call on US Ambassador in Islamabad,' October 12, 1977, TNA FCO96/728, 1.

<sup>157</sup> Vance to Carter, 'Your Visit to India, November 27-29,' November 1977 (exact date unknown), JCPL, RAC NLC-10-16-5-24-2, 13-14.

British sale of Jaguar to India would push Pakistan even further down the nuclear path.<sup>158</sup>

Richard Ericsson (of the State Department's Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs) outlined the difficult American decision to halt the A-7 sale and the serious domestic consequences this entailed for the administration and the manufacturer. Jaguar, the Americans argued, was qualitatively superior to any other aircraft in the region and an Indian purchase could provoke Pakistan to "escalation and an arms race."<sup>159</sup> Back in London, the SAD outlined the compelling reasons for ignoring the US protestations: if the sale did not go ahead, aircraft production lines may have to close and Britain's overall aircraft sales strategy would suffer a setback. In terms of foreign affairs, India would perceive this as a judgement on them and more widely, it would appear as if the British government had capitulated in the face of American demands.<sup>160</sup>

As the State Department maintained pressure on the FCO, Donald Murray, the leader of the British delegation, questioned the American assertion that selling Jaguar to India would push Pakistan further towards the nuclear option and challenged the US view that Jaguar represented a vast improvement in Indian capabilities. Murray characterised US opposition as being within the context of an outmoded view of the sub-continent and because of the A-7 manufacturers' fury at the cancellation. There was also a European dimension. If Britain pulled out, Murray considered it likely that "the unscrupulous French" would pick up the contract with their Mirage aircraft.<sup>161</sup> If Britain withdrew from the competition, someone else was bound to pick up the sale. The government would therefore be depriving the country of valuable export earnings while doing nothing to alter the situation on the sub-continent.<sup>162</sup> David Owen accepted the arguments in favour of the sale and on December 21, he dispatched a note to his subordinates: "I agree completely. Push ahead with this sale. If we can land it, I will be pleased."<sup>163</sup> The US State Department was most certainly not pleased. On the very last day of December 1977, it was noted that the Indian purchase of

---

<sup>158</sup> 'Record of a Meeting Held at the State Department at 11.30 on 2 December 1977, ' December 6, 1977, TNA FCO96/728, 3.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid, 7-9.

<sup>160</sup> O'Neill to Murray, 'Sales of Jaguar Aircraft to India,' December 19, 1977, TNA FCO37/1971, 2-4.

<sup>161</sup> Murray to O'Neill, 'Sales of Jaguar Aircraft to India,' December 20, 1977, TNA FCO37/1971.

<sup>162</sup> Luard to Owen, 'Sale of Jaguar Aircraft to India,' December 20, 1977, TNA FCO37/1971.

<sup>163</sup> Wall to O'Neill, 'Sale of Jaguar Aircraft to India,' December 21, 1977, TNA FCO37/1971.

Jaguar would “cause considerable alarm in Pakistan and could set off an arms race in South Asia.”<sup>164</sup>

The Indian Jaguar contract and its connections to the Pakistani nuclear programme provide an illustrative case of British willingness to participate in non-proliferation activity coming up against the hard realities of an economy in crisis. Given David Owen’s personal liking for arms-control and non-proliferation policies, the case demonstrates that the economic and political need for commercial gains could override anti-nuclear considerations. When major British commercial interests remained unthreatened—as with the inverter situation—the UK was strongly anti-proliferation. Where commercial considerations above a certain magnitude were concerned—such as the THORP or the Jaguar contract—the UK government subordinated non-proliferation to the wellbeing of the British economy. The Jaguar case in particular also illustrates the quite different perceptions of the situation in London and Washington. The State Department firmly believed that selling a supposedly nuclear-capable, advanced strike aircraft to India would alarm the Pakistanis so much that they would be even more determined to gain nuclear capability as a hedge against increased Indian military superiority. The FCO, from Owen on down, was unconvinced by this argument and—because of what were fundamentally economic imperatives—compartmentalised arms sales to India and the Pakistani nuclear problem. Furthermore, this also demonstrates the lack of influence that the United States could bring to bear on its key ally when hundreds of millions of pounds of foreign investment were at stake. The situation would continue to evolve in 1978 and 1979 and, as will be demonstrated in subsequent chapters, became a source of increasing frustration for the United States and the cause of British resentment at American interference in its commercial affairs.

### **The US and Pakistan After the INFCE Meeting**

In the wake of the first INFCE meeting and Pakistan’s decision to have a limited part in future discussions, there were significant further developments. Brzezinski agreed to a US abstention from a UN General Assembly (UNGA) vote on a SANWFZ proposal by Pakistan, a proposal that the Pakistanis had been pushing since the Indian test in 1974. Brzezinski’s

---

<sup>164</sup> State Department Bureau of Intelligence and Research, ‘Analysis,’ December 31, 1977, JCPL, RAC NLC-4-7-1-16-2, 1.

staff believed that the proposal was simply a Pakistani political ploy and a positive US vote could seriously damage the warming US-Indian relationship and, furthermore, unless China was party to the SANWFZ, India would have nothing to do with it.<sup>165</sup> There was, however, a later shift in attitude during a further round of voting, when both the US and UK voted in favour of the SANWFZ proposal, a move that was enthusiastically welcomed in Islamabad.<sup>166</sup>

By the end of 1977, the French government had—it appeared—finally agreed to abandon the Pakistani reprocessing deal. The situation was problematic for all concerned. Even though France had informed Pakistan and the US that the deal was now off, the French did not want the news made public due to the adverse effect it might have on the Giscard government's chances in the March 1978 legislative elections. This placed the Carter administration in a difficult situation: the US government could now resume aid to Pakistan and patch up relations with Zia but to do so would mean explaining the French cancellation to Congress, an action that would automatically mean that the information would become public.<sup>167</sup> Joe Nye opined that such an eventuality might come to pass anyway, as the Pakistanis were apparently briefing their domestic press to expect an unfavourable French announcement.<sup>168</sup> The French decision was a victory of sorts for the United States. Even though the change in attitude could not be announced or used overtly, it was a worthwhile outcome to months of often painful and protracted diplomacy.

Just past the first anniversary of Carter's inauguration, Vance submitted a lengthy report on proliferation, asking the question, "where are we after the first year?"<sup>169</sup> There were some successes to reflect upon: the final publication of the NSG trigger list in January; the welcome given to INFCE; and most importantly, the increased prominence of non-

---

<sup>165</sup> Thornton and Tuchman to Brzezinski, 'South Asian Nuclear Free Zone Vote in the UNGA,' November 10, 1977, DDRS, DDRS-268103-i1-2.

<sup>166</sup> Burdess to Candlish, 'Pakistan's UN Resolution on South Asian Nuclear Weapon Free Zone,' December 29, 1977, TNA FCO37/2066.

<sup>167</sup> Vance to Carter, 'Evening Report,' December 27, 1977, JCPL, NSS-NS Box 95.

<sup>168</sup> Vance to USE Paris, 'Meeting with Ambassador de Laboulaye on Nuclear Issues,' December 1977, JCPL RAC NLC-16-110-1-6-5, 5-6.

<sup>169</sup> Vance to Carter, 'Non-proliferation Policy Progress Report,' February 26, 1978, JCPL RAC NLC-15-123-2-4-3, 1.

proliferation as an international issue.<sup>170</sup> On the negative side, Vance expressed doubt about the firmness of the French decision on Pakistan and reflected upon the lack of progress regarding the FRG-Brazil nuclear deal. The Secretary of State contended that the new non-proliferation policy had left the US relatively isolated, arguing,

We must recognise, however, that while we have sensitized the international community to the dangers of proliferation, we remain essentially isolated (with Canada and Australia) among the major industrialized states in questioning the inevitability of moving toward reprocessing and early commercialization of breeder technology. The prevailing attitude remains that non-proliferation goals can be pursued without conflict with perceived energy needs if reliance is placed on political and safeguards arrangements rather than limits on technology. The success of our policy will depend to a great extent on our ability to reconcile these differences.<sup>171</sup>

Again, a key figure in the Carter administration had failed to note the genuine economic concerns expressed by the UK and others surrounding abandoning reprocessing. Likewise, the focus remained on reprocessing and plutonium as the primary proliferation route. Once again, centrifuge-based programmes went unremarked. However, Vance's scepticism about the reprocessing plant was well founded. The issue would rumble on into 1978 as Pakistan attempted to keep the deal alive.

By early March, after being passed by overwhelming majorities in both houses, Carter signed into law the Nuclear Non-proliferation Act of 1978 with the intent of bringing to a halt "the spread of nuclear weapons capability while preserving the peaceful use of nuclear energy."<sup>172</sup> The NNPA placed strict criteria on US nuclear exports and required the renegotiation of existing agreements to bring them into line with the new policy. Any countries embarking on a nuclear weapons programme, assisting others to do so, or failing to submit to full-scope safeguards inspections would have all US cooperation terminated.<sup>173</sup> As J. Samuel Walker has noted, the NNPA enshrined distrust of foreign countries when it came to non-proliferation matters.<sup>174</sup> In an extreme interpretation, the Act served warning to the

---

<sup>170</sup> Ibid; The NSG trigger list was officially published by the IAEA in Information Circular (INFCIRC) 254, based on information received from the NSG parties on January 11, 1978. See [www.iaea.org/Publications/Documents/Infcircs/Others/infcirc254.shtml](http://www.iaea.org/Publications/Documents/Infcircs/Others/infcirc254.shtml) (accessed on July 25, 2013) for full details.

<sup>171</sup> Vance to Carter, February 26, 1978, 2.

<sup>172</sup> Wittner, 50; Carter, 'Nuclear Non-proliferation Act of 1978, Statement on Signing H.R. 8638 Into Law', March 10, 1978, PPPJC, [www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=30475&st=reprocessing&st1=#axzz1muxPn8eP](http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=30475&st=reprocessing&st1=#axzz1muxPn8eP) (accessed on February 20, 2012).

<sup>173</sup> Clausen, 135.

<sup>174</sup> J. S. Walker, 'Nuclear Power and Nonproliferation,' 246.

nuclear-exporting states of Europe to bring their own nuclear export activities into line with those of the United States or face the consequences. For Britain, the NNPA could theoretically precipitate an economic disaster by destroying the basis for the THORP.

### **Britain, Pakistan, and the Reprocessing Issue After the INFCE Meeting**

Irrespective of Britain's own reprocessing ambitions, Callaghan's government—less well informed than the Americans about evolving French thinking—continued in its attempts to wheedle information on the Pakistani reprocessing plant out of the Quai d'Orsay. Callaghan's impending visit to India and Pakistan necessitated more detailed information, even though the British Embassy in Paris had previously advised the FCO not to press the French government too hard on the reprocessing plant issue. With Zia having now consolidated his power in Pakistan, Whitehall wanted to know more about the Pakistani leader's attitudes towards the reprocessing plant and the French stance on the issue in order to assess how much scope Callaghan had for influencing Zia's position.<sup>175</sup> Responding to British enquiries, the French were coy. According to the Quai d'Orsay, the reprocessing deal was—by early December—in a state of “pause,” but from the French point of view, there was little diminution in Pakistani determination to go ahead with the reprocessing facility and little hope for Pakistani acceptance of full fuel cycle safeguards.<sup>176</sup> In private, French officials admitted to British diplomats that they found themselves in something of an embarrassing position, having decided that the reprocessing plant contract was a bad idea but not wanting to lose credibility by appearing to cave in to American pressure.<sup>177</sup> British consular officials in Paris believed that the French were doing their best to frustrate the contract, while in public Giscard's government was still committed to the deal and expressed faith in Pakistani assurances that the plant would not be used for military purposes.<sup>178</sup> From Islamabad, Kit Burdess commented that US diplomats seemed resigned to the fact that there was no moving the Zia government on the reprocessing issue. French reluctance to take

---

<sup>175</sup> Cortazzi to James, 'Pakistan Nuclear: French Reprocessing Plant,' November 30, 1977, TNA FCO37/2066.

<sup>176</sup> James to Cortazzi, 'Pakistan Nuclear: French Reprocessing Plant,' December 11, 1977, TNA FCO37/2066, 1-2.

<sup>177</sup> UKE Paris to FCO, 'French Sale of Nuclear Reprocessing Plant to Pakistan,' January 9, 1978, TNA FCO96/822.

<sup>178</sup> Macrae to Wilmshurst, 'Supply of a Reprocessing Plant by France to Pakistan,' January 13, 1978, TNA FCO96/822, 2; UKE Paris to FCO, 'MIPT,' January 10, 1978, TNA FCO96/822.

public action on the deal might, Burdess suggested, stem from wider commercial interests such as the Saviem truck plant discussed earlier in the year.<sup>179</sup>

Britain sprang to prominence in Pakistan with a raft of press stories that suggested the UK supported the wide availability of reprocessing plants. Headlines such as “UK Backs N-plant Stand by Pakistan” caused John Bushell to urgently request clarification from London. According to Bushell, the Pakistani media was reporting that the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority (UKAEA) had stated that withholding reprocessing facilities could not control proliferation and that reprocessing was an essential part of nuclear power programmes.<sup>180</sup> The FCO suspected that the mistaken headlines came from speeches by British officials, submissions to the Windscale enquiry, or from the UKAEA annual report.<sup>181</sup> Owen told Bushell that if queried by Pakistani officials, the ambassador should adopt the line that:

...the UK has had a large and sophisticated nuclear industry for over 25 years, of which reprocessing has formed a major part. As the UK is a nuclear weapon state proliferation dangers do not arise. Pakistan, on the other hand, has no such industrial or economic requirement for reprocessing, and she is not a nuclear weapon state. The circumstances are not, therefore, comparable.<sup>182</sup>

Owen’s justifications highlight the problematic nature of British domestic nuclear policy when it came to dealing with the Pakistani situation and the stark division that arose between the nuclear ‘haves’ and ‘have nots.’ The arguments made by Pakistan in favour of having a domestic reprocessing capability—energy needs and the economic basis—were identical to the British justifications for the THORP. Hence, the British reticence to become deeply involved in anti-reprocessing plant diplomacy, even though Owen attempted to delineate a qualitative difference between British and Pakistani needs and capabilities, predicated on the fact that Britain was a nuclear weapon state. This conflicted with Carter’s desire that every state should be a ‘have not’ in terms of reprocessing, even though he had grudgingly

---

<sup>179</sup> Burdess to Wilmshurst, ‘Pakistan Nuclear Affairs—The Reprocessing Plant,’ November 14, 1977, TNA FCO96/728, 1.

<sup>180</sup> Bushell to FCO, ‘UKAEA Report on Nuclear reprocessing,’ November 16, 1977, TNA FCO96/728.

<sup>181</sup> Jay to Bushell, ‘UKAEA Report on Nuclear Reprocessing,’ November 18, 1977, TNA FCO96/728; Owen to Bushell, ‘UKAEA Report on Nuclear Reprocessing,’ November 21, 1977, TNA FCO96/728; Owen to Bushell, ‘UKAEA Report on Nuclear reprocessing,’ November 18, 1977, TNA FCO96/728.

<sup>182</sup> Ibid.



conceded that states—such as Britain and France—with existing reprocessing facilities should be allowed to retain them.

Between January 11 and 13, Jim Callaghan visited Pakistan—the first visit by a major Western political leader since the military takeover—as part of his tour of the sub-continent. Just before Callaghan left New Delhi for Islamabad, Owen sent an urgent telegram advising that the Prime Minister should not raise the topic of reprocessing and instead try to persuade the Pakistanis to accept full fuel cycle safeguards on their nuclear facilities.<sup>183</sup> In the midst of the pomp, ceremony, and exclamations of mutual affection, Callaghan emphasised to his hosts UK concerns about democracy, non-proliferation, and—contrary to Owen's advice—the reprocessing plant.<sup>184</sup> During their private conversations, Zia apparently stated his willingness to sign up to the NPT and to accept full safeguards, although Agha Shahi later struck a note of caution regarding this new found enthusiasm for the treaty.<sup>185</sup> The most significant conversations took place outside of the Callaghan-Zia meetings, when officials from both nations discussed the nuclear issue and the potential for formal talks in London. Agha Shahi was particularly interested in nuclear guarantees from nuclear weapons states to non-nuclear weapon states, and hoped for a sympathetic hearing from the British. The prospect of Anglo-Pakistani nuclear talks in London was guardedly welcomed and the FCO hurriedly put plans in place for a meeting sometime in February to discuss security assurances and transfers of nuclear technology.<sup>186</sup>

The hastily convened Anglo-Pakistani nuclear talks took place in London on February 23. The discussions followed a familiar pattern, with the Pakistanis seeking nuclear security assurances that would be operative against India, and the British attempting to cajole their guests into providing some assurances that they would consider full fuel cycle safeguards or even sign up to the NPT. Naiz Naik, Additional Foreign Secretary in the Pakistani Ministry of Foreign Affairs, argued that security assurances were vital for the

---

<sup>183</sup> FCO to UKHC New Delhi, 'French Reprocessing Plant for Pakistan,' January 10, 1978, TNA FCO96/822.

<sup>184</sup> UKE Islamabad to FCO, 'Prime Minister's Visit to Pakistan,' January 16, 1978, TNA FCO96/822, 2.

<sup>185</sup> Cartledge to Prendergast, 'Prime Minister's Discussions in South Asia, 3-13 January 1978: Nuclear Matters,' January 17, 1978, TNA FCO96/822; UKE Islamabad to FCO, 'Anglo/Pakistani Talks on Non-proliferation and Disarmament,' January 24, 1978, TNA FCO96/822.

<sup>186</sup> O'Neill to Mallaby, 'Pakistan: Disarmament,' January 17, 1978, TNA FCO 96/822; Bushell to FCO, January 24, 1978.

“safety and security of the third world.”<sup>187</sup> Neither side in the discussions mentioned the reprocessing plant or the clandestine uranium enrichment programme. Despite mutual declarations of respect, these talks were fruitless beyond a vague appearance that the Pakistanis might be a little more flexible on the subject of security assurances and that further talks at a higher level might take place in March.<sup>188</sup>

### **Conclusion**

If there was one truism to come out of 1977, it was Robin Fearn’s statement that the “omens were scarcely encouraging” when it came to the Pakistani nuclear weapons programme. For all the effort put in by the Carter administration and the Callaghan government, there was little in the way of genuine progress. New faces in Washington, London, and Islamabad had not brought new solutions. One dim ray of light emerged on the reprocessing front, with expressed French willingness to disengage from the Pakistani deal. However, this was tempered by the Giscard government’s lack of enthusiasm for going public on the French change of heart. The emergence of the clandestine enrichment programme in late 1976 and into 1977 represented a new strand in the tangled web of Pakistani nuclear efforts. Success in hindering the Pakistani purchasing programme was notably lacking despite British attempts to comprehend and utilise the evidence provided by Pakistani purchasing in the UK. The ability to use that evidence to move the non-proliferation agenda forward collided with the difficulty of proving the intended end use of inverters, the dubiety of the legal case against exports, and the unwillingness of fellow nuclear supplier states to support Britain’s efforts. While committed to non-proliferation, Callaghan’s government had to juggle such global commitments with the harsh realities of the 1970s British economy. British economic self-interest in the form of the THORP and the Indian Jaguar negotiations also complicated non-proliferation activity on the sub-continent and created friction between the US and UK governments. In 1978, non-proliferation policy would see some success with the final cancellation of the Franco-Pakistani reprocessing plant contract. However, as reprocessing

---

<sup>187</sup> ‘Record of the Anglo/Pakistani Talks on Non-proliferation and Disarmament Held at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office on 23 February,’ February 23, 1978, TNA FCO37/2112, 1.

<sup>188</sup> UKE Islamabad to FCO, ‘Pakistan, India, and Nuclear Proliferation,’ March 13, 1978, TNA FCO37/2112.

faded into the background, the clandestine enrichment programme would become a much more significant proliferation threat.

## **Chapter 4: “We do find this statement of intentions to be disquieting”**

### **March-December 1978**

---

On November 1, 1978, US Deputy Secretary of State Warren Christopher wrote to his counterparts in London and Paris, expressing unease over Pakistani nuclear ambitions. Reflecting on statements by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto that—prior to his removal from power—Pakistan had been on the verge of nuclear capability and would be willing to share that capability with the Islamic world, Christopher stated that, “we do find this statement of intentions to be disquieting.”<sup>1</sup> The Deputy Secretary had good reason for disquiet. Although 1978 saw a non-proliferation success when the Franco-Pakistani reprocessing plant deal was finally abandoned, it also saw the emergence of Islamabad’s clandestine enrichment programme as a major international issue.

Months of American diplomatic pressure on France and Pakistan were rewarded when Valéry Giscard d’Estaing’s government finally took the decision to cancel Islamabad’s contract for a reprocessing plant. This gave the US government a chance to engage in meaningful discussions with Islamabad over issues of aid and arms sales that Pakistani determination to acquire the reprocessing plant had hampered. However, it was apparent throughout 1978 that moving Zia’s government from the nuclear path would not be so easy.

Further evidence emerged in 1978 that strengthened the case that Pakistan was pursuing a clandestine uranium enrichment programme as part of its quest for nuclear weapons. Here, the British government took a leading role in non-proliferation diplomacy, commencing a campaign conducted in the diplomatic shadows in an effort to marshal a consensus amongst nuclear supplier states to prevent Pakistani acquisition of sensitive technologies.

However, the British government also managed to impede sub-continental non-proliferation policy. The UK remained determined to keep conventional arms sales and non-

---

<sup>1</sup> State to USE London et al, ‘Pakistani Reprocessing Plant,’ November 1, JCPL, RAC NLC 16-114-1-9-8, 3

proliferation policy compartmentalised, in the hope of selling the Jaguar strike aircraft to India despite American and Pakistani concerns. The Carter administration—continuing to link sales of conventional arms to bribing or coercing Zia into giving up his atomic aspirations—made unsuccessful efforts to frustrate the Jaguar deal. Furthermore, the UK’s own domestic nuclear industry continued to complicate non-proliferation action, with the parliamentary decision to allow the building of the controversial THORP weakening British non-proliferation credibility in Pakistani eyes.

Statements made by Bhutto and Zia during 1978 would lay the foundations for public and private discussions about the religious aspects of Pakistani nuclear aspirations that took place in 1979 and beyond. Pronouncements such as the “reinforcing the power” comments provoked debate about proliferation amongst a transnational faith community. Although the image of an ‘Islamic bomb’ did nothing to change actual non-proliferation policy in 1978, it provided the basis for a much larger and broader series of public and private discussions in the future.

### **Reprocessing, Arms Sales, and the Foundations of the ‘Islamic Bomb’**

Despite French indications during 1977 that they were ready to abrogate their reprocessing plant contract with Pakistan, the deal continued to vex politicians and diplomats on both sides of the Atlantic into 1978. The issue was complicated, not simply by French recalcitrance, but by a range of other factors. In terms of the Anglo-American non-proliferation alliance, the United States also resented Britain’s continued quest for its own reprocessing capability, weakening UK non-proliferation standing. Pakistan picked up on the essential hypocrisy of the British stance, generating Pakistani antipathy towards the UK. Likewise, the on-going British efforts to sell the Jaguar strike aircraft to India created another point of contention directly influencing the Pakistan situation.

In early April, the Pakistani media highlighted (prompted, Kit Burdess of the British Embassy in Islamabad assumed, by their government) one of the inherent contradictions in Britain’s position on non-proliferation by running stories focussing on the “discriminatory” aspects of the recent parliamentary vote to allow the THORP’s construction. The Pakistani press brought this up as a “contradiction in policy” when the UK and the US were trying so

hard to prevent Pakistan from acquiring a reprocessing facility.<sup>2</sup> During his January 1978 sub-continental tour, James Callaghan had given critics ammunition by stating that, “I am not a fan of reprocessing myself. It won’t help us in our task to rid the world of the threat of nuclear weapons.”<sup>3</sup> The Pakistani reaction was understandably angry, given that the THORP decision reinforced the appearance of discrimination against the developing world. It highlighted the inequalities inherent in anti-proliferation strategies: while Pakistan was subject to diplomatic initiatives to prevent it gaining reprocessing capability, the UK moved on with upgrading and expanding its own capabilities in that area.

Regarding Pakistani efforts to acquire reprocessing capability, there was considerable anxiety in the US government about how to deal with an aggrieved Pakistan following the French deal’s eventual cancellation. The main worry was that Pakistan might decide to “go it alone” with the plant and considerable thought was put into averting this outcome.<sup>4</sup> The US Embassy in Paris proposed a Franco-American solution that would give Pakistan increased access to less sensitive nuclear technology, such as reactors, seen as economically and developmentally helpful to the Pakistanis. This would also reassure the French, who were concerned about how the cancellation would affect France’s credibility as a nuclear exporter.<sup>5</sup> Arthur Hummel, US ambassador to Pakistan, argued that such a plan would help counter accusations of nuclear discrimination against Pakistan and the developing world.<sup>6</sup>

At the end of April, Zia demonstrated just how aggrieved he was about the pressure being exerted on Pakistan when he connected the THORP, Pakistani nuclear aspirations, and discrimination against the Islamic world in an interview with American journalist Bernard Nossiter. The *Washington Post* gave the reprocessing issue the briefest of mentions amongst a wider discussion of the General’s Islamic faith.<sup>7</sup> However, Kit Burdess, analysing Pakistani reporting on the interview, pointed out that there was a “clear plea to the US to

---

<sup>2</sup> Burdess to Wilmshurst, ‘Pakistani Reaction to Commons Windscale Vote,’ April 6, 1978, TNA FCO37/2112. The THORP would not become operational until 1997.

<sup>3</sup> Simon Winchester, ‘Callaghan presses Zia to tow line,’ *TG*, January 13, 1978, 7.

<sup>4</sup> State to USE Islamabad, Paris, and Tehran, ‘Pakistan Reprocessing Issue,’ April 21, 1978, DNSA, NP01574.

<sup>5</sup> USE Paris to State, ‘Pakistan Reprocessing Issue,’ April 21, 1978, DNSA, NP01575.

<sup>6</sup> USE Islamabad to State, ‘Pakistan Reprocessing Issue,’ April 25, 1978, DNSA, NP01576.

<sup>7</sup> Bernard Nossiter, ‘Pakistani Chief Denies Political Ambition,’ *WP*, May 1, 1978, A17.

stop trying to block the reprocessing plant; and to the French to get on with supplying the plant as under the original project.”<sup>8</sup> There was the usual (for Zia) oblique reference to nuclear weapons, all the while providing assurances that Pakistan did not intend to build any. Significantly, for the future of debates about Pakistan’s nuclear intentions, Burdess also highlighted Zia’s remarks about discrimination against the Muslim world, observing that, “Zia emphasised that Brazil was going to get a reprocessing plant, the Indians would soon have a third one, and ‘The Jews have got it [reprocessing technology]. Then why should Pakistan, which is considered part of the Muslim world, be deprived of this technology...’” Zia also played on American and European concerns regarding the energy crisis: Pakistan needed energy security just as badly as the developed world states wracked by the oil shocks of the 1970s, so why should Pakistan not have a full nuclear fuel cycle?<sup>9</sup> Although not explicitly mentioned, Britain—with its recent vote on the THORP—was a component of an iniquitous developed world that sought to prevent Pakistan from obtaining facilities that European states had or were planning. However, it was the connections Zia made between nuclear power and the Islamic world that would come back to haunt the Pakistani leader by creating a propaganda problem for Islamabad, London, and Washington when the ‘Islamic bomb’ paradigm gained media prominence from 1979 onwards.

In the face of Zia’s rhetoric, the US and the UK attempted to mitigate an adverse Pakistani reaction when it became apparent that the French were finally about to finally cancel the reprocessing plant contract. Hummel contended that Pakistan would raise an “almighty fuss” and emphasise the perceived injustice of US pressure on France. The ambassador argued that the Carter administration must go to considerable lengths in order to prove that it was not a “willing accessory or accomplice” to the cancellation.<sup>10</sup> Vance (whom French Foreign Minister Louis de Guiringaud told that the deal was off) took Hummel’s advice on board on May 18 when he outlined the two main US goals as being to guard against an “intemperate” reaction and to dissuade Pakistan from continuing its efforts to develop a nuclear capability.<sup>11</sup> Vance outlined various methods of achieving these goals,

---

<sup>8</sup> Burdess to Wilmshurst, ‘Pakistan: Reprocessing Plant,’ May 15, 1978, TNA FCO96/822, 2.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, 1.

<sup>10</sup> USE Islamabad to State, ‘Pakistan, Iran, and Reprocessing,’ 18 May 1978, DNSA, NP01589.

<sup>11</sup> State to USE Islamabad, ‘Reprocessing Issue,’ May 30, 1978, USPQB, Doc.6, 1-2.

including a “tangible package of inducements” (which included restarting financial aid and military equipment sales), and a political dialogue to reassure Pakistan over its security concerns. Somewhat optimistically, Vance noted that the “reprocessing issue is behind us.”<sup>12</sup>

Over in London, the THORP was not the only major British commercial interest that adversely affected Britain’s credibility on non-proliferation policy. Bilateral Anglo-American discussions once more highlighted that the US government saw arms sales as a non-proliferation tool, in contrast to a British government that compartmentalised arms sales and non-proliferation. London saw no problem in continuing to market the Jaguar strike aircraft to India, selling a warplane known to have a tactical nuclear role to the nation whose conventional *and* nuclear superiority to Pakistan was *the* major motivating factor for the Pakistani atomic programme.

In July, Joe Nye called on JNU chief Robert Alston to discuss reprocessing and Pakistani security. The Pakistanis had become increasingly nervous about their security situation because of the communist coup in neighbouring Afghanistan at the end of April that had installed the pro-Soviet government of Nur Muhammad Taraki. Nye and his colleagues worried that Pakistan might make concrete moves away from the West, towards non-aligned status by leaving the CENTO, *and* go all out for the nuclear weapons option if not suitably reassured by its Western allies. The State Department remained concerned about the potential British Jaguar arrangement with India. Nye wondered if, given Pakistan’s sensitivity, the UK might not consider delaying or halting the deal?<sup>13</sup> FCO officials thought this a little hypocritical given that the US was considering the sale of advanced aircraft to Pakistan in an attempt to assuage security concerns and ameliorate Pakistani annoyance at the various non-proliferation efforts.<sup>14</sup> British intransigence regarding the sale of Jaguar—a sale that was in competition with French and Swedish aircraft manufacturers—went all the way to the top.<sup>15</sup> David Owen, despite his warm personal relationship with Cyrus Vance, had

---

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Alston to White, ‘Pakistan Reprocessing Plant,’ July 3, 1978, TNA FCO 96/823.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> The State Department eventually persuaded the Swedes to drop out of the race by refusing permission for them to export the US engine design that was at the heart of their SAAB Viggen fighter-bomber (Kux, *Estranged Democracies*, 350).



forcefully committed himself to the deal in 1977 and saw no reason to now delay or halt the proposed sale.<sup>16</sup> Although ambassador Bushell in Islamabad appreciated that the Jaguar negotiations were a complicating factor in Anglo-Pakistani relations, he did not expect it to cause particular problems.<sup>17</sup> Word from New Delhi indicating that British procrastination might result in India making this valuable arms purchase from France was a further factor accounting for British determination.<sup>18</sup> A contract worth £1 billion would be a fillip to the ailing British aerospace industry and a feather in the cap of a government under severe economic pressure.

Much to Owen's annoyance, Carter personally attempted to discourage the Indian purchase. The President, in correspondence with Indian Prime Minister Moraji Desai, emphasised his policy of restricting the supply of advanced weapons to the sub-continent, arguing that such supplies could precipitate an arms race and disrupt the delicate regional balance.<sup>19</sup> In addition to this presidential intervention, Vance also warned Indian Minister of External Affairs Atal Bihari Vajpayee that the acquisition of Jaguar could only have a harmful and destabilising effect on the region and potentially cause a rift in US-Indian relations.<sup>20</sup> The mood in Whitehall was not lightened when word filtered back to the FCO that senior State Department official Eric David Newsom had approached the British High Commission in New Delhi on a mission to measure Indian tolerance for the sale of American combat aircraft to Pakistan.<sup>21</sup> British officials recognised that there was genuine alarm in Islamabad regarding the Afghan situation, a circumstance not helped by perceptions of a relatively relaxed American attitude towards Afghanistan and the ever-present worries about India.<sup>22</sup> The British Embassy in Islamabad suggested that a way around the problem posed by Indian rearmament might be to resurrect the old idea of offering the aircraft for sale to

---

<sup>16</sup> Vance, 262; UKHC New Delhi to FCO, 'French Nuclear Reprocessing Plant in Pakistan,' July 17, 1978, TNA FCO 96/823. Owen had a less genial relationship with Zbigniew Brzezinski. The slightly comical beginning to this is recounted in Brzezinski, 291.

<sup>17</sup> UKE Islamabad to FCO, 'French Nuclear Reprocessing Plant,' July 17, 1978, TNA FCO96/823, 1.

<sup>18</sup> UKHC New Delhi to FCO, July 17, 1978, 1.

<sup>19</sup> Carter to Desai, Letter, August 14, 1978, JCPL, RAC NLC 128-3-2-9-5, 4.

<sup>20</sup> Christopher to Carter, Memorandum, October 3, 1978, JCPL, RAC NLC 7-20-8-1-3, 2.

<sup>21</sup> UKHC New Delhi to FCO, July 17, 2.

<sup>22</sup> UKE Islamabad to FCO, 'Your Telegram Number 654: Visit En Newsom,' July 19, 1978, TNA FCO96/823, 1; Kux, *Disenchanted Allies*, 237.

India and Pakistan, thereby putting both sides on an equal footing.<sup>23</sup> Owen, angered by American interference in what could be a lucrative commercial transaction, argued that the Pakistanis had been aware of the potential deal for some time now and he had even recently mentioned it to the Pakistani Foreign Minister. “We should look after our relations with the Pakistanis,” the Foreign Secretary grumbled, “the Americans can look after theirs.”<sup>24</sup>

Owen took the opportunity to plead the British case for Jaguar at the quadripartite foreign ministers’ meeting involving Owen, Vance, de Guiringaud, and Hans-Dietrich Genscher of West Germany that took place during the 1978 G7 summit in Bonn. The Foreign Secretary admitted that, yes, the situation had contributed to regional concerns, but that Britain had offered to sell the aircraft to India *and* Pakistan. The British government could not help it, Owen contended, if Pakistan was not interested in, or lacked the money for, Jaguar. According to the Foreign Secretary, the UK had taken a measured attitude, kept the Pakistanis informed, and believed that in the end, the sale would not be taken as a “tilt” against Pakistan.<sup>25</sup>

In the end, American protestations that Jaguar would alter the situation on the sub-continent came to naught. In October 1978, Moraji Desai’s government made the decision to buy the warplane to fulfil the deep penetration strike role for the Indian Air Force and by July 1979, the first aircraft had landed at Jamnagar airbase.<sup>26</sup> The tension surrounding the sale of these aircraft illustrates the way in which domestic economic needs could transcend the global requirements of non-proliferation policy. The mid-year diplomatic arguments over the reprocessing plant also highlighted key differences between Britain and America. Britain—in approving the THORP and in its intransigent insistence on the sale of Jaguar to India—looked inward towards its own domestic economic difficulties, which were intertwined with issues exacerbated by the energy crises. Thus, Callaghan’s government consistently and clearly compartmentalised the issues of the Jaguar deal and non-proliferation, despite the fact that Jaguar was *always* an impediment to a successful sub-continental non-proliferation policy. American officials—from the President down—had

---

<sup>23</sup> UKE Islamabad to FCO, July 19, 1978, 2.

<sup>24</sup> ‘French Nuclear Reprocessing Plant in Pakistan,’ July 17, 1978, TNA FCO96/823.

<sup>25</sup> ‘Record of Meeting of Foreign Ministers,’ July 17, 1978, 4.

<sup>26</sup> Kapil Bhargava, ‘Quarter Century of the Jaguar in India,’ [www.bharat-rakshak.com/IAF/Aircraft/Current/607-Jaguar-25.html](http://www.bharat-rakshak.com/IAF/Aircraft/Current/607-Jaguar-25.html) (accessed on December 10, 2013).

argued for four years that the Jaguar deal was having an adverse effect on anti-proliferation action on the sub-continent. For the United States, conventional arms sales were a tool of non-proliferation policy, as either a bribe or means of coercion. Weapons were a means of reassuring Pakistan in the face of a worryingly unstable situation and a nuclear neighbour, with this reassurance a key theme in attempts to discourage Pakistan from pursuing its nuclear ambitions. If the US government could bolster Pakistan's conventional military forces and persuade the Indians not to re-arm, logic dictated that there was less incentive for Pakistan to pursue nuclear weapons. In contrast, Britain took a compartmentalised approach. Despite the arms control commitment of major British political figures such as David Owen—angered at perceived American interference in the UK's economic affairs—the magnitude of the Jaguar deal (and the THORP project) was such that non-proliferation had to subordinate itself to economic necessity. The need to support an ailing British industry in a time of economic woe trumped concerns about the spread of nuclear weapons.

At the same time as American interference in Britain's economic affairs was angering David Owen, Zia made comments that would—at least in part—form the foundations of a decades-long media fascination. On July 17, the Pakistani leader stated in a Saudi Arabian newspaper interview that, “no Muslim country has any (atomic arms). If Pakistan possesses such a weapon it would reinforce the power of the Muslim world.”<sup>27</sup> The English-speaking media did not cover the interview, even though Arthur Hummel assumed that the information had been passed to major news outlets. Hummel advocated a restrained US stance on Zia's remarks, seeing them as a “gaffe” that could—if the US or French governments publicised the comments—create domestic problems for Zia at an already difficult time.<sup>28</sup> Nevertheless, in conjunction with Zia's blustering rhetoric about the Muslim world in his April interview with Bernard Nossiter, the Pakistani leader's remarks formed the basis for the media imbroglio surrounding the so-called ‘Islamic bomb’ that surfaced in 1979. Until 1979, such remarks would—in the West at least—remain solely the subject of limited governmental speculation. Zia's aim with his pronouncements was clear. Under pressure from Western

---

<sup>27</sup> USE Islamabad to State, ‘Nuclear Reprocessing,’ August 6, 1978, USPQB, Doc.11, 1.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

states, the Pakistani leader, his subordinates, and religious allies sought to dissipate the American and British pressure on Pakistan's nuclear programme by changing matters from an *anti-Pakistani* issue to an *anti-Muslim* issue. By positioning Pakistan as a victim, Zia hoped to leverage support from his co-religionists in the Middle East and South Asia. This quest for support from a faith community would give rise to a media outcry that the American, British, and Pakistani governments would have to deal with in 1979 and beyond.

Zia's statements were discussed at the G7 summit in Bonn, where Owen was pressing the case for selling Jaguar to India. De Guiringaud contended that such "disquieting" statements "exposed the Pakistani position to the public," and made it easier for France to justify delaying or cancelling the reprocessing plant. Regarding the Islamic aspect, Vance saw Zia's pronouncements as a bluff and was quick to point out that the quite different Islamic states of Saudi Arabia and Iran had urged Pakistan not to build a nuclear weapon.<sup>29</sup> Pleading for confidentiality, Owen lauded de Guiringaud for a "courageous" French stand when the Frenchman told his counterparts that the Quai d'Orsay had dispatched a representative to Islamabad seeking a delay to the sale.<sup>30</sup> Reflecting on non-proliferation in general, the American Secretary of State was sceptical about the chances for truly controlling the spread of nuclear technology but—reflecting the Carter administration's continued focus on reprocessing—contended that plutonium was still the prime concern.<sup>31</sup>

After the summit, Owen cabled the British Embassy in Islamabad to see if his subordinates could expand upon Zia's disturbing statements.<sup>32</sup> Kit Burdess responded on July 23, observing that the reprocessing plant had become a matter of national pride in Pakistan. The plant—and by extension the implicit nuclear weapons programme—had become solidly identified with Pakistani national identity and self-image.<sup>33</sup> In a widely publicised speech that Burdess was sure had government endorsement, prominent religious and political leader Maulana Mufti Mahmood spoke in "terms which left no doubt that he

---

<sup>29</sup> 'Record of Meeting of Foreign Ministers,' July 17, 1978, Thatcher MSS (Digital Collection, hereafter TMSS), [www.margaretthatcher.org/document/111458](http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/111458) (accessed on December 10, 2013), 5.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid, 6-7.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, 8.

<sup>32</sup> FCO to UKE Islamabad, 'French Nuclear Reprocessing Plant,' July 20, 1978, TNA FCO96/823.

<sup>33</sup> Burdess to Candlish, 'Pakistan Public and Political Attitudes to reprocessing and "The Bomb",' July 23, 1978, TNA FCO96/823, 1.

was referring [positively] to nuclear weapons (for Pakistan and the Muslim world).”<sup>34</sup> British ambassador John Bushell backed up Burdess’s views, highlighting Pakistani government-approved media comment that the reprocessing plant was “a matter of life and death for Pakistan.” Furthermore, Zia had stated, “Not only the government but the people of Pakistan were committed to the procurement of [a] nuclear reprocessing plant.”<sup>35</sup> French and American pressure on Pakistan was ill received. André Jacomet, de Guiringaud’s representative, met with Zia’s representatives on July 17 and 19, attempting to persuade the Pakistanis to agree to the plant’s delay or cancellation. Jacomet later related that his Pakistani hosts reacted very badly to this request and refused to agree. The Frenchman then made a tense situation even worse when he attempted to use Zia’s “power of the Muslim world” interview as evidence that Pakistan was planning to build a bomb and to proliferate.<sup>36</sup>

However, the roots of the ‘Islamic bomb’ were not just based on Bhutto and Zia’s blustery rhetoric. Libyan leader Colonel Gaddafi’s lieutenant Abdessalam Jalloud visited Islamabad in mid-August, prompting worries about a Pakistani-Libyan nuclear alliance and cooperation in building a reprocessing plant, should the French deal be cancelled.<sup>37</sup> Moreover, at the end of September, the JNU received a press agency release noting Pakistani-Libyan connections that it regarded as “well informed”. The release drew on rumours of a triangular Chinese-Libyan-Pakistani relationship that Whitehall viewed as “a nasty idea.”<sup>38</sup> As will be demonstrated, the idea of Pakistani-Libyan nuclear cooperation was one of the main platforms on which public narratives surrounding the ‘Islamic bomb’ were built, despite the fact that the issue did nothing to affect actual non-proliferation policy.

As well as questions of pan-Islamic proliferation, policymakers in London and Washington also had to consider matters of Pakistani nationalism and national pride. Senior US diplomats wanted to influence any post-cancellation Pakistani nuclear plans and gain assurances that there would be no efforts to continue with building a reprocessing plant. In

---

<sup>34</sup> UKE Islamabad to FCO, ‘French Nuclear Reprocessing Plant,’ July 20 1978, TNA FCO96/823, 1-2.

<sup>35</sup> UKE Islamabad to FCO, ‘Pakistan’s Reprocessing Plant,’ July 28, 1978, TNA FCO96/823.

<sup>36</sup> UKE Islamabad to FCO, ‘French Nuclear Reprocessing Plant,’ July 20 1978, TNA FCO96/823, 1-2.

<sup>37</sup> UKE Islamabad to FCO, ‘Further Visit of Libyan Vice-President to Pakistan: 15-17 August,’ August 17, 1978, TNA FCO96/823.

<sup>38</sup> ‘Libya’s Qadafi Seeks Nuclear Fuel Deal,’ September 29, 1978, TNA FCO96/824.

order to restart the flow of aid, Pakistan would very publicly have to relinquish sovereign rights and subjugate itself to American dictates. The State Department strongly implied that if Pakistan abandoned pursuit of the French reprocessing plant and assured the administration of its good intentions, then there could be the chance of restoring the economic aid cut off in September 1977.<sup>39</sup> The Pakistanis were opposed to giving any assurances, stating that if Pakistan did wish to press ahead with a reprocessing plant, “it would not matter how many assurances [it] provided.”<sup>40</sup> Hummel saw the request for assurances as unacceptably impinging on Pakistani sovereignty and claimed that no government of Pakistan could survive the public outcry over such an assurance.<sup>41</sup>

Given the level of anti-American feeling welling up in the Pakistani media over the reprocessing plant, anxiety on both sides was unavoidable. According to the British embassy in Islamabad, the Pakistani press and public believed that the US government was engaged in a conspiracy against Pakistan. British observers viewed the situation as irrational: the Pakistani press stressed the reprocessing plant’s importance and denigrated the value of US aid, “which most serious officials must consider to be indispensable.”<sup>42</sup> Here was a situation where outside observers contended that Pakistan should suppress national pride and self-image in order to gain Western aid. Becoming involved in the fracas might be counterproductive to British interests and the Islamabad embassy strongly recommended that Britain keep a low profile at this point.<sup>43</sup> Ambassador Hummel—in a frank discussion with his British opposite number John Bushell (a discussion that Bushell advised should not reach wider American or French ears)—was pessimistic about the situation. Hummel was certain that a final negative reply from Paris would lead to a Pakistani withdrawal from CENTO, something that Bushell had mooted at the end of July.<sup>44</sup> One way the UK could help ameliorate the effects of the anti-US line emanating from Zia’s administration was through the BBC World Service’s influence in Pakistan. The BBC could be used as a medium to

---

<sup>39</sup> State to USE Islamabad, ‘Pak Ambassador’s Call on Undersecretary Newsom,’ August 1, 1978, USPQB, Doc.8, 2.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid, 3.

<sup>41</sup> USE Islamabad to State, ‘Pakistani Reprocessing Plant: USG Stipulation,’ August 6, 1978, USPQB, Doc.10, 1.

<sup>42</sup> UKE Islamabad to FCO, ‘Pakistan’s Reprocessing Plant,’ August 9, 1978, TNA FCO96/823, 1.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid, 2.

<sup>44</sup> UKE Islamabad to FCO, ‘French Reprocessing Plant (RPP),’ August 11, 1978, TNA FCO96/823, 2; UKE Islamabad to FCO, ‘French Reprocessing Plant (RPP),’ July 31, 1978, TNA FCO96/823, 2; USE Paris to State, ‘Surfacing of French-Pakistan Reprocessing Issue,’ August 25, 1978, DNSA, NP01605, 1-2.

clarify the French position regarding the plant, which emphasised that the cancellation was entirely the decision of Giscard's government and not made under US pressure.<sup>45</sup> Finally, Bushell commented on the potential for a Pakistani move to non-aligned status. The Pakistanis were, he commented, receptive to Soviet "blandishments."<sup>46</sup>

By the beginning of September, American and French officials believed they had resolved the reprocessing issue, despite the fact that Zia and other senior Pakistanis were doing all they could to reinvigorate the ill-fated project by linking it to the Saviem truck plant deal.<sup>47</sup> After André Jacomet's hapless mission in July, Giscard had written to Zia indicating, in convoluted and obscure language, that once the INFCE studies had been completed, France was willing to renegotiate the deal. Arthur Hummel believed Giscard's message was tantamount to total cancellation of the contract.<sup>48</sup> On August 23, Zia announced that the deal was off.<sup>49</sup> Pakistani comments were initially mild, but became more heated when Agha Shahi remarked on the perfidy of "some of the nuclear supplier states and their allies [who] prevent the transfer of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes to Third World nations."<sup>50</sup> In early September, Zia repeated his earlier assertion that it was Washington's pressure on Paris that led to the plant's cancellation and that he would continue to press the French to meet their contractual obligations.<sup>51</sup> Kit Burdess noted that Zia's statement that Pakistan was "determined to acquire nuclear technology and hoped that with the help of Allah its efforts in this regard would be successful," had apparently convinced the French of Pakistan's desire to develop nuclear weapons.<sup>52</sup> British analyses suggested that the Pakistanis were unable or unwilling to recognise that remarks made by Zia—and not

---

<sup>45</sup> UKE Islamabad to FCO, August 11, 1978, 2.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>47</sup> USE Paris to State, 'Next Steps of Pakistan Reprocessing Issue', September 1, 1978, NSAEBB 'Non-papers and Demarches' (hereafter NPAD) [www2.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nukevault/ebb352/index.htm](http://www2.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nukevault/ebb352/index.htm) (accessed on November 10, 2012), Doc.1, 2-3; USE Islamabad to State, 'Pakistan Reprocessing vs French Commercial Deals', September 3, 1978, NPAD, Doc.2, 1.

<sup>48</sup> USE Islamabad to State, 'Reprocessing Plant,' 20 August 1978, USPQB, Doc14, 2; USE Paris to State, 'Surfacing of French-Pakistani Reprocessing Issue', August 24, 1978, DNSA, NP01605, 1-2.

<sup>49</sup> Anon., 'Paris cancels nuclear deal with Pakistan,' *TT*, August 24, 1978, 3.

<sup>50</sup> Agha Shahi, quoted in USE Islamabad to State, 'Press and GOP [Government of Pakistan] Reactions to Reprocessing Deal Cancellation Surprisingly Mild,' August 30, 1978, DNSA, NP01607, 2.

<sup>51</sup> USE Paris to State, 'French Views on Pakistan Reprocessing Plant', August 25, 1978, USPQB, Doc17; USE Islamabad to State, 'Ambassador's Talk With General Zia,' September 5, 1978, NPAD, Doc3, 1.

<sup>52</sup> UKE Islamabad to FCO, 'French Reprocessing Plant,' August 24, 1978, TNA FCO96/823; Smith to Murray, 'French Nuclear Deal With Pakistan', August 25, 1978, TNA FCO37/2112, 1.

“rumours”—were the root cause of anxiety about a Pakistani bomb being developed for use by the wider Arab or Muslim world. Furthermore, Burdess suggested that it was the implicit connection between the reprocessing plant and nuclear weapons—and the position of nuclear weapons as a ‘prestige’ technological development—that made non-proliferation efforts seem like such an attack on Pakistani national image and identity.<sup>53</sup>

Now that there had been public acknowledgement that the reprocessing plant deal was dead, the issue entered a new phase when the US government sought assurances from Giscard’s representatives that there was no chance that the deal could come back to life. With Washington seriously considering the resumption of aid to Pakistan, and with key anti-proliferation figures in Congress to be persuaded that Pakistan was worthy of such aid, the State Department thought an explicit commitment from Paris would be helpful.<sup>54</sup> André Jacomet rebuffed the US request when he met with Gerard Smith, Carter’s roving ambassador for non-proliferation affairs. Jacomet felt that, because of domestic political difficulties, a public statement from Giscard would simply give Jacques Chirac—the former prime minister and *de facto* leader of the French right—and the Gaullists ammunition to attack Giscard’s beleaguered government.<sup>55</sup> Despite considerable pressure from Smith, Jacomet refused to offer any assurances that the Carter administration could present to Congress as part of their negotiations over aid to Pakistan.<sup>56</sup>

The State Department pressed ahead with consultations on Capitol Hill despite French recalcitrance. These discussions took place between Newsom, Nye, John Glenn (one of the NNPA’s main congressional authors), and Clement Zablocki (Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee). The talking points covered a number of issues, including the threat to US regional interests by a “disintegrating or radicalized Pakistan.”<sup>57</sup> The State Department portrayed Pakistan as fearful of the unfriendly (India) or unstable (Afghanistan and Iran) states that surrounded it and losing confidence in the West’s ability to provide for

---

<sup>53</sup> Burdess to Candlish, ‘Pakistan Nuclear Affairs: Visit by Mr Justice Fox,’ August 20, 1978, TNA FCO37/2112.

<sup>54</sup> State to USE Paris, ‘Next Steps on Pakistan Reprocessing Deal,’ September 7, 1978, NPAD, Doc.4A, 2.

<sup>55</sup> USE Vienna to State, ‘Smith-Jacomet Meeting: French Position on Cancellation of Pakistan Reprocessing Plant Contract,’ September 13, 1978, NPAD Doc.4B, 3.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>57</sup> State to USE Vienna, ‘Congressional Consultations on Pakistan,’ September 15, 1978, NPAD, Doc.5, 3.



Pakistani security.<sup>58</sup> Newsom and Nye argued that the Pakistanis could be reassured regarding their security situation, and encouraged to move away from a bomb programme, by the resumption of economic aid and military equipment sales.<sup>59</sup> In any regard, US officials saw Pakistan as having neither the technical prowess nor the industrial ability to complete the reprocessing plant without external aid. The inverter problem was alluded to, but given scant attention, as Carter administration officials believed that the technical challenges of a centrifuge based enrichment programme were insurmountable for Pakistan, and that such ambitions could be defeated by strict supplier controls.<sup>60</sup> According to the two State Department officials, restoring good relations with Pakistan would give the administration a better chance of dealing effectively with the nuclear problem.

France was once more in the spotlight when stories appeared in the French press that the firm Robatel had received a license from the government to export centrifuges for a reprocessing plant.<sup>61</sup> Jacomet, who perceived a Gaullist hand in the affair, strenuously denied this.<sup>62</sup> Intelligence from a highly placed anonymous source in the Élysée Palace did, however, indicate that the Pakistanis were searching for suppliers who would allow them to complete the reprocessing plant on their own or with the help of another supplier nation.<sup>63</sup> Indeed, the Pakistanis broadly hinted that they might turn to their ally China for aid.<sup>64</sup> The State Department had already sought and received “credible” assurances from Beijing that the Chinese did not intend to offer Pakistan assistance to complete the reprocessing plant.<sup>65</sup> Likewise, Chinese diplomats “emphatically denied” nuclear co-operation with any other state to their British counterparts.<sup>66</sup>

---

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid, 3-4.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid, 4-5.

<sup>61</sup> State to USE Paris, ‘French Export of Centrifuges for Pakistani Reprocessing Plant,’ September 19, 1978, NPAD, Doc.6, 1-2. These were not the same type of centrifuge that the Pakistanis were attempting to build as part of their uranium enrichment programme.

<sup>62</sup> USE Paris to State, ‘Update on French-Pakistani Reprocessing Situation,’ September 21, 1978, NPAD, Doc7, 1.

<sup>63</sup> USE Paris to State, ‘Élysée Views on Reprocessing Issues,’ September 23, 1978, NPAD, Doc8, 1-2.

<sup>64</sup> Burdess to Candlish, ‘Pakistan’s Reprocessing Plant: Self Sufficiency or Chinese Help?,’ September 24, 1978, TNA FCO37/2113, 1.

<sup>65</sup> State to USE Islamabad, ‘PRC Assistance to Pakistan in Reprocessing,’ August 25, 1978, USPQB, Doc.16, 2. The irony being that considerable evidence would later emerge that the PRC did indeed aid the Pakistani nuclear programme during the 1980s. See CP&B for a range of documents.

<sup>66</sup> Burdess to Candlish, September 24, 1978.

In early October, the United States once more attempted to use arms sales and aid as a means of luring Islamabad away from the nuclear path. Cyrus Vance indicated to Agha Shahi that the United States was ready to resume financial aid programmes and consider military sales to Pakistan. Vance wanted Shahi to understand that this potential resumption of aid was on the basis that Pakistan did not intend to develop nuclear weapons capability. The Secretary of State observed that recent reports had suggested that Pakistan was exploring “other means” of “completing the reprocessing plant or otherwise acquiring a nuclear option through indigenous efforts.”<sup>67</sup> Shahi had asked about the possible sale of A-7 attack aircraft in light of the Indian intention to buy Jaguar, and Vance made it clear that he saw no reason for the Indian purchase.<sup>68</sup> The Jaguar sale might, Vance suggested, create a new spiral of arms acquisitions in the region. Subject to Congressional approval, Carter had decided in July that he was still willing to sell Pakistan forty to fifty of the less capable F-5E warplanes that had previously been considered in 1977 to replace the Pakistan Air Force’s Korean War vintage F-86 fighters.<sup>69</sup> The Pakistanis again brought up Jaguar during November meetings with a US delegation to Islamabad. Lucy Benson (Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security Affairs) made it clear to the Pakistanis that they would have to come up with a list of arms requirements that both met their needs *and* did not contravene Carter’s stated policies on conventional arms restraint.<sup>70</sup>

By this point US intelligence had caught up with what the British had been telling them for several months, passing their conclusions to Congress in highly diluted form. Senators and Representatives were informed that, although the non-proliferation problem with Pakistan had not been completely resolved, the restoration of normal relations would “best serve both our non-proliferation objectives and our interest in regional stability.”<sup>71</sup> Newsom, Hummel, and Nye briefed Glenn two days later, discussing the possibility of an indigenous Pakistani programme. The team concluded that, although Pakistan was clearly

---

<sup>67</sup> ‘Memo to Chris [Warren Christopher] from Steve [Steve Oxman] enclosing edits to draft cable to Islamabad and “Evening Reading” reports to President Carter on Pakistan,’ October 4, 1978, USPQB, Doc18, 8.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid, 7; Kux, *Disenchanted Allies*, 235.

<sup>69</sup> Brzezinski to Carter, ‘F-5E’s for Pakistan,’ July 7, 1978, JCPL, National Security Staff (hereafter NSS) Files, North/South, Box 95, Pakistan: 4/77-12/78.

<sup>70</sup> USE Islamabad to State, ‘Under Secretary Benson’s Meeting at Pak Defense Ministry,’ November 7, 1978, JCPL, NSS Files, North/South, Box 95, Pakistan: 4/77-12/78.

<sup>71</sup> ‘Memo to Chris from Steve,’ October 4, 1978, 8.

exploring multiple means of gaining access to weapons-grade nuclear material, these methods would take time and could be closely monitored.<sup>72</sup> The US government shortly acquired further intelligence on Islamabad's intentions. Pakistani ambassador Iqbal Ahmed Akhund had informed Arthur Hartman that Pakistan "had every intention of finishing the reprocessing plant on its own."<sup>73</sup> Hartman concluded that Akhund had all but admitted the nuclear programme's military nature, its function being to give "the Pakistani people, Indians, and others a perception of a Pakistani military capability."<sup>74</sup>

By November, the Americans were engaged in the final preparations for a diplomatic offensive that the Carter administration hoped would finally kill any chance of the reprocessing plant ever being completed. Influenced by the reports that Pakistan may have been seeking to complete the facility with foreign aid, the Carter administration determined to ensure that such completion would be impossible. The UK and France were the first foreign eyes to see the US démarche, provided with the communication before general circulation. Although heavily redacted, this document—with its much lengthier talking points than the version eventually dispatched to embassies around the world—gives a sense of Carter administration feelings. Warren Christopher articulated serious concerns about the Pakistani reprocessing and enrichment programmes, and was particularly desirous of a continued dialogue with France over reprocessing.<sup>75</sup> The main American worry was the impact of Pakistani nuclear ambitions on the South Asian geopolitical situation. In the aftermath of the Afghan Revolution and with growing instability in Iran, Christopher deemed it "critical to stability in the region and to our non-proliferation objectives to inhibit Pakistan from moving closer to the threshold of nuclear explosive capability."<sup>76</sup>

---

<sup>72</sup> 'Memorandum of Conversation: Consultations on Pakistan: details on Indigenous Nuclear Capabilities (Supplement to Oct. 6, 1978 memcon prepared by Ambassador Hummel),' October 6, 1978, USPQB, Doc.19.

<sup>73</sup> USE Paris to State, 'Pakistan Ambassador to France Hard-Lines on Reprocessing Plant', October 21, 1978, DNSA, NP01612, 1.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> State to USE London et al, November 1, 1.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid, 3.

Christopher's cable also alluded to inflammatory statements made by Bhutto in the text of his political testament written in jail.<sup>77</sup> While imprisoned, Bhutto had stated that—before his removal from power—Pakistan was on the verge of “full nuclear capability” and was willing to share this capability with the “Muslim world.”<sup>78</sup> “We do not necessarily accept Mr. Bhutto's claims of imminent success in this field,” stated Christopher at this juncture, “but we do find this statement of intentions to be disquieting.”<sup>79</sup> Even though Christopher found Bhutto's remarks “disquieting” and potentially having “profound implications,” the implied Islamic dimension did not change basic American assumptions about the reasoning behind the Pakistani programme. Christopher and his colleagues “were under no illusion that Pakistan's motivations or intentions have changed,” with Islamabad's nuclear ambitions still perceived as a “national project.”<sup>80</sup> Thus, Bhutto and Zia's rhetoric about the ‘Islamic bomb’ failed to alter American perceptions and policy regarding Pakistani intentions. For the Carter administration, while the idea of the ‘Islamic bomb’ might have proved “disquieting,” it did not change the fundamental assumptions about the national quality of Pakistan's bomb project and the dual issues of regional stability and global non-proliferation policy.

The responses from London and Paris to Christopher's telegram provide a working demonstration of a lack of European unanimity over non-proliferation. The JNU's Robert Alston responded on the British government's behalf and indicated there was a slight case of confusion over which nations might be able to supply nuclear components to Pakistan. Alston observed that the recipients of the proposed American cable and Britain's parallel *démarche* on the clandestine enrichment programme (discussed later in this chapter) were different. Britain should thus be given time to send further cables in order that both campaigns were fully coordinated.<sup>81</sup> Alston also commented that US allies such as Taiwan

---

<sup>77</sup> The text was eventually formally published under the title *If I Am Assassinated* after Bhutto's execution in 1979. As Ashok Kapur points out, before this death cell testimony, Bhutto had never spoken about an ‘Islamic bomb.’ See Ashok Kapur, *Pakistan's Nuclear Development* (Beckenham: Croom Helm, 1987), 181-182.

<sup>78</sup> Martin Woollacott, ‘The life that is hanging by eighty thousand words,’ *TG*, November 2, 1978, 13; Martin Woollacott, ‘U.S. “ready to sell jets to Pakistan”,’ *TG*, November 4, 1978, 5; Milton R. Benjamin, ‘U.S. Officials View Pakistan as the Leading Threat to Join the Nuclear Club,’ *WP*, December 8, 1978, A16.

<sup>79</sup> State to USE London et al, November 1, 1978, 3.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid*, 4.

<sup>81</sup> USE London to State, ‘Pakistani Reprocessing Plant,’ November 2, 1978, NPAD, Doc.10A, 1.

and South Korea—both countries that had pursued nuclear weapons programmes—might prove problematic in their reactions to a campaign of Pakistani nuclear containment.<sup>82</sup> In contrast, André Jacomet was more anxious about the situation's European dimension, particularly concerning West Germany. Now assured that France's own domestic reprocessing plants were untouchable, Jacomet told the US consular staff that furnishing sensitive nuclear equipment to Pakistan would conflict with the French position on nuclear proliferation. According to Jacomet, France's most serious concerns were with Italy and the FRG, which did not care about French non-proliferation policy.<sup>83</sup> Jacomet was relieved that the US *démarche* made no mention of the reprocessing plant deal's cancellation, as there was still a "great sensitivity [in the French government] to any direct linking on our part of US policies with the French decision to cancel the deal."<sup>84</sup>

When the finalised American *démarche*—influenced by the French reporting on Pakistani efforts to complete the reprocessing plant and Anglo-American intelligence on the clandestine uranium enrichment programme—was finally sent out, it left its recipients in no doubt that Washington was very serious about ensuring that Pakistan would not complete the reprocessing plant. Sent in Cyrus Vance's name, the request was made due to "deep concern at the highest levels" of the Carter administration.<sup>85</sup> The communication sketched American concerns in light of intelligence flowing into Washington. In view of the increasing instability in the region—continued Pakistani-Indian tensions, the Afghan revolution, and the stirrings in Iran—it was vital for continued stability that Pakistan be prevented from gaining nuclear capability.<sup>86</sup> In a move that caused some degree of peevishness in London, the cable cited the UK as the source of "firm information" that Pakistan was *also* constructing a centrifuge-based uranium enrichment facility. Vance encouraged supplier governments to be watchful when it came to Pakistani overt and covert attempts to acquire the means to complete their reprocessing facility.<sup>87</sup>

---

<sup>82</sup> Ibid, 2.

<sup>83</sup> USE Paris to State, 'US Demarches [sic] on Pakistani Reprocessing Plant,' November 2, 1978, NPAD, Doc.10B, 1.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid, 2.

<sup>85</sup> State to USE London et al, 'US Demarche [sic] on Pakistani Reprocessing Plant,' November 4, 1978, NPAD, Doc.12, 2.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid, 4.

Responses to this major diplomatic initiative were mixed, once more illustrating that American and British concern about proliferation was not universally shared. Many were routine expressions of acknowledgement or willingness to cooperate. Some governments, such as the Canadians, Italians, and Japanese, expressed surprise that Pakistan was considering the reprocessing plant's completion.<sup>88</sup> Despite niggling doubts, the Netherlands government regarded Bhutto's death cell testimony as simple boasting regarding the Pakistani programme's status. Furthermore, the Dutch were concerned about the developing world's reaction should word of a Western offensive against Pakistan leak out. Nuclear power, officials in The Hague suggested, was a great status symbol for developing nations, as it represented the acme of industrial and technological achievement. Actions that created even the perception that Western nations were trying to prevent developing states from gaining access to nuclear technology presented a "psychological question" that the West would have to consider very carefully.<sup>89</sup> Some of the US conclusions about Pakistani intentions and progress surprised the West German government and, like the Dutch, Bonn was concerned about the on-going campaign's potential public relations implications. The last thing the Auswärtiges Amt wanted to see was a headline stating "US and FRG in Nuclear Boycott of Pakistan."<sup>90</sup>

The concern expressed by the FRG and the Netherlands over adverse reactions to a "boycott" of Pakistan was echoed by American diplomats. Hummel was nervous about a plan to inform the Indians about the diplomatic campaign. The ambassador argued that, if the press found out that the US government had been talking to India behind Pakistan's back, there could be a hostile reaction from Islamabad. Colluding with Western nations to prevent Pakistan from continuing with its bomb programme was one thing, colluding with the Indians would be quite another.<sup>91</sup> Vance contended that India already seemed aware of

---

<sup>88</sup> USE Ottawa to State, 'US Demarche [sic] on Pakistani Reprocessing Plant,' November 7, 1978, NPAD Doc.13F; USE Rome to State, 'US Demarche [sic] on Pakistani reprocessing Plant', November 7, 1978, NPAD Doc.13C; USE Tokyo to State, 'US Demarche [sic] on Pakistani Reprocessing Plant', November 9, 1978, NPAD Doc.13I.

<sup>89</sup> USE The Hague to State, 'Demarche [sic] on Pakistani Reprocessing Plant,' November 9, 1978, NPAD, Doc.13H.

<sup>90</sup> USE Bonn to State, 'US Demarche [sic] on Pakistani Reprocessing Plant,' November 8, 1978, NPAD, Doc.13E.

<sup>91</sup> USE Islamabad to State, 'Achieving USG Nonproliferation Objectives in Pakistan,' November 14, 1978, NPAD, Doc.15A.

Bhutto's claims of nuclear capability *and* the UK inverter story, but that US representatives in India had been instructed not to mention Pakistan in talks.<sup>92</sup> Robert Goheen, US ambassador to India, reinforced Vance's statement. Goheen was sure that the Indians had known for some time about American suspicions, and the Indians themselves believed that Pakistan was only two or three years from producing a bomb.<sup>93</sup>

At the end of November, the French further reassured US representatives of their firmness regarding the reprocessing plant. Jacomet emphasised that, despite a continuing dialogue with the Pakistani government, there was no possibility of France ever helping to complete it.<sup>94</sup> He did mention that Pakistan had requested bilateral discussions regarding a "plutonium storage scheme", something that Gerard Smith found highly unusual if there was to be no plutonium produced in Pakistan.<sup>95</sup>

For the Carter administration, the manoeuvring against the Franco-Pakistani reprocessing plant deal represented a qualified non-proliferation success. The French had finally cancelled the contract and there was a generally positive response from nuclear supplier nations regarding US moves to prevent the Pakistanis completing the plant with the aid of third parties. Regardless of the success of the anti-reprocessing offensive, it was quite clear that Pakistani nuclear ambitions remained undiminished. A major factor in this realisation was the mounting evidence of another strand to the nuclear programme. It was this much more covert aspect that would be the focus of anti-proliferation action on the sub-continent from late 1978 onwards, action that would be led not by America, but by Britain.

### **The Clandestine Uranium Enrichment Project**

Parallel with American led anti-reprocessing efforts, action directed against Pakistan's clandestine uranium enrichment programme gathered pace. From 1978 onwards, it became apparent to first the UK and then the US that the inverters ordered from EEIC by agents working on behalf of Pakistan during the previous eighteen months represented only a small

---

<sup>92</sup> State to USE Islamabad, 'Achieving USG Non-proliferation Objectives in Pakistan,' November 16, 1978, NPAD, Doc.15B.

<sup>93</sup> USE New Delhi to State, 'Achieving USG Nonproliferation Objectives in Pakistan,' November 17, 1978, NPAD, Doc.15C.

<sup>94</sup> State to USE Paris, 'Pakistan Reprocessing Plant,' November 22, 1978, NPAD, Doc.18, 2.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

part of a huge, international project aimed at gaining the capability to produce weapons-grade enriched uranium. It was in this strand of non-proliferation diplomacy that Britain would take the lead.

In March of 1978 Mr E. S. Harris, EEIC's managing director, yet again contacted the DoE, passing on his suspicions about another request to tender that his company had received from Weargate Ltd, supply agents acting on the Pakistani government's behalf. The enquiry was for inverters worth £2 million, a much larger order than the small shipments dispatched to Rawalpindi in 1977. Again, Harris claimed that the inverters were of a similar specification to those used in BNFL's centrifuges at Capenhurst in Cheshire despite Pakistani claims that the devices were for use in a textile mill.<sup>96</sup>

Once Harris informed the DoE about the inverter order, British non-proliferation and economic interests began to collide again. After Harris communicated his suspicions to the government, considerable evidence and expert opinion was amassed from a diverse range of sources—including BNFL, the MoD, and the DoE—that the likely end-use for the inverters was as components of a uranium enrichment plant.<sup>97</sup> Given the British economy's precarious state in 1978, the DoE's Barbara Parkin observed that this was a substantial order that would be of great benefit to a British manufacturer.<sup>98</sup> EEIC had made representations to the government that, in the event of not being permitted to fulfil the order, the prospects for their workforce were bleak.<sup>99</sup> In the end, the government decided that the FCO—in consultation with the United States and other NSG member states—should take the lead, with FCO enquiries informing a final decision on whether or not to allow the export.<sup>100</sup> When Agha Shahi visited London just after the March 18 announcement that a Lahore court had passed a death sentence on Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, British suspicions about the clandestine programme were kept under wraps despite discussions of nuclear security assurances, and attempts by

---

<sup>96</sup> Parkin to Bourke, 'Export of Inverters to Pakistan,' March 15, 1978, TNA FCO96/822.

<sup>97</sup> 'Note of a Meeting Held in the Department of Energy, Atomic Energy Division, on 17 March 1978 to Discuss a Possible Export Order for Inverters to Pakistan,' March 23, 1978, TNA FCO96 822, 1.

<sup>98</sup> Parkin to Bourke, 'Export of Inverters to Pakistan,' March 15, 1978, TNA FCO96/822.

<sup>99</sup> 'Note of a Meeting', March 23, 1978, 3.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*



David Owen to persuade Shahi to at least agree to delaying acquisition of the reprocessing plant.<sup>101</sup>

At the end of March, the FCO officially brought inverters to the attention of the US government. The FCO Joint Nuclear Unit's (JNU) Martin Bourke wrote to the Washington embassy's First Secretary, the experienced diplomat Michael Pakenham, asking for US input.<sup>102</sup> Bourke's main point was whether the Americans felt that their export restrictions covered inverters and how these controls related to their 'machinery' for combating the proliferation problem. There was less incentive for Britain to halt the sale if the Americans felt that their export restrictions did not cover inverters. Furthermore, the FCO tasked Kit Burdess in Islamabad with finding out (in the subtlest way possible) whether or not the Pakistanis *did* have plans to build an enrichment plant.<sup>103</sup>

Other than a brief message from Pakenham on March 28 to the effect that inverters probably fell within the spirit, if not the letter, of US non-proliferation legislation, it was several weeks before the State Department offered a substantive response.<sup>104</sup> In the FCO's eyes, that response was less than satisfactory. Pakenham related the opinion of Joe Nye, who questioned the "quality and dependability" of the intelligence indicating that the inverters were for a nuclear enrichment facility.<sup>105</sup> US intelligence agencies had "not come up with any evidence that the Pakistanis were organising themselves for the development of an enrichment capability."<sup>106</sup> Despite the British government's conviction—based on all the evidence that had been amassed since late 1976—that the inverters *were* for a clandestine uranium enrichment project, the State Department wanted to wait until there was incontrovertible evidence of wrongdoing before they would step into the murkiness of this "grey area."<sup>107</sup>

---

<sup>101</sup> 'Record of a Meeting Between the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary and the Foreign Affairs Adviser of Pakistan, Mr Agha Shahi at 2.30pm on Monday, 20 March,' March 20, 1978, TNA FCO96/822, 1. Callaghan and Owen would both call upon Zia to rescind Bhutto's death sentence, to no avail (Owen, 755).

<sup>102</sup> Bourke to Pakenham, 'Export by a UK Firm of Inverters to Pakistan,' March 23, 1978, TNA FCO96/822.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid, 2.

<sup>104</sup> UKE Washington to FCO, 'Inverters for Pakistan: Bourke's Letter to Pakenham of 23 March,' March 28, 1978, TNA FCO96/822.

<sup>105</sup> Pakenham to Bourke, 'Export of Inverters to Pakistan,' April 18, 1978, TNA FCO96/822, 1.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

Between the request for American input and the unsatisfactory mid-April response, intelligence continued to flow into Whitehall from the British Embassy in Islamabad. Burdess submitted detailed appraisals of Pakistani intentions, noting that he had heard nothing concrete, but was unsurprised that Pakistan may have embarked on an enrichment programme, as this would probably be the only way PAEC could get access to enriched material without acceding to full-scope safeguards or the NPT.<sup>108</sup> Furthermore, Burdess doubted the claim that the inverters were for a textile mill. Burdess was familiar with the plant for which the inverters were allegedly intended, observing that the factory had no means of spinning cloth and produced items from materials manufactured elsewhere in Pakistan. Nonetheless, Burdess concluded that stopping the inverter export at this point might do more harm than good by arousing Pakistani suspicions and leading Islamabad to adopt even more secretive methods in future. Burdess felt that confronting the Pakistanis over these discrepancies could only stop a covert enrichment programme if incontrovertible proof could be found that the inverters were indeed intended for an enrichment facility.<sup>109</sup>

In Washington, the CIA presented the limited fruits of its intelligence efforts on the Pakistani bomb programme on April 26. Parts of this detailed report remain classified, but from the unredacted sections—and despite London alerting the US authorities to Pakistan’s covert centrifuge project—it appears that the analysis did not consider a centrifuge-based enrichment programme.<sup>110</sup> The report focused on reprocessing as the route to a bomb and assumed—incorrectly—that unlike Bhutto, Zia attached a relatively low priority to the nuclear programme.<sup>111</sup> Following on from this apparent oversight, the CIA would continue to award little significance to the possibility of an enrichment programme for some months to come, as it focused on the reprocessing issue.

This opening period of Anglo-American communication on Pakistan’s enrichment project saw a marked difference between the British and American views of the situation. British officials recognised that the EEIC inverter order was potentially a very serious non-

---

<sup>108</sup> Burdess to Bourke, ‘Inverters for Pakistan,’ April 3, 1978, TNA FCO96/822.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid.

<sup>110</sup> CIA, ‘Pakistan Nuclear Study,’ April 26, 1978, DNSA, WM00212. The National Security Archive’s William Burr opines that the redacted sections were on issues other than a potential enrichment programme; see [www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nukevault/ebb333/index.htm](http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nukevault/ebb333/index.htm), notes on Doc.5.

<sup>111</sup> ‘Pakistan Nuclear Study,’ April 26, 1978, 1.

proliferation regime breach and attempted to formulate ways to handle the situation. When the FCO informed its American counterpart, the State Department offered little more than bland platitudes. From Carter downwards, the US focus at this stage concentrated on reprocessing as the main proliferation danger. With American intelligence agencies offering little or no information on enrichment and unwilling to rely on evidence from the UK, Carter's team gave enrichment a low priority. Because American policy—typified by the NNPA—was directed so much towards the 'big ticket' elements of proliferation such as reprocessing plants, the Carter administration apparently failed—despite warnings—to see the dangers inherent in a smaller-scale, clandestine uranium enrichment programme. This highlighted a contradiction in the Carter administration's non-proliferation policy. Despite their enthusiasm for non-proliferation efforts directed at reprocessing capabilities, the US government—not wishing, as Nye had intimated, to fight a 'war on two fronts' until there was definite proof of Pakistan duplicity—deprioritised the possibility of a secret Pakistani enrichment scheme.<sup>112</sup>

From late summer onwards the inverter problem came to the fore. By this stage EEIC had had its tender accepted and was in the process of manufacturing the components, the UK export control list not yet including inverters. Transatlantic discussions saw the UK taking the diplomatic lead in an effort to gain unanimity amongst potential suppliers as intelligence pointing towards a covert Pakistani bomb programme accumulated. By late October, the campaign against the Pakistani bomb effort was in full swing. The United States continued to make efforts to ensure the end of the reprocessing plant deal, while Britain carried out an interlocking campaign against the clandestine enrichment project.

Up to this point, discussion of inverters had taken place behind closed doors, but in late July, the issue became semi-public when Labour MP Frank Allaun asked in parliament “[I]f consideration has been given to the purchase of variable frequency inverters, which are used in gas centrifuges to enrich uranium, by TEAM, a German company, for supply to Pakistan, in the light of the provisions of the non-proliferation treaty or other measures to

---

<sup>112</sup> The Carter administration was not alone in having such a blind spot. British officials had, since the late 1960s, been warning their US counterparts about the dangers posed by the proliferation of gas centrifuge technology, to no avail. See Krige, 17-18.

prevent the spread of nuclear weapons?”<sup>113</sup> Allaun was one of the parliamentary Labour Party’s staunchest anti-nuclear campaigners, a passionate CND supporter, and an organiser of the Aldermaston Marches against nuclear weapons.<sup>114</sup> Tony Benn, the Secretary of State for Energy and one of Owen’s fellow non-proliferation enthusiasts, had to provide a written reply. “Yes,” he responded,

However equipment specially designed for use in a gas centrifuge installation was not at that time subject to the Export of Goods Control Order; such equipment is now subject to control. Any application to export equipment which is specially designed for uranium enrichment plants would be treated with full regard to our Non-Proliferation Treaty—NPT—and other international obligations, in accordance with the statement of my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister on 31st March 1976.<sup>115</sup>

On July 26, Allaun again probed the issue, this time asking the Secretary of State for Trade, Edmund Dell, if “the supply to Pakistan by Emerson Industrial Controls of Swindon of equipment which will form part of that Government's technological capability to manufacture their own nuclear weapons was made with his approval.” Dell responded bluntly “No. A licence to export such equipment would have been needed only if the goods involved had been subject to the Export of Goods (Control) Order 1970.”<sup>116</sup> Although buried within the parliamentary record, the questions asked by Allaun would shortly bring the clandestine Pakistani programme into the public gaze.<sup>117</sup> Allaun continued to plague the government with questions on the Pakistani nuclear programme throughout 1978 and beyond. Existing histories of the Pakistani nuclear programme posit Allaun’s questioning as the moment at which the British government began to take the issue seriously. As the

---

<sup>113</sup> Frank Allaun MP, Question, July 21, 1978, *Hansard Online*, [http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/written\\_answers/1978/jul/21/nuclear-power-variable-frequency#S5CV0954P0\\_19780721\\_CWA\\_167](http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/written_answers/1978/jul/21/nuclear-power-variable-frequency#S5CV0954P0_19780721_CWA_167) (accessed on November 8, 2012). How Allaun came to find out about the matter is a matter of considerable speculation. Weissman and Krosney (187) argue that it was Ernst Pfiffel—a disillusioned Pakistani purchasing agent in Germany—who spread the word about Islamabad’s activities. However, Allaun took the secret of who gave him the information to his grave in 2002.

<sup>114</sup> Keith Laybourn, ‘Allaun, Frank Julian (1913-2002)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* online, [www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/77372](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/77372) (accessed on November 8, 2012).

<sup>115</sup> Owen, 320; Tony Benn, in response to Frank Allaun MP, July 21, 1978, *Hansard Online*, [http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/written\\_answers/1978/jul/21/nuclear-power-variable-frequency#S5CV0954P0\\_19780721\\_CWA\\_167](http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/written_answers/1978/jul/21/nuclear-power-variable-frequency#S5CV0954P0_19780721_CWA_167) (accessed on November 8, 2012).

<sup>116</sup> Frank Allaun MP, Question, July 26, 1978, *Hansard Online*, [http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/written\\_answers/1978/jul/26/nuclear-power-equipment-exports#S5CV0954P0\\_19780726\\_CWA\\_322](http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/written_answers/1978/jul/26/nuclear-power-equipment-exports#S5CV0954P0_19780726_CWA_322) (accessed on November 8, 2012).

<sup>117</sup> David Fairhall, ‘Power export faces ban,’ *TG*, October 6, 1978, 1; David Fairhall, ‘Nuclear trade loophole closed by Government,’ *TG*, November 23, 1978, 4.

archival record demonstrates, however, serious concerns had in fact been raised long before the MP asked his questions.<sup>118</sup>

Before Britain's diplomatic campaign against the covert Pakistani purchasing programme got under way, there were discussions within the government over whether or not to actually control the export of inverters, and, if control was required, what form this should take. The DoT was understandably keen not to place additional burdens on hard-pressed British exporters, but overall the feeling was that export restrictions *must* be toughened up in the face of a major non-proliferation test.<sup>119</sup> Additionally, the FCO decided not to seek "end use assurances" from Pakistan. David Hannay, head of the FCO's Energy Department, believed that the Pakistanis would simply say the inverters were not for use in a bomb programme, requiring the British government to either allow the export or openly accuse the Pakistanis of lying.<sup>120</sup>

Tony Benn wrote to Owen on August 30 expressing his deep concern about the problem. "I believe," he stated in an echo of the US NNPA, "that we should do everything possible to prevent the spread of sensitive technology."<sup>121</sup> The problem was that the inverters themselves could be used for a range of industrial purposes, not just for uranium enrichment centrifuges. In a summary that broadly reflected inter-departmental and ministerial thinking, Benn's subordinates asserted that the non-proliferation value of controlling the exports—even though such controls were of little value should other supplier nations not be persuaded to do the same—outweighed the problems additional export controls would cause for British manufacturers.<sup>122</sup> Despite the tension that existed between the two men, Owen agreed with Benn's assessment and restated his conviction that Pakistan *was* pursuing a nuclear weapons programme based on enriching uranium.<sup>123</sup> The Foreign Secretary asserted that the burden on British exporters—in terms of delays and possible lost contracts—would just have to be

---

<sup>118</sup> Armstrong and Trento (74-6), for example, mention the early March to July discussions, but attach little or no significance to them.

<sup>119</sup> Dunning to Parkin, 'Export of Inverters,' August 18, 1978, TNA FCO96/823.

<sup>120</sup> Hannay to Gittelton, 'Export of Inverters to Pakistan,' August 9, 1978, TNA FCO96/823.

<sup>121</sup> Benn to Owen, Letter, August 30, 1978, TNA FCO37/2113.

<sup>122</sup> Inclusion with 30th August Benn to Owen Letter, 'Export of Inverters,' Date unknown, presumed August 1978, TNA FCO37/2113.

<sup>123</sup> On the tension between Benn and Owen, see David Hannay, transcript of interview by Malcolm McBain, July 22, 1999, BDOHP, [www.chu.cam.ac.uk/archives/collections/BDOHP/Hannay.pdf](http://www.chu.cam.ac.uk/archives/collections/BDOHP/Hannay.pdf) (accessed on December 10, 2013), 13.

borne in order to see that Britain was able to fulfil this “major priority of our non-proliferation policy.”<sup>124</sup> In this case, Britain could subordinate economic concerns to non-proliferation. Enhanced export controls might cause inconvenience to manufacturers, but if the EEIC case was typical, the losses would only amount to a few million pounds. This contrasted significantly with the Jaguar and THORP cases, when the sums of money involved were several orders of magnitude greater. In those cases, prioritising non-proliferation over billions of pounds of orders and investment was simply too great a burden for Callaghan’s government to bear.

By early October, Allau’s questions in the Commons brought the entire affair out into the public domain. Newspapers local to the EEIC factory in Swindon started asking the government questions, receiving bland replies from the DoT that consideration was being given to controlling exports of “certain electrical equipment.”<sup>125</sup> Weightier media voices were raised when the *Guardian* and the *Financial Times* ran stories on October 6 about the exports. The *Guardian* revealed that the government had been pressuring EEIC to drop the Pakistani deal and included disgruntled comments from senior management at the company. EEIC had already protested to the DoE in private, but now expressed their anger in public.<sup>126</sup> Alasdair Malpas, EEIC’s personnel manager, stated that, “The Government has asked us not to make it. But we pointed out that we have no contract with Pakistan. Our contract is with an agent, and we might be sued for damages. In any case there would be no difficulty in getting the equipment elsewhere. There is nothing magic about it. Swindon should have the business rather than anyone else.”<sup>127</sup>

With the issue now becoming embarrassingly public, diplomatic and inter-alliance communications intensified in the run-up to Britain’s campaign to alert nuclear supplier states to the danger posed by the clandestine Pakistani programme. John Bushell in Islamabad astutely commented that the Pakistanis were intent on pursuing a nuclear programme regardless of the barriers put in their way. Furthermore, Bushell argued that

---

<sup>124</sup> Owen to Benn, ‘Proposed Sale of Inverters to Pakistan,’ September 12, 1978, TNA FCO37/2113, 1.

<sup>125</sup> Owen to UKE Islamabad, ‘Inverters for Pakistan,’ October 5, 1978, TNA FCO37/2113.

<sup>126</sup> Harris to Herzig, ‘Weargate Contract for Inverters,’ September 28, 1978, TNA FCO37/2113.

<sup>127</sup> David Fairhall, ‘Power Export Faces Ban,’ *TG*, October 6, 1978, 1; Owen to UKE Islamabad, ‘Inverters for Pakistan,’ October 6, 1978, TNA FCO37/2113.

because of the evolving situation in Afghanistan, Britain should offer Pakistan any support it could.<sup>128</sup> In a meeting between American and British officials in London, Joe Nye circulated drawings showing exactly how inverters could fit into a centrifuge array. Tom Pickering noted that Bhutto's prison cell statements about imminent nuclear capability made it somewhat easier to publicly take action against Pakistan. The tenor of the meeting was that any efforts to retard the clandestine programme must be made secretly in order to avoid the perception of discrimination or a "US crusade" against Pakistan.<sup>129</sup> It had also become apparent to the FCO that the Pakistanis were attempting to purchase not just inverters, but a wide range of equipment from Britain that could be used as part of the enrichment project.<sup>130</sup>

On October 26, the British government began its diplomatic campaign to halt, or at least retard, the clandestine Pakistani enrichment project. Before the campaign's initiation, FCO officials had bilateral meetings with the West Germans, who had been so obstructive in 1976 and 1977. Again, there were vague promises to investigate the situation and get back to the British government.<sup>131</sup> When the full campaign started, Owen dispatched three related telegrams laying out overall British aims, assessing Pakistani intentions, and providing speaking notes for consular representatives. These cables shared the case's basic facts: that an order had been placed with EEIC; that there were suspicions of a covert weapons programme; and that the immediate aim was to prevent Pakistan from acquiring inverters from other suppliers.<sup>132</sup> Not wanting to create the impression of an international crusade, Owen was keen to place these efforts within a wider non-proliferation context, as opposed to a campaign that singled out Pakistan. The Pakistanis were described as being "in a nervous state about their security situation" and it was necessary to avoid any "overreaction which could itself have long-term destabilising consequences in the region."<sup>133</sup> There was no mention of the fact that Britain was contributing to these security fears by pressing ahead

---

<sup>128</sup> UKE Islamabad to FCO, 'Pakistan—A Difficult Time Ahead,' September 24, 1978, TNA FCO96/826, 5.

<sup>129</sup> 'Extract From: Record of Discussions of Non-proliferation Issues in the State Dept.,' October 6, 1978, TNA FCO96/824.

<sup>130</sup> Fletcher-Cooke to Candlish, 'Nuclear Exports to Pakistan,' October 10, 1978, TNA FCO37/2113.

<sup>131</sup> 'Anglo-German Bilaterals: Bilateral Discussions on Nuclear and Non-proliferation Questions,' October 19-20, 1978, TNA FCO96/825, 2-4.

<sup>132</sup> FCO to UKE Bonn et al, 'Nuclear Exports,' October 26, 1978, TNA FCO96/825, 1.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid.

with the Jaguar sale. Suspicions about a covert enrichment programme were broadly outlined, highlighting the various purchases that front organisations had been making and the unsafeguarded nature of domestic Pakistani uranium supplies.<sup>134</sup> Owen's speaking note for diplomatic representatives covered the key UK concerns and emphasised British status as a depository party to the NPT and core NSG member. Recipient governments were to be made aware that revised British export controls on inverters would come into force on November 9, and other nations were urged to take similar steps themselves.<sup>135</sup> Finally, Owen contacted his ambassadors in nuclear supplier countries instructing them that, if the American *démarche* on reprocessing were mentioned in their discussions on inverters, UK officials should confirm that the American approach had full British support.<sup>136</sup>

There were mixed reactions to the *démarche*. The Dutch government was concerned that it might have difficulty in obtaining information about inverter orders while the governments of Australia, Canada, Italy, Spain, and Sweden broadly agreed with the British approach and assessment.<sup>137</sup> The West Germans assured the British that inverters were already covered by their export controls, that they agreed with the *démarche*'s aims, and that a more considered reply was imminent.<sup>138</sup>

While the British *démarche* was making its way around the capitals of Europe, North America, and Australasia, Anglo-American cooperation continued apace. Returning from a tour of Afghanistan, Iran, and Pakistan, State Department official Jack Mikloss confided to Deputy Under Secretary of State Hugh Cortazzi (who informed Owen) that the Pakistanis were thoroughly lacking in self-confidence and that this lack of confidence might influence a move towards non-aligned status.<sup>139</sup> At the same time, US embassies were instructed to

---

<sup>134</sup> FCO to UKE Bonn et al, 'MIFT: Nuclear Exports,' October 26, 1978, TNA FCO96/825.

<sup>135</sup> FCO to UKE Bonn et al, 'MIFT: Nuclear Exports. Following Is Suggested Speaking Note,' October 26, 1978, TNA FCO96/825.

<sup>136</sup> FCO to UKE Bonn et al, 'Our Telno 631 to 633: Nuclear Exports,' November 7, 1978, TNA FCO96/825.

<sup>137</sup> UKE The Hague to FCO, 'Your Telno 631 to Bonn: Nuclear Exports,' October 30, 1978, TNA FCO96/825; UKHC Canberra to FCO, 'Your Telegrams 631, 632 and 633 to Bonn: Nuclear Exports,' October 30, 1978, TNA FCO96/825; UKHC Ottawa to FCO, 'Your Telsnos 631, 632 and 633 to Bonn: Nuclear Exports,' October 30, 1978, TNA FCO96/825; UKE Rome to FCO, 'Your Telno 631 to Bonn: Nuclear Exports,' October 31, 1978, TNA FCO96/825; USE Madrid to State, 'US Demarche [sic] on Pakistani Reprocessing Plant,' November 13, 1978, NPAD, Doc.14; UKE Stockholm to FCO, 'Your Telno 631 to Bonn: Nuclear Exports,' November 2, 1978, TNA FCO96/825.

<sup>138</sup> UKE Bonn to FCO, 'Your Telnos 631, 632 and 633 to Bonn: Nuclear Exports,' November 2, 1978, TNA FCO96/825.

<sup>139</sup> FCO to UKE Islamabad, 'Afghanistan/Pakistan,' October 31, 1978, TNA FCO96/825, 2.



emphasise that the Carter administration shared British concerns and to be aware that the US would shortly be sending out its own *démarche* on reprocessing.<sup>140</sup> Furthermore, the Americans passed previously classified intelligence to the UK that indicated Pakistan was apparently working on various technologies necessary for a nuclear bomb programme, such as high explosives, triggering systems, and laboratory-scale reprocessing operations.<sup>141</sup>

Differences between the British and American positions came to light over the inverter issue and its place in wider superpower relations. Back in early October, Alston had submitted a list of countries that Pakistan might turn to if the EEIC order was turned down. Those countries fell into three categories: those that were definitely known to have the capacity to manufacture inverters (including France, the FRG, the Netherlands, and Switzerland); those that possessed adequate technology to manufacture them, but whose capability to actually do so was unknown (Austria, Australia, Canada, Japan, and Sweden); and those countries that were assumed to have the capacity to manufacture comparable items if they wished (such as Brazil, India, Iran, Israel, South Africa, and the USSR.)<sup>142</sup> These lists formed the basis of the countries approached in both the UK *démarche* on inverters and its US counterpart on reprocessing. After both of these diplomatic efforts had begun, the matter of approaching the USSR remained unsolved. The US government planned to have an informal discussion with the Soviets on the margins of a late November INFCE meeting.<sup>143</sup> Robert Alston was concerned about this and made his feelings known via the US embassy in London. British officials had considered approaching the Soviets at the point of sending out their *démarche*, but had ruled out such action because they were “not certain [of the] Soviet’s [sic] commitment to non-proliferation” and whether or not it would outweigh their “special political interests vis a vis Pakistan.”<sup>144</sup> Alston suggested meeting with Nye in Vienna to discuss the matter more fully. In this meeting Nye noted that the Americans were “well satisfied” with the reactions to their own *démarche* and Alston went over the British doubts about an approach to the Soviets. The meeting’s conclusion was that when Gerard Smith met

---

<sup>140</sup> State to USE Bonn et al, ‘UK Approach to Supplier Governments on Pakistan,’ November 1, 1978, NPAD, Doc.9.

<sup>141</sup> Weston to Cullimore and White, ‘Inverters for Pakistan,’ November 3, 1978, TNA FCO96/825.

<sup>142</sup> FCO to UKE Washington, ‘Inverters for Pakistan,’ October 5, 1978, TNA FCO37/2113, 1-2.

<sup>143</sup> State to USE London, ‘Pakistan Proliferation Problem,’ November 18, 1978, NPAD, Doc.17A, 2.

<sup>144</sup> USE London to State, ‘Pakistan Proliferation Problem,’ November 24, 1978, NPAD, Doc.17B.

with Soviet representatives, he would speak from the notes prepared in Washington (thereby excluding the British notes on their *démarche*) and offer no further elaboration on them.<sup>145</sup>

### **The Fallout**

The two-pronged diplomatic attack on the Pakistani nuclear programme did not end the issue. Despite this, the view from London was that the campaign had been a qualified success. The major nuclear-exporting nations had been alerted to the situation and reached broad agreement on exports. At the same time, the Pakistani government had not publicly attacked the UK in the way it had done with America over the reprocessing plant.<sup>146</sup>

Washington was slightly more sanguine about the evolving situation. US intelligence was now feeding back information that despite the “best efforts” of nuclear supplier states, Pakistan had made great progress in pulling together the major components for a uranium enrichment programme.<sup>147</sup> Thinking in London paralleled these assessments, the FCO suggesting that Pakistan was “pressing ahead as rapidly as possible with the development of a fissile material production capability” and “continuing its attempts to acquire a nuclear fuel reprocessing facility that would produce plutonium.”<sup>148</sup>

As December progressed, a variety of international diplomatic sources backed up the US intelligence appraisal of the Pakistani situation. On December 18, Burdess reported to the FCO that he had met with an Australian diplomat whose name was only recorded as ‘Baker.’ Baker had approached Burdess because of the US *démarche* on reprocessing, which mentioned that the UK had “hard evidence” of Pakistani nuclear intentions. When Burdess outlined the information that the UK had gathered, Baker commented that he had recently been to Kahuta, east of Rawalpindi, where there was a “frenzy” of construction. The Australian seemed to think (and Burdess was quick to disabuse him of the notion) that machinery was being installed at Kahuta with the compliance of BNFL. Having seen other nuclear facilities, Baker was convinced that the facilities being constructed at Kahuta formed

---

<sup>145</sup> ‘Pakistan,’ December 4, 1978, TNA FCO37/2114.

<sup>146</sup> ‘Pakistan: Inverters,’ December 12, 1978, TNA FCO96/826.

<sup>147</sup> National Intelligence Officer for Nuclear Proliferation to Director of Central Intelligence, ‘Monthly Warning Report–Nuclear Proliferation,’ December 5, 1978, USPQB, Doc.21, 2.

<sup>148</sup> ‘Pakistan: Nuclear Weapons Development,’ December 22, 1978, TNA FCO96/827. The second page of this document—which it would be reasonable to assume contains the key intelligence information on the Pakistani programme—is unfortunately readacted.

part of a nuclear weapons programme.<sup>149</sup> Baker's companion on his visit to Kahuta was French diplomat Jean Forlot, who fed information back to the US embassy in Islamabad. Forlot came to the same conclusions as Baker—that work was proceeding swiftly on constructing some form of nuclear facility—and Arthur Hummel quickly passed these suspicions back to his superiors in the State Department.<sup>150</sup>

This diplomatic intelligence arrived on the back of statements by Zia a few days earlier that re-emphasised the possibly pan-Islamic dimensions of Pakistani nuclear ambitions. In a speech inaugurating a conference on commercial and industrial matters, he called for technical and economic cooperation between Islamic countries that should not remain dependent on the West.<sup>151</sup> Burdess suggested that the pan-Islamic comments on the value of nuclear energy and the pursuit of that technology would be taken by Pakistanis as a re-affirmation of Pakistan's intention to develop a nuclear weapons capability.<sup>152</sup>

The increased volume of evidence signalling Islamabad's determination to build an enrichment plant persuaded the United States and United Kingdom to plan another series of démarches aimed at shutting down Pakistani access to further supplies of components for centrifuges. In a meeting with US officials, British diplomats fretted about the political consequences and tried to reassure themselves that the US and UK were thinking in the same direction. The main danger, from the British point of view, was that if Pakistan perceived itself as the victim of further Western diplomatic pressure on an issue so identified with the nation, then a departure from CENTO and a move towards non-alignment became all the more likely.<sup>153</sup> The Americans thought the Pakistani attitude towards CENTO was more likely influenced by other external matters, such as the developing situation in Iran. The US government drew on its experiences in dissuading South Korea and Taiwan from pursuing indigenous nuclear weapons programmes, and thought that the tactics used there would have a similar effect in the case of Pakistan.<sup>154</sup> British scepticism was well founded. South Korea

---

<sup>149</sup> Burdess to Alston, 'Pakistan Nuclear Affairs,' December 18, 1978, TNA FCO37/2114, 1.

<sup>150</sup> USE Islamabad to State, 'Discussion With French Official on Nuclear Matters,' December 19, 1978, DNSA, NP01615, 1.

<sup>151</sup> Burdess to Alston, 'Pakistan Nuclear Affairs: General Zia's Public Comments,' December 22, 1978, TNA FCO37/2114.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid.

<sup>153</sup> Weston to Alston, 'Pakistan Nuclear Developments,' December 22, 1978, TNA FCO37/2114, 1.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid, 2.

and Taiwan were two nations tied to America on a much more deep-seated and fundamental level than Pakistan ever was. Therefore, the US had much greater diplomatic weight and could assert considerably more pressure than it could on Pakistan. Furthermore, the South Korean desire to develop nuclear weapons was in direct reaction to the Carter administration's desire to reduce US troop numbers in the country, leaving them fearful in the face of the huge North Korean army.<sup>155</sup> Whitehall analysts suggested that politically it might be easier for Zia to quit the enrichment programme, as it had not been publicly announced, and therefore cancellation would not result in a loss of face.<sup>156</sup> By this juncture, the United States had been firmly persuaded by its British ally and its own belated intelligence gathering that Pakistan was engaged in a covert attempt to enrich uranium. As the reprocessing plant problem faded away, it was the enrichment project—much harder to combat with state to state diplomacy—that would occupy the attention of the US and UK governments.

### **Conclusion**

In 1978, two strands of non-proliferation activity became intertwined. The Carter administration achieved a measure of non-proliferation success by realising its aim of preventing Pakistani acquisition of a nuclear reprocessing plant. However, just as the threat of a Pakistani bomb based on recovered plutonium was receding, the covert enrichment project became the focus of non-proliferation policy and action. This was a field in which Britain took the lead, attempting to marshal international opinion against Pakistan. Callaghan's government also impeded non-proliferation by pressing ahead with the commercially lucrative deal to sell Jaguar aircraft to India and through the success of the parliamentary vote to approve construction of the revenue-generating THORP. Because of this, the Carter administration was frustrated by British insistence on prioritising commercial interests over non-proliferation. However, these cases illustrate the level at which the British government was willing to subordinate non-proliferation to economic self-interest. The emergence of the clandestine enrichment programme as an international issue saw Callaghan's government quite willing to accept relatively small economic burdens in order

---

<sup>155</sup> Clausen, 140-141.

<sup>156</sup> Weston to Alston, December 22, 1978, 2.

to enforce anti-proliferation policy. When it came to multi-billion pound enterprises such as Jaguar and the THORP, the economic turmoil of the 1970s forced Callaghan, Owen, Benn, and their colleagues de-prioritise non-proliferation. Regardless, the passing of these two commercial milestones would allow Britain to take a more active role in non-proliferation into 1979, the government freed from two major economic constraints. The year 1978 had also seen the foundations being laid for a major cultural component of debates on Pakistan's nuclear aspirations. Bhutto and Zia's remarks about the pan-Islamic nature of their atomic ambitions would become a huge part of the public discussion of Pakistan, the Middle East, and nuclear weapons. Although the responses of the media and governments to the 'Islamic bomb' would be quite different, they would nonetheless help to shape the outcry over 'Islamic' nuclear proliferation that emerged over the next twelve months and into the decades beyond.

## Chapter 5: “A dream of nightmare proportions”

January 1979–December 1979

---

At 5.12am on December 18, 1979, Labour MP Tam Dalyell stood in the House of Commons and delivered a philippic against the Pakistani nuclear programme and the prospect of atomic proliferation in the Islamic world. “This is a spine-chilling prospect—a dream of nightmare proportions,” he intoned, “Great Governments, such as those of the Soviet Union or the United States, can be counted upon to act with deliberation...but the bad dream come true of a Gadaffi [sic] bomb or an ayatollah bomb is altogether different.”<sup>1</sup> Dalyell’s apocalyptic, classically orientalist speech that starkly differentiated between ‘responsible’ states and the ‘irresponsible’ Islamic world brought to a close a year where Pakistani nuclear aspirations had gone from a modest media story to front-page news. Revelations about the ‘Islamic bomb’ and Pakistani metallurgist A.Q. Khan’s role in appropriating gas centrifuge designs from Europe ensured that the religious and clandestine elements of Pakistani nuclear ambitions became the dominant public narratives. Within these narratives, there was a strand of alarmism around the ‘Islamic bomb’s’ impact on global proliferation. ‘Proliferation cascade’ alarmism was nothing new, normally voiced in terms of security concerns and national prestige. This was proliferation of a different kind, founded in the cultural connections between disparate states.

Historians have recently identified the influence of cultural factors in nuclear policymaking. Matthew Jones has analysed the importance of the cultural construct of race as an influence on American nuclear policy in Asia.<sup>2</sup> Unlike Jones’ findings—where race is a significant factor—an analysis of non-proliferation policymaking by the US and UK during the late 1970s indicates that the cultural factor of religion had no meaningful influence on policy. In order to demonstrate this, this chapter will cover the media ‘scare’ surrounding the ‘Islamic bomb’ paradigm and then go on to analyse how the paradigm was received by

---

<sup>1</sup> Tam Dalyell, House of Commons Debate, December 18, 1979, *Hansard Online*, [http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1979/dec/18/joint-centrifuge-project-almelo#column\\_555](http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1979/dec/18/joint-centrifuge-project-almelo#column_555) (accessed May10, 2013).

<sup>2</sup> Jones, *After Hiroshima*.

policymakers in Washington and London. By doing so, it will show that the ‘Islamic bomb’ failed to influence non-proliferation policy towards Pakistan. While some individuals in government placed credence in the idea of trans-Islamic proliferation, nobody could offer evidence that it was either taking, or going to, take place. What the ‘Islamic bomb’ concept did do was create a propaganda problem that the White House and Whitehall needed to address.

The third section of this chapter—examining the *genuine* changes that took place in policy and strategy towards Pakistan—demonstrate that it was not the ‘Islamic bomb’ but the problems created by a Pakistani state determined to acquire nuclear capability that forced change upon the American and British foreign policy establishments. By the middle of 1979, it was Zia’s unwillingness to abandon the nuclear programme that prompted a significant but little remarked upon policy change on both sides of the Atlantic. The Carter administration and Thatcher government shifted from a commitment to *preventing* proliferation in South Asia to a policy of *mitigating* eventual Pakistani nuclear acquisition. This centred on a quest for assurances from both Pakistan and India not to test nuclear weapons. No longer did America and Britain seek to stop Pakistan from acquiring nuclear capability, they decided that ameliorating the effects of that acquisition was the only real option open. Overall, this period clearly demonstrates that what was taking place was not a ‘clash of civilisations,’ but a clash between Western states determined to enforce some form of non-proliferation policy and a developing world state led by men even more determined to gain nuclear capability.

### **The ‘Islamic bomb’ in Public**

Although the concept of the ‘Islamic bomb’—a nuclear weapon transcending state boundaries and spanning a transnational religious community—had appeared in Pakistani and in Western governmental comment before 1979, it was only in that year that the issue burst into the media, increasing public pressure on policymakers in Washington and London but failing to influence policy in any significant way. Following the Indian nuclear test of May 1974, connections between nuclear weapons and Pakistan’s Islamic faith were not as clear to the media and peripheral politicians—such as British Members of Parliament—as they later became. However, the 1974-78 period laid the groundwork for an emotive issue in the trilateral American-British-Pakistani relationship.

Media commentary on the ‘Islamic bomb’ mostly ignored the disparities between Muslim states, taking Pakistani rhetoric at face value and expressing a belief that because Pakistan was an Islamic state, it would share its nuclear achievements with co-religionists.<sup>3</sup> During the Cold War there were pro-American and pro-Soviet states, states representing various Islamic sects, and states—such as Libya and Pakistan—vying for leadership positions within the Muslim world. Pakistan used its nuclear programme to make itself unique, nuclear weapons forming part of a quest for regional leadership based on religious community.<sup>4</sup> Positioning the nationalist Pakistani pursuit of nuclear weapons as an Islamic issue allowed two quite different Pakistani leaders to legitimise that pursuit. For Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Mohammad Zia ul-Haq the ‘Islamic bomb’ was a means of legitimising the nationalist reasoning behind the nuclear programme.<sup>5</sup> National security and a political desire for nuclear power were the main driving forces. The ‘Islamic bomb’ allowed both leaders to cloak their quest in transnational religious garb, presenting Western non-proliferation efforts as anti-Muslim and not just anti-Pakistani. Pakistan also asserted its Islamic identity as a means of differentiating itself from India and the common civilisational heritage that both countries shared.<sup>6</sup> Bhutto, in particular, set out to remodel the image of Pakistan in foreign eyes, emphasising his socialist ideals and Pakistani ties with the wider Muslim world.<sup>7</sup> Zia emphasised Islam’s role in political and civil society, striving to mould Pakistan to his vision of an Islamic state and appealing to domestic constituencies: the military, harder-line Islamic radicals, and widespread anti-Indian sentiment.<sup>8</sup> However, as Pervez Hoodbhoy argues, individual Muslim countries may cloak their desire for nuclear weapons in Islamic garb, but the motivations are secular and nationalistic. Just as Israel’s nuclear weapons serve the

---

<sup>3</sup> It is worth noting that ‘Islamic’ and ‘Arab’ were interchangeable in the vast majority of commentary on this topic. In almost all cases, the ‘Islamic world’ equated to the ‘Arab world’ and vice versa, putting the focus on the Middle East.

<sup>4</sup> Samina Yasmeen, ‘Is Pakistan’s Nuclear Bomb an Islamic Bomb?’, *Asian Studies Review*, 25:2 (June, 2001), 202.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*, 202-203.

<sup>6</sup> Aparna Pande, ‘Foreign Policy of an Ideological State: Islam in Pakistan’s International Relations’ (PhD diss., Boston University, 2010), xi.

<sup>7</sup> Khan, 97-98.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid*, 99.



Israeli state and not Judaism, Pakistan intended its quest for the atom bomb to serve the purposes of the Pakistani state.<sup>9</sup>

The Indian nuclear test coincided with changes in Pakistan catalysed by Bhutto's 'tilt' towards religious conservatism, a shift connected to his economic and security agendas. The Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) had acclaimed Pakistan as a leading Muslim state, and after the Indian explosion, Bhutto naturally turned for financial aid to the countries that had so recently elevated his country to a position of such esteem.<sup>10</sup> The move towards the increased significance of Islam in Pakistani political life re-invigorated domestic debate about Pakistani national identity, tying that identity to Islamic traditions rather than geography or ethnicity.

At this early stage, the Pakistani government exploited the bonds of faith in verbal attacks on India. In an announcement timed to coincide with Pakistani Independence Day on August 14, 1974, PAEC chief Munir Ahmad Khan outlined the test's religious dimensions:

The history of Muslims is full of instances which show that any threats to their existence brings out their inner strength of faith which unifies them and helps them surmount great difficulties. India's explosion was aimed at demoralizing us but it may serve as a jolt to awaken us from a long slumber so that we quickly summon and deploy all our moral, human, and material resources in defence of our country... It may also bring realization in other Muslim countries that India's ambitions extend far beyond the sub-continent and this threat to Pakistan is also a threat to them.<sup>11</sup>

Here Pakistan's senior atomic scientist—a man cognisant of the drive for the bomb—explicitly Islamised the nuclear issue to elicit Muslim support. Although Washington and London made little of this rhetoric at the time, Bhutto and Zia echoed such statements through the years. From prison, Bhutto had claimed that Pakistan was near to a nuclear breakthrough, stating, “We know that Israel and South Africa have full nuclear capability. The Christian, Jewish, and Hindu civilizations have this capability. The communist powers also possess it. Only the Islamic civilization was without it, but that position was about to change.”<sup>12</sup>

---

<sup>9</sup> Pervez Hoodbhoy, 'Myth Building: The "Islamic Bomb,"' *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* (June, 1993), 44-45.

<sup>10</sup> Haqqani, 107-108.

<sup>11</sup> Munir Ahmad Khan, 'Challenge and Response,' August 14, 1974, TNA FCO66/664, 1-2.

<sup>12</sup> Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, *If I Am Assassinated*, [www.bhutto.org/books-english.php](http://www.bhutto.org/books-english.php) (accessed on May 1, 2013), 151, originally published by Vikas Press, New Delhi, 1979. It is, however, significant that from 1972-77, Bhutto made no mention whatsoever of the Islamic dimensions of the Pakistani nuclear programme (Kapur, 181).

As discussed in Chapter Four, during 1978, Zia had publicly linked nuclear technology and Islamic faith, stating, “[T]he Jews have got it. Then why should Pakistan, which is considered part of the Muslim world, be deprived of this technology,” and, “No Muslim country has any [nuclear weapons]. If Pakistan possesses such a weapon it would reinforce the power of the Muslim world,” a comment that featured in the late-1978 American and British diplomatic offensives.<sup>13</sup> Religious leaders, emboldened by Zia’s policies, also entered the fray. Conservative cleric Maulana Mufti Mahmood spoke in “terms which left no doubt that he was referring [positively] to nuclear weapons (for Pakistan and the Muslim world.)”<sup>14</sup> The visit of Gaddafi’s right hand man Abdessalam Jalloud to Islamabad in mid-August prompted diplomatic comment on the potential for a Pakistani-Libyan nuclear alliance and, should the French deal be cancelled, cooperation in building a reprocessing plant.<sup>15</sup> Dread of Libyan-Pakistani nuclear cooperation was the foundation of much of the media furore surrounding the ‘Islamic bomb.’

Before 1979, the ‘Islamic bomb’ was absent from the Western media. The Iranian revolution of February 1979—a popular uprising that caught the Carter administration completely off-guard and drove the Shah, America’s staunchest ally in the Islamic Middle East, from power—dramatically brought to Western public attention a new form of political, puritanical Islamic radicalism. While sometimes characterised as anti-modern, Ayatollah Khomeini’s new republic was by no means anti-technology. Khomeini repeatedly emphasised that Muslims had to improve their access to technology and harness science in the service of Islam.<sup>16</sup> The later hostage crisis also negatively influenced the American public’s perceptions of Islam.<sup>17</sup> It was in this atmosphere—where Islam appeared to be growing in power—that the ‘Islamic bomb’ surfaced. Driven by Pakistani rhetoric and media revelations about the nuclear programme, Israeli and Indian pressure, and increased militancy in the

---

<sup>13</sup> Burdess to Wilmshurst, ‘Pakistan: Reprocessing Plant,’ May 15, 1978, TNA FCO96/822, 1; USE Islamabad to State, ‘Nuclear Reprocessing’, August 6, 1978, USPQB, Doc.11.

<sup>14</sup> Burdess to Candlish, ‘Pakistan Public and Political Attitudes to reprocessing and “The Bomb”,’ July 23, 1978, TNA FCO96/823.

<sup>15</sup> Islamabad to FCO, ‘Further Visit of Libyan Vice-President to Pakistan: 15-17 August,’ August 17, 1978, TNA FCO96/823.

<sup>16</sup> Westad, 295-296.

<sup>17</sup> Kambiz GhaneaBassiri, *A History of Islam in America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 303; Gerges, 7-8.

Islamic world, 1979 saw the fear of Islamic nuclear weapons become a key component of public debate on Pakistani atomic aspirations.

The exposure of the 'Khan Affair' thrust the 'Islamic bomb' into the Western consciousness. In late March, the West German *Zweites Deutsches Fernsehen* (ZDF) television channel highlighted security failings going back to 1975 at the British-Dutch-German Urenco uranium enrichment facility in the Netherlands and speculated on the situation's Muslim aspects. The documentary highlighted A.Q. Khan's theft of centrifuge secrets from Urenco, weaving together the Islamic issue and Western efforts to disrupt the Pakistani nuclear programme into a web of speculation and recrimination.<sup>18</sup> The ZDF broadcast subscribed to the notion that "radical Arab countries," like Libya "whose hatred of Israel and all those who desire peace in the Middle East is well known" financed Pakistan.<sup>19</sup>

From the ZDF programme onwards, the 'Islamic bomb' became a significant trope in the media and the commentary of non-governmental, peripheral political figures such as British MPs. The *New York Times* and *Washington Post* repeatedly placed the Pakistani programme within a pan-Islamic context.<sup>20</sup> By June, broadcaster Walter Cronkite introduced a CBS report on 'The Pakistani-Islamic Bomb' that painted an apocalyptic picture of Middle Eastern nuclear warfare. From the outset, reporter Bill McLaughlin assumed that bonds of faith would cause Pakistan to share its nuclear technology, claiming that Libya financed the Pakistani bomb programme.<sup>21</sup> "Reliable" informants proffered information that led McLaughlin to contend that the Islamic world sought nuclear weapons for violent ends: "Libya wants it [a Pakistani nuclear weapon] to be the nuclear sword of the Moslem world. And Pakistan not only has close relations with Libya, it is also deeply committed to the Palestine Liberation Organisation."<sup>22</sup> The Pakistani Embassy in Washington responded

---

<sup>18</sup> 'Pakistan: Nuclear,' April 2, 1979, TNA FCO96/950; Translated transcript of ZDF broadcast, appended to Carter to Granger, 'Pakistan,' April 20, 1979, TNA FCO 37/2203.

<sup>19</sup> Translated transcript of ZDF broadcast April 20, 1979, 2-3.

<sup>20</sup> Peter Nieswand, 'Pakistan Denies it is developing Nuclear Arms,' *WP*, April 9, 1979, front page; David Binder, 'How Pakistan Ran the Nuke Round the End,' *NYT*, April 29, 1979, E5; Don Oberdorfer, 'Arms Sales to Pakistan Urged to Stave Off A-Bomb There,' *WP*, August 6, 1979, A7; Don Oberdorfer, 'Pakistan: The Quest for Atomic Bomb [sic],' *WP*, August 27, 1979, A1.

<sup>21</sup> Transcript of CBS Evening News, 'Special Report on the Pakistani-Islamic Bomb, part 1,' broadcast June 11, 1979, TNA FCO96/956, 3.

<sup>22</sup> Transcript of CBS Evening News, 'Special Report on the Pakistani-Islamic Bomb, part 2,' broadcast June 12, 1979, TNA FCO96/956, 2.

furiously to CBS's narrative, disavowing the Libyan connection.<sup>23</sup> Nuclear experts on both sides of the Atlantic concluded that McLaughlin's "intelligence sources" were quite likely Israeli.<sup>24</sup>

June was a fruitful month for speculation. In Britain, the *Guardian* ran multiple stories on the Pakistan programme and the Khan imbroglio, unquestioningly referencing an 'Islamic bomb' and claiming that Pakistan was not just developing an atomic bomb, but was working on thermonuclear weapons.<sup>25</sup> The publicity surrounding the Khan Affair prompted MPs to ask awkward questions in parliament. Leo Abse, Frank Allaun, Bob Cryer, Jim Marshall, David Stoddart, and Dalyell—all from the Labour Party—queried British involvement in the scandal and British approaches to the Pakistani problem.<sup>26</sup> Most vocal initially was Abse, who quizzed Margaret Thatcher, asking the new Prime Minister if she was aware that the Khan Affair had brought the possibility of an "Islamic bomb"—a bomb that would subvert the Western position with Middle Eastern oil producers—that much closer?<sup>27</sup> Thatcher was silent regarding Islamic nuclear weapons posing a threat to the power of the Western world. More publicity then came from an unexpected source. The magazine *8 Days*, published in London, funded by the Emirati ambassador, and distributed around the Middle East and South Asia, published a lengthy article on Khan. Correct in some respects, inaccurate in others, it concluded with more unquestioning comment on the Pakistani bomb's pan-Islamic nature.<sup>28</sup>

Pakistani protestations about their intentions did little to curtail speculation. Having utilised 'Islamic bomb' language throughout 1978, senior figures in Islamabad recognised their rhetoric's danger in the febrile, post-Iranian revolution environment where Western nations feared the Muslim world. Officials denied that the now implicitly admitted nuclear programme was anything other than an enterprise created by and for the Pakistani state.

---

<sup>23</sup> Embassy of Pakistan, Washington D.C., Press Release, June 13, 1979, TNA FCO96/956, 1.

<sup>24</sup> Pakenham to Alston, 'Nuclear Pakistan,' June 25, 1979, TNA FCO37/2206.

<sup>25</sup> Inder Malhotra, 'Zia uninterested in N-weapons, says Desai,' *TG*, June 22, 1979, 6; Brendan Boyle, 'Dutch step up inquiry after security slip which 'gave hydrogen bomb to Pakistan,' *TG*, June 22, 1979, 6; Michael Morris, 'Security breach 'cover-up' at uranium plant,' *TG*, June 29, 1979, 3.

<sup>26</sup> Boyle, 'Dutch step up inquiry,' June 22, 1979; Morris, 'Security breach 'cover up',' June 29, 1979.

<sup>27</sup> Leo Abse, House of Commons Debate, July 3, 1979, *Hansard Online* [hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1979/jul/03/tokyo-summit-meeting#S5CV0969P0\\_19790703\\_HOC\\_223](https://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1979/jul/03/tokyo-summit-meeting#S5CV0969P0_19790703_HOC_223) (accessed May10, 2013).

<sup>28</sup> Anon., 'How Pakistan Fooled the World and Got the Bomb,' *8 Days*, June 23, 1979, 13.

Interviewed by the BBC, Zia cryptically commented, “It does not mean that Pakistan one day will make a bomb and it will fly it off [sic] in an umbrella to its Arab friends and say here is the bomb, now throw it down the drain. How can that be done?”<sup>29</sup> The CBS report and the *8 Days* article infuriated Agha Shahi, who contended that the media commentary was part of a campaign against Pakistan, repudiating connections between the Islamic world and the nuclear programme.<sup>30</sup> This was followed by an editorial in the semi-official *Pakistan Times* railing against the ‘Islamic bomb’ as a “Western created myth” that was “part of the process of rallying the non-Islamic world against the Islamic people.”<sup>31</sup> Zia, Shahi, and the Pakistani media were unwilling to recognise that it was their rhetoric—and that of Bhutto—that gave birth to the ‘Islamic bomb’ and initiated the media frenzy.

As summer turned to autumn, the press continued to posit a trans-Islamic nuclear project centred on Pakistan. American journalist Don Oberdorfer buried Carter administration statements on the lack of evidence for an ‘Islamic bomb’ at the tail end of an article on Congressional disquiet about the Pakistan situation.<sup>32</sup> Sunanda Datta-Ray, reporting from Calcutta for the *Guardian*, referenced the “intense speculation about the imminence of the Libyan financed ‘Islamic bomb’.”<sup>33</sup> A subsequent article on British links to the clandestine Pakistani purchasing programme ignored official comment about the ‘Islamic bomb’s’ speculative nature and once more suggested Libyan financing for the project.<sup>34</sup> In India, D.K. Palit and P.K.S. Namboodiri published *Pakistan’s Islamic Bomb*, arguing Pakistan was indeed engaged in a nuclear project with a pan-Islamic dimension.<sup>35</sup> FCO analysts regarded the book—which received considerable attention in India—as hawkish and intended as a “wake-up call” for the Indian government.<sup>36</sup> In reality, the book contributed nothing new to

---

<sup>29</sup> Michael Charlton, Interview with Mohammad Zia ul-Haq, Transcript, June 21, 1979, TNA FCO96/955, 1.

<sup>30</sup> UKE Islamabad to FCO, ‘Pakistan Nuclear,’ July 2, 1979, TNA FCO96/956, 1.

<sup>31</sup> UKE Islamabad to FCO, ‘Pakistan Nuclear: Agha Shahi’s Press Briefing,’ July 2, 1979, TNA FCO96/956, 2-3.

<sup>32</sup> Don Oberdorfer, ‘Arms sales to Pakistan Urged to Stave Off A-Bomb There,’ *WP*, April 6, 1979, A7.

<sup>33</sup> Sunanda Datta-Ray, ‘Pie in the nuclear sky may save Charan Singh,’ *TG*, August 19, 1979, 7.

<sup>34</sup> Malcolm Stuart, ‘Pakistan bomb link denied,’ *TG*, August 23, 1979, 3.

<sup>35</sup> D K Palit and P K S Namboodiri, *Pakistan’s Islamic Bomb* (New Delhi; Vikas Press, 1979).

<sup>36</sup> Manning to Carter, “‘Pakistan’s Islamic Bomb’,” July 20, 1979, TNA FCO37/2206.

the debate, offering no proof of Arab funding for the Pakistani programme and leaving the project's Islamic nature implicit.<sup>37</sup>

On 9 December, the *Observer* published an article on A.Q. Khan that firmly tied together Pakistani nuclear ambitions, Islam, and the clandestine programme. 'How Dr Khan Stole the Bomb For Islam,' written by Colin Smith and his Indian colleague Shyam Bhatia, followed up on mid-year stories alleging British links to the Pakistani nuclear programme.<sup>38</sup> Smith and Bhatia amplified this a week later with an article—'Atoms for War'—considering the wider implications of nuclear proliferation, again reflecting on the Islamic dimension.<sup>39</sup> The 'Dr Khan' and 'Atoms for War' articles inspired Dalyell to raise the matter in parliament.<sup>40</sup> After pointing towards a "potential world holocaust" originating in the Arab world or Asia, he outlined his "dream of nightmare proportions," in which Islamic solidarity was the root of nuclear proliferation in an unreliable, irrational Muslim world.<sup>41</sup> Dalyell's speech symbolised how embedded the notion of the 'Islamic bomb' had become when the media and peripheral political figures discussed the interactions between nuclear technology and the Islamic world.

Public comment on the 'Islamic bomb'—from Oberdorfer's reports, to Smith and Bhatia's exposés, to Dalyell's histrionics—tended towards the orientalist and alarmist. As the Islamic nuclear issue was developing, Edward Said published the landmark *Orientalism*. Although scholars have debated Said's at-times ahistorical observations and conclusions ever since, his thoughts on media images of Islam are apposite when considering the 'Islamic bomb.'<sup>42</sup> "Lurking behind all these images," he argues, "is the menace of *jihad*. Consequence: a fear

---

<sup>37</sup> UKE Islamabad to FCO, 'Pakistan's Islamic Bomb: An Indian Survey,' August 1, 1979, TNA FCO37/2206.

<sup>38</sup> Colin Smith and Shyam Bhatia, 'How Dr Khan Stole the Bomb for Islam,' *The Observer* (hereafter *TO*), December 9, 1979, 11. Khan penned an abusive letter to Donald Trelford, editor of the *The Observer*, castigating Bhatia as a "Hindu bastard" who could not "differentiate between the mouth and the back hole of a donkey." Trelford did not publish the letter, which is reproduced at [www.rediff.com/news/2004/feb/11spec1.htm](http://www.rediff.com/news/2004/feb/11spec1.htm) (accessed August 26, 2013).

<sup>39</sup> Smith and Bhatia, 'Atoms for War,' *TO*, December 16, 1979, 12.

<sup>40</sup> Judith Judd, 'MPs to debate atom bomb revelations,' *TO*, December 16, 1979, 1; Marion Donhoff, 'MP Praises Observer,' *TO*, December 23, 1979, 14.

<sup>41</sup> Dalyell, House of Commons, 18 December, 1979.

<sup>42</sup> Andrew J Rotter provides a useful dissection of this aspect of Said's work in 'Saidism Without Said: Orientalism and U.S. Diplomatic History,' *The American Historical Review*, 105:4 (October, 2000), 1207-1210.

that Muslims (or Arabs) will take over the world.”<sup>43</sup> Fear did lie behind public discussion of the Islamic bomb: fear of Middle Eastern nuclear war and more modest—but still significant—fears of changes in the balance of power between the Muslim world and the West. As sociologist Jonathan Lyons notes, there is a “single, persistent Western discursive formation of violence in Islam that remains largely immune to serious challenge on historical, linguistic, and theological bases.”<sup>44</sup> Moreover, non-proliferation and the ‘Islamic bomb’ feed into the belief that developed nations have a monopoly over the legitimate use and technologies of violence.<sup>45</sup> Cultural anthropologist Hugh Gusterson comments that for decades, creators of foreign policy and public opinion saw the spread of nuclear weapons to the Islamic world as particularly dangerous.<sup>46</sup> In the case of Pakistan in the 1970s, both Gusterson and Lyons are correct in their assessment of public discourses, but as the documentary evidence demonstrates, the policymakers of the 1970s were far less influenced by fear of pan-Islamic proliferation. As this study shows, the ‘Islamic bomb’ was—for policymakers—a problem of propaganda rather than an imminent reality.

Reporting on the ‘Islamic bomb’ also formed part of a continuum of proliferation alarmism extending back to 1945. For decades, governmental, scientific, military, and media figures had made dire predictions about the spread of nuclear weapons. At the core of this was the notion a ‘proliferation cascade,’ an unstoppable chain reaction of new nuclear states emerging after an ‘Nth country’ had achieved nuclear capability.<sup>47</sup> The ‘cascadologists’ feared that an ‘Nth country’ acquiring nuclear weapons would threaten the national security of other nations, thereby leading to a domino effect. Fears surrounding the ‘Islamic bomb’ were of a different stripe. This was not a potential cascade based on national security or even the ‘prestige’ of being a nuclear state. It was a cascade based solely on the perception that sharing a common (and poorly understood) religion meant that one country achieving nuclear status would lead to an automatic, and willing, spread of that status.

---

<sup>43</sup> Edward Said, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin, 2003), 287.

<sup>44</sup> Jonathan Lyons, *Islam Through Western Eyes: From the Crusades to the War on Terrorism* (New York, NY; Columbia University Press, 2012), 124.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 112.

<sup>46</sup> Gusterson, 112.

<sup>47</sup> Mueller, 89-91.

### **The ‘Islamic bomb’ Behind Closed Doors**

Many works on America, Britain, and the ‘Islamic bomb’ misunderstand how policymakers comprehended and interpreted Pakistani rhetoric. The ‘Islamic bomb’ *was* present in discussions of the Pakistani nuclear programme, but understandings were frequently more nuanced than in public discourses. There may indeed have been anti-Muslim, even racist, sentiments present in policymakers’ minds, but the available evidence does not show that this influenced policy to any significant degree. There was never any concrete evidence of an ‘Islamic bomb,’ but the idea provoked deliberation and discussion about how to deal with the publicity it created. There were policymakers on both sides of the Atlantic who at times placed greater emphasis on the possibility of an ‘Islamic bomb.’ However, both the American and British governments recognised that there was little—if any—hard intelligence or evidence to back-up assertions of a Pakistani desire to equip its co-religionists with nuclear weapons.

While the ‘Islamic bomb’ became embedded in the media coverage of Pakistan, nuclear weapons, and the Middle East, policymakers in Washington and London sought to cut through the speculation, despite the increased pressure that the Islamic issue and the Pakistani purchasing programme put on non-proliferation policy. Islam had been a thread running through British and American assessments of Pakistan’s nuclear ambitions since 1974. FCO analysts suggested eleven days after the Indian detonation that Pakistan may seek firmer links with “Iran and the Arab states,” a natural move for Islamabad given Pakistan’s troubled history with India and known links with friendly Islamic states.<sup>48</sup> The British Embassy in Islamabad opined that there was mounting domestic pressure from harder-line religious elements—such as the Jamaat-e-Islami (JI)—to pursue a nuclear option.<sup>49</sup> Furthermore, senior diplomatic officers thought that Pakistan might well seek to put pressure on India through its OIC ties.<sup>50</sup> The most direct connection between a Pakistani nuclear programme and the Muslim world came from an FCO SAD assessment produced two weeks after the Indian explosion. In the midst of an analysis of the test’s impact, SAD commented:

---

<sup>48</sup> Seaward to Wilford, ‘Implications of the Indian Nuclear Test,’ May 29, 1974, TNA FCO66/654, 5.

<sup>49</sup> The JI (literally ‘Islamic Party’) was a socially conservative, religious political party that campaigned for governance according to Islamic principles.

<sup>50</sup> Imray to Drew, ‘Pakistani Reactions to the Indian Nuclear Test,’ May 29, 1974, TNA FCO66/663, 1.



In order to minimise the real cost for Pakistan and also to increase the Arab commitment to him [Bhutto] he would almost certainly seek substantial financial assistance from the Middle East oil producers. Indeed he might even endeavour to involve them in some kind of nuclear partnership. A development of this kind in the already potentially explosive situation in the Middle East, particularly with its anti-Soviet undertones, would produce its own dangers.<sup>51</sup>

In the years after the Indian test, Islam popped up in various contexts. In a meeting with Henry Kissinger in late 1975, the Indian ambassador to the United States Triloki Nath Kaul pointed out the rising danger of pan-Islamism. Kissinger's response was illuminating: "We may become allies yet."<sup>52</sup> In 1977, British officials had noted discussion of the reprocessing plant as a potentially pan-Islamic facility. The *Pakistan Times* had asserted Pakistan's willingness to assist Muslim countries in acquiring nuclear technology, but Robin Fearn at the British Embassy in Islamabad noted, "it is a theme which may be developed as a factor in US hostility to Pakistan's acquisition of the plant." However, reflecting on the significance of potential pan-Islamic proliferation, he suggested, "Perhaps it need not be taken too seriously."<sup>53</sup> French consular staff in Islamabad thought the same, indicating to their British counterparts that there was no evidence that the Muslim world attached *any* significance to the reprocessing plant as an "Islamic facility" and the entire *raison d'être* of the plant was to retain the nuclear weapons option for Pakistan in the hope of gaining parity with India.<sup>54</sup> American intelligence suggested Muslim nations had promised aid for the nuclear programme, Pakistan having apparently convinced the quite disparate Islamic states of Saudi Arabia and Libya that "the Muslim world must no longer suffer the humiliation of being second class citizens in a nuclear age."<sup>55</sup> At a joint meeting in Washington at the end of 1977, American and British delegates agreed that under Zia, Pakistan was looking increasingly towards the Islamic world for support.<sup>56</sup>

---

<sup>51</sup> Chalmers to Male, 'Indian Nuclear Explosion,' June 3, 1974, TNA FCO66/654, 5.

<sup>52</sup> Memcon, 'Meeting With Foreign Minister Chavan,' October 7, 1975, *FRUS* 69-76, Vol.E8, Doc.214.

<sup>53</sup> Fearn to Carberry, 'Pakistan: Nuclear Reprocessing Plant,' June 24, 1977, TNA FCO37/2066, 1-2.

<sup>54</sup> Burdess to Wilmshurst, 'Pakistan Nuclear Affairs—The Reprocessing Plant,' November 14, 1977, TNA FCO96/728, 1.

<sup>55</sup> 'Notes on Proliferation—Global Highlights,' November 10, 1977, JCPL, RAC NLC-28-63-3-16-2.

<sup>56</sup> 'Record of a Meeting Held at the State Department at 11.30 on 2 December 1977,' December 6, 1977, TNA FCO96/728, 3.

During 1978, Zia's rhetoric about "reinforcing the power of the Muslim world" and Bhutto's death-cell testimony about the imminence of Pakistani nuclear capability were debated in multilateral gatherings (for example, at the G7 summit in Bonn). However, as Warren Christopher's diplomatic cables in late 1978 demonstrate, those making non-proliferation policy placed no credence in the blustery rhetoric emanating from Islamabad. Despite senior figures such as Arthur Hummel arguing that Zia's comments were nothing more than a "gaffe," the Pakistani leader's remarks truly laid the groundwork for the much more wide-ranging public and private debates about the spread of nuclear weapons in the Islamic world that emerged in 1979.

For American and British officials in 1979, the 'Islamic bomb' featured prominently in the months before it became a major public issue. Visiting London, Jack Mikloss (Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for the Near East & South Asia) and Paul Kreisberg (of the Bureau of Political-Military Affairs) suggested that Pakistan had "offered to be the supplier of nuclear weapons to the Arab world." They saw this as explaining perceived Pakistani casualness about the risks of American pressure.<sup>57</sup> Arthur Hummel echoed these beliefs, suggesting that Pakistan might use future nuclear capability to win financial support from "Arab oil producers."<sup>58</sup> Missives from the British Embassy in Islamabad mirrored this worry, arguing an American embargo's impact on the Pakistani economy might be minimal "if accounts of Arab backing for Pakistan's nuclear programme are correct." In such a case, the Symington Amendment's invocation and an embargo on aid would only move Pakistan closer towards the Islamic world, rather than reducing nuclear ambitions.<sup>59</sup> Although a Pakistani move towards closer alliance with the Islamic world was not a signifier of a desire to spread the 'Islamic bomb,' this created a paradoxical point in policymakers' minds: by taking action to head off the 'Islamic bomb,' the US might increase the chances of Pakistan moving further away from the West.

---

<sup>57</sup> 'Summary Record of a Meeting Held by Mr. H.A.H. Cortazzi, Commonwealth Office,' March 5, 1979, TNA FCO96/949, 3.

<sup>58</sup> Brzezinski to Carter, 'Daily Report,' March 1, 1979, JCPL, RAC NLC-1-9-8-12-0.

<sup>59</sup> UKE Islamabad to FCO, 'Pakistan: Economic Angles,' March 5, 1979, TNA FCO96/949.

For some American and British policymakers, public speculation about an ‘Islamic bomb’ provoked anxiety about Israeli, Islamic, and Indian opinion. Not only would a break in relations with Pakistan—viewed as a moderate Muslim state—adversely affect the similarly restrained Gulf states’ sentiments, there was apprehension about the ‘Islamic bomb’s’ impact on Israeli and Indian attitudes towards Pakistan.<sup>60</sup> Vance noted Anglo-American unanimity, stating, “We both share the same deep concern about the regional and international consequences of Pakistan developing a nuclear weapon, particularly in view of the ‘Islamic bomb’ aspect to the situation with regard to both Israel and India.”<sup>61</sup>

The ‘Islamic bomb’ idea had gained traction in India, where government officials vacillated over whether or not they believed that Pakistan was pursuing an Arab-financed ‘Islamic bomb.’<sup>62</sup> Unsurprisingly, given the long history of Indo-Pakistani tension and conflict, New Delhi frequently made much of the issue, arguing for the Islamic dimension’s centrality. However, Sir John Thomson (British High Commissioner to India) offered a more nuanced response suggesting that there might only be general, ephemeral support for the Pakistani nuclear programme amongst Muslim nations.<sup>63</sup> At the highest level, Jim Callaghan agreed with Prime Minister Moraji Desai that if there *were* evidence of Arab involvement in the Pakistani programme, this would make the situation much more serious, but Callaghan offered no evidence for the Muslim funding theory.<sup>64</sup> At this stage, American and British policymakers and diplomats recognised that the ‘Islamic bomb’ idea was a provocation, not a reality, prompting Israeli fears of a nuclear threat from the Islamic world and increasing long-standing Indo-Pakistani tension.

In bilateral Anglo-American discussions, shared concerns became apparent. John Bushell quizzed Hummel, who contended that sharing nuclear technology was the *quid pro quo* for Islamic support of the Pakistani programme. Hummel suspected that supporters

---

<sup>60</sup> ‘Pakistan and the Symington Amendment,’ March 17, 1979, NARA, RG59, Records of Warren Christopher, 1977-1980 (hereafter RWC), Box 56, Pakistan; Vance to Carter, ‘Nuclear Problems in the Sub-continent—Status Report,’ March 19, 1979, JCPL, RAC NLC-15-37-5-11-8.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> UKHC New Delhi to FCO, ‘Nuclear Developments,’ January 30, 1979, TNA FCO96/947; UKHC New Delhi to FCO, ‘Nuclear Developments,’ February 1, 1979, TNA FCO37/2200.

<sup>63</sup> UKHC New Delhi to FCO, ‘Pakistan: Nuclear Weapons programme,’ March 9, 1979, TNA FCO96/948.

<sup>64</sup> FCO to UKHC New Delhi, ‘India/Pakistan Nuclear,’ April 4, 1979, TNA FCO96/951.

included Libya, Saudi Arabia, and perhaps others.<sup>65</sup> Meeting with senior State Department officials in Washington, Anthony Parsons (Deputy Under-secretary at the FCO) observed that “events in Pakistan were one of the most horrifying developments since 1945,” and the possibility that Arab money might be available to Pakistan only added to the danger for the Middle East.<sup>66</sup> Parsons had never been one to shy away from fearful pronouncements about Islamic nuclear capability. “Pakistan is paranoid in its attitude towards India,” he wrote, “and I do not at all like the association between the Pakistani nuclear programme and Arab money (not proven but likely) in the present atmosphere prevailing in the Moslem world. It would not be difficult to construct a Nevil Shute type scenario out of all of this.”<sup>67</sup> However, the FCO thought it unlikely that Arab countries would knowingly fund the Pakistani nuclear programme, even though many Muslim states might be glad that a co-religionist had achieved nuclear capability.<sup>68</sup>

Although the FCO largely dismissed Parsons’ comments, his view—couched in terms of the Iranian Revolution and Middle East unrest—exposed an underlying fear of a violent, irrational Muslim world dragging the planet to a nuclear fate of the kind so vividly depicted in Shute’s bestselling 1957 novel *On The Beach* (and its 1959 film adaptation).<sup>69</sup> Shute’s representation of an atomic apocalypse had galvanized readers and reviewers alike and it had—in the intervening years—become the iconic image illustrating a nuclear end of the world.<sup>70</sup> Parsons’ comments—that made the spread of nuclear weapons to the Islamic world the most shattering, apocalyptic change since the creation of the atomic bomb—could be taken as illustrative of ‘Islamic bomb’ fears in government. However, his argument’s main thrust was that Pakistan was an unstable, paranoid state with a deeply unsatisfactory government.<sup>71</sup> Parsons’ statements, whilst expressing fear of Muslim nuclear weapons, were

---

<sup>65</sup> USE Islamabad to State, ‘Nuclear Aspects of DepSec Visit Discussed With UK and French Ambassadors,’ March 7, 1979, USPQB, Doc.26A, 2-3.

<sup>66</sup> ‘Record of a Discussion in the State Department,’ March 16, 1979, TNA FCO96/950, 1.

<sup>67</sup> ‘India, Pakistan and Nuclear Weapons,’ March 8, 1979, TNA FCO96/950.

<sup>68</sup> ‘Pakistan’s Military Nuclear Programme: Pressures and Inducements,’ March 23, 1979, TNA CAB130/1073.

<sup>69</sup> Paul Boyer, ‘From Activism to Apathy: The American People and Nuclear Weapons, 1963–1980,’ *The Journal of American History*, 70:4 (March, 1984), 823.

<sup>70</sup> Daniel Cordle, ‘Beyond the apocalypse of closure: nuclear anxiety in the postmodern literature of the United States,’ in Andrew Hammond (ed.), *Cold War Literature: Writing the Global Conflict* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2006), 75fn7.

<sup>71</sup> ‘Record of a Discussion in the State Department,’ March 16, 1979, TNA FCO96/950, 1.

more deeply founded in classically Western concerns about ‘irrational’ and ‘unstable’ oriental peoples and rulers. The concerns expressed by Parsons did, however, have a genuine basis in fact. Pakistan *did* have an extremely troubled and volatile political history, with extended periods of military rule and martial law.

Carter’s roving non-proliferation ambassador Gerard Smith also thought that Pakistan was “secretly transgressing norms” of nuclear behaviour adhered to by most states. Smith was also fearful about the prospects for the Middle East, noting that if a “Moslem bomb” was a genuine threat, the Israeli reaction must be considered. Nuclear weapons in the Middle East and South Asia required much wider deliberation if the ‘Islamic bomb’ were “on the cards.”<sup>72</sup> State Department officials thought that this aspect posed a serious threat to US national interests in the Middle East and Persian Gulf, with Pakistan moving “more towards the militant Islamic camp.”<sup>73</sup>

Despite the apocalyptic visions of some individuals, at this stage policymakers on both sides of the Atlantic saw the ‘Islamic bomb’ paradigm as provocative, rather than a genuine threat. The most worrying aspects were the potential reactions of Israel and India, the two states who felt most threatened by, respectively, the Islamic world and Pakistan specifically. The consensus was that although it was a worrying idea, no one could offer any hard evidence that the ‘Islamic bomb’ was about to become a reality.

While the ‘Islamic bomb’ remained pure speculation, harder evidence of clandestine Pakistani efforts to acquire the necessary components for uranium enrichment facilities continued to emerge. From the British perspective, this purchasing pattern required urgent and determined action.<sup>74</sup> The US government had similar fears, acknowledging that enrichment was now the core of the Pakistani bomb effort and could lead to a potential derailment of US-Pakistani relations by triggering the Symington Amendment.<sup>75</sup> However, non-proliferation policy came into conflict with human rights and regional security policies. Furthermore, a non-proliferationist Congress created problems for the administration and

---

<sup>72</sup> Ibid, 5.

<sup>73</sup> ‘PRC Paper on South Asia,’ March 23, 1979, USPQB, Doc.32A.

<sup>74</sup> Carter [FCO] to Thomson, ‘Pakistan: Nuclear Weapons Intentions,’ January 5, 1979, TNA FCO96/947.

<sup>75</sup> Memorandum for Brzezinski, January 30, 1979, JCPL, RAC NLC-10-18-2-27-0; UKE Washington to FCO, ‘Pakistan Nuclear Developments,’ January 27, 1979, TNA FCO96/947.

Zia's stonewalling turned promising avenues into blind alleys. Finally, within the Carter administration, there was confusion over the formulation and implementation of policy.

In Whitehall, GEN 74 pondered the timescale for Pakistan achieving nuclear capability. According to experts, Pakistan could produce weapons-grade uranium using the stolen centrifuge designs by 1982 at the earliest, although 1984-85 was more likely. The main constraint on Pakistani efforts was the requirement for precision-made 'bellows' for the enrichment cascades.<sup>76</sup> British customs officials had stopped a shipment of bellows from Ireland and were pushing the Irish government to prevent further exports.<sup>77</sup> French investigations discovered that the Pakistanis had contracted the engineering firm Calorstat to provide the same equipment. London and Washington shared anxieties about the purchasing effort and submitted diplomatic representations to the French government.<sup>78</sup> This new evidence resulted in British ministers once again tightening export controls and seeking "pressures and inducements" to dissuade Pakistan.<sup>79</sup>

By March, intelligence on Pakistani purchasing was flooding in to Washington and London. The State Department attempted to influence the Swiss government when it became apparent that multiple Swiss firms were supplying components to Pakistan.<sup>80</sup> Bern was reluctant to act, offering only vague assurances to talk with the companies concerned.<sup>81</sup> America also pressured the FRG when reports suggested that multiple West German companies were involved in supplying components.<sup>82</sup> In light of this, the US and UK continued their close cooperation in attempting to shut down the purchasing networks. For the Carter administration, the situation was becoming increasingly difficult as mounting evidence of Pakistani intentions made it impossible to prevent the Symington Amendment's invocation.

---

<sup>76</sup> GEN 74, 'Pakistan: Possible Timing of a Nuclear Explosion,' February 27, 1979, TNA CAB130/1073, 1-2. This is the first British document in which Khan is named.

<sup>77</sup> 'Pakistan: Nuclear Weapons Development Programme,' February 23, 1979, TNA FCO96/948.

<sup>78</sup> FCO to UKE Paris, 'Pakistan: Nuclear Weapons Development,' March 1, 1979, TNA FCO96/948; Macrae to Alston, 'Pakistan: Nuclear Weapons Development,' March 8, 1979, TNA FCO96/949.

<sup>79</sup> GEN 74, 'Pakistan's Nuclear Intentions,' February 27, 1979, TNA CAB130/1073.

<sup>80</sup> State to USE Bern, 'US-Swiss Discussions on Pakistan Nuclear programs,' March 6, 1979, JCPL, RAC NLC-16-115-5-25-5.

<sup>81</sup> UKE Bern to FCO, 'Pakistan Nuclear Weapons Development,' March 9, 1979, TNA FCO96/949.

<sup>82</sup> State to USE Bonn, 'Pakistani Nuclear Program,' March 6, 1979, JCPL, RAC NLC-16-115-5-26-4.

The US government faced contradictory needs: to force the Pakistanis to abandon their nuclear aspirations, while preserving relations in a strategically significant region.<sup>83</sup> Here, non-proliferation policy and Cold War imperatives collided as détente crumbled. The Iranian Revolution had destroyed the US alliance with Tehran just as it appeared that the Soviets were involving themselves more deeply in neighbouring Afghanistan. However, Pakistan was not simply seen as a bastion of US regional influence, but it was also a potentially significant part of wider Cold War arms control. The ‘Tackman’ radar stations in Iran that had monitored the Soviet missile test range at Tyuratam had been lost because of the revolution, and required replacing with new sites. The most obvious location for these was in Pakistan.<sup>84</sup> A harsh non-proliferation policy risked driving Pakistan away from the US, striking a further blow to US regional influence *and* superpower arms control.

The Carter administration faced a wave of intelligence and publicity that made the Symington Amendment’s imposition a certainty. January to March saw numerous efforts aimed at retarding the imposition by engaging with Zia’s government. The State Department viewed the problem as one of regional security and stability: with the situation in Iran, a rupture with Pakistan could pose serious regional problems for the US.<sup>85</sup> The elite, multi-agency Policy Review Committee (PRC) agreed to delay the Symington Amendment’s imposition on the grounds of the on-going diplomatic efforts and Pakistan’s critical regional importance.<sup>86</sup> Hummel had confronted Zia with intelligence about the nuclear programme and the Pakistani president responded angrily, offering inspection rights to any nuclear facility in Pakistan as proof of his peaceful intentions.<sup>87</sup> The administration seized upon this opportunity, as it usefully demonstrated to Congress the correctness of resisting the Symington Amendment’s application.<sup>88</sup> In the end, Zia dashed hopes for inspections when—

---

<sup>83</sup> ‘Policy Review Committee Meeting,’ March 9, 1979, JCPL, RAC NLC-132-73-6-5-3, 2; On the strategic significance, see Clausen, 148.

<sup>84</sup> Rhodri Jeffreys-Jones, *The CIA and American Democracy*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003), 221; Kux, *Disenchanted Allies*, 241

<sup>85</sup> Saunders and Pickering to Newsom, ‘Mini-PRC Meeting on the Pakistan Nuclear Problem,’ January 20, 1979, USPQB, Doc.23A, 2.

<sup>86</sup> ‘Summary of Conclusions: Mini-PRC on Nuclear Matters,’ January 22, 1979, JCPL, RAC 24-102-7-4-1, 2.

<sup>87</sup> Kux, *Disenchanted Allies*, 236.

<sup>88</sup> Memorandum, January 30, 1979, JCPL, RAC NLC-128-9-16-7-6, 2; ‘Call on Mr P H Moberly by Mr T Pickering,’ February 26, 1979, TNA FCO37/2200, 1; UKE Washington to FCO, ‘Indo-US Relations: Sino/Pakistan and Nuclear Dimensions,’ February 21, 1979, TNA FCO96/948, 3-4.

unmoved by warnings about US legislation—the Pakistani leader informed Warren Christopher that he would not permit scrutiny of nuclear facilities and refused to rule out a “peaceful” nuclear test.<sup>89</sup>

The growing publicity attendant upon Pakistani ambitions highlighted the problematic nature of open US challenges to Zia’s government. In contrast to the ‘softly softly’ approach favoured by some State Department officials, Gerard Smith favoured a high profile, international campaign against the Pakistani bomb, echoing Anthony Parsons’ view that the situation posed the “sharpest challenge to the international structure since 1945.” Smith argued that when faced with an eroding global consensus against nuclear weapons, “[T]he prospect of ‘Moslem’ bombs is as likely as a German and Japanese bomb (consider what their jingos would make of these countries remaining 3d class powers.)”<sup>90</sup> The threat in Smith’s eyes was not the ‘Islamic bomb’, but the impact of Pakistani nuclear attainment on the international scene, leading to a cascade of key non-nuclears deciding to pursue the nuclear option. Smith argued that the current non-proliferation policy towards the subcontinent was too parochial and demanded that the situation be placed in a global context.<sup>91</sup> Realising that massive publicity about the Pakistani programme was inevitable, State Department non-proliferationists such as Pickering favoured the high-profile “sunshine approach,” placing the full glare of publicity on Pakistan, potentially turning international opinion against Islamabad.<sup>92</sup>

Zia’s intransigence, the Symington Amendment’s looming implementation, and the flow of information on the purchasing project led the State Department to scramble for a new policy. Hummel argued only a “bold initiative” would meet Pakistani security requirements and constrain nuclear ambitions.<sup>93</sup> Tom Pickering (Assistant Secretary of State for Oceans & International Environmental & Scientific Affairs) and Harold Saunders (Assistant Secretary of State for Near East Affairs) suggested such a “bold initiative,” an “audacious

---

<sup>89</sup> Vance to Carter, Memorandum, March 2, 1979, JCPL, RAC NLC-128-14-5-2-7, 2; Kux, *Disenchanted Allies*, 239.

<sup>90</sup> Smith to Christopher, ‘Memorandum to the Deputy Secretary,’ March 27, 1979, NARA, RG59, RWC, Box 56, Pakistan III, 1

<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

<sup>92</sup> ‘Record of a Discussion in the State Department,’ March 30, 1979, TNA FCO 96/951, 2-3.

<sup>93</sup> USE Islamabad to State, ‘Pakistan’s Nuclear Program: Hard Choices,’ March 5, 1979, NARA, RG59, RWC, Box 56, Pakistan II.



buy-off” comprised of extensive security assistance—consisting of arms sales and economic aid—aimed at assuaging Pakistani fears.<sup>94</sup> Additionally, they suggested, there could be exploration of an Indo-Pakistani agreement to neither build nor test nuclear weapons if assistance did not result in movement on the nuclear front. Pickering and Saunders also noted that, “The likelihood of an ‘Islamic bomb’ with its consequences in the Arab-Israeli dispute will increase Congressional concerns over anything we might propose doing for Pakistan.”<sup>95</sup> Here, Pickering and Saunders worried that the ‘Islamic bomb’ idea would cause increased consternation in an actively non-proliferationist Congress. However, the proposal never gained traction. Warren Christopher’s assistant Steve Oxman thought Pickering and Saunders were “dreaming” if they imagined the package would look like anything other than a bribe for Pakistan and if they believed Congress would permit such a package in the face of persuasive evidence of Pakistani nuclear ambitions.<sup>96</sup> The DoD and ACDA also opposed security assistance for Pakistan, lest it be mistaken for tacit approval of the nuclear programme.<sup>97</sup> Human-rights proponents in the State Department also rejected increased security assistance, protesting Zia’s imposition of Islamic punishments in Pakistan.<sup>98</sup>

The reaction to the Pickering-Saunders proposal highlighted the issues the Carter administration faced in dealing with Pakistan. The challenges of balancing non-proliferation, conventional arms control, and security assistance were becoming all too apparent. The Pickering-Saunders proposal did, in one sense, presage a sea change in administration policy towards Pakistan. Pickering and Saunders’ suggestion of exploring a non-test/non-production agreement between Pakistan and India would in time become a core element of administration strategy. This strategy eventually focused on the non-testing portion and—when Vance eventually articulated it in early June—moved policy from *prevention* to *mitigation* of Pakistani nuclear capability.

---

<sup>94</sup> Oxman to Christopher, Note, March 5, 1979, NARA, RG59, RWC, Box 56, Pakistan II.

<sup>95</sup> Saunders and Pickering to Vance, ‘A Strategy for Pakistan,’ March 5, 1979, NARA, RG59, RWC, Box 56, Pakistan II, 2.

<sup>96</sup> Handwritten marginalia, ‘A Strategy for Pakistan,’ March 5, 1979, 7.

<sup>97</sup> Slocombe to Lake, ‘FY-79 Security Assistance Supplemental,’ March 2, 1979, NARA, RG59, RAL, Box 5; Blechman to Lake, ‘1979 Security Assistance Supplemental,’ March 5, 1979, NARA, RG59, RAL, Box 5; Blechman to Gelb, ‘Paks Nobiscum?,’ January 26, 1979, NARA, RG59, RAL, Box 5, 3.

<sup>98</sup> Schneider to Newsom, et al, ‘FY ’79 Security Assistance Supplemental,’ March 5, 1979, NARA, RG59, RAL, Box 5, 2.

By early April, events were taking place that typified the tension between the various strands of Carter's overall foreign policy plaguing his time in office. There was strain between regional and global proliferation concerns. As Smith had noted at the end of March, the administration needed to think more widely about how Pakistan was affecting the global environment. Pakistani security was certainly a regional issue and non-proliferation was a global issue. Addressing one meant addressing the other, and vice versa. On April 6, 1979—two days after Bhutto's execution—Carter invoked the Symington Amendment, embargoing arms sales and aid to Pakistan because of mounting evidence of a uranium enrichment programme. The aid cut-off, coupled with the Khan Affair, created more headlines and antagonised a Pakistani political establishment already dealing with the violent domestic convulsions provoked by Bhutto's execution.<sup>99</sup> The Symington Amendment's implementation angered the Pakistanis. Islamabad was particularly aggrieved that the US had continued to supply nuclear fuel to the Indian reactor at Tarapur, an issue that was causing difficulties for the Indo-American relationship.<sup>100</sup> There was little enthusiasm in the Carter administration for the imposition of sanctions, as Pakistan would suffer little real harm from the withdrawal of bilateral economic aid. However, failure to publicly react to the blatant Pakistani activities would signal open acquiescence to Islamabad's nuclear ambitions and diminish US credibility on non-proliferation issues.<sup>101</sup>

At the same time as the Carter administration was grappling with the issue of non-proliferation credibility, the US print media, radio, and television extensively publicised the Khan Affair.<sup>102</sup> From the publicity, the FCO in London expected an onslaught against Britain, and readied briefings that defended British actions and said the absolute minimum about the Pakistani programme.<sup>103</sup> The story eventually broke wide open, publicised by the BBC, Swiss television, the *New York Times*, the *Daily Telegraph*, and many other news outlets

---

<sup>99</sup> Richard Burt, 'U.S. Aid to Pakistan Cut After Evidence of Atom Arms Plan,' *NYT*, April 7, 1979, 1; Don Oberdorfer, 'U.S. Cutting Aid to Pakistan in A-Facility Dispute,' *WP*, April 7, 1979, A1; Robert Trumbull, 'Pakistan Denies It Plans A-Bomb: Denounces Washington Aid Cutoff,' *NYT*, April 9, 1979, A1.

<sup>100</sup> For a perceptive analysis of the Tarapur issue during late 1978 and early 1979, see Perkovich, 218-219. For a succinct analysis of the problems posed by nuclear exports during the 1970s, see J.S. Walker, 'Nuclear Power and Nonproliferation.'

<sup>101</sup> Clausen, 147-148.

<sup>102</sup> UKE Washington to FCO, 'Pakistan Nuclear,' April 7, 1979, TNA FCO96/951, 1.

<sup>103</sup> Lavers to Baxter, 'Pakistan: Nuclear Weapons Programme,' April 6, 1979, TNA FCO96/951, 1-2.

which all followed the lead given by ZDF.<sup>104</sup> During the hard-fought British general election campaign of May 1979, the FCO attempted to deflect questions onto the Dutch and aligned Britain with American concerns about the enrichment programme.<sup>105</sup> On May 4, as it became clear Callaghan had lost the election, his government—pushed by Carter—made a final representation to the Pakistanis regarding British anxieties about the enrichment programme.<sup>106</sup> The changes taking place in British politics militated against a serious reception for the *démarche*. It later became evident that the Pakistanis had discounted the representation as the “dying whim of the outgoing government.”<sup>107</sup>

In the wake of April 6 and the Islamic element’s ever widening media prominence, the FCO placed little credence in the idea of a pan-Islamic nuclear capability originating in Pakistan. Egyptian diplomats expressed to their British counterparts anxiety about the swirling rumours regarding Libya, suspicious of Pakistani attempts to position themselves as suffering anti-Islamic discrimination.<sup>108</sup> Despite provocative Indian speculation that Pakistan’s sole nuclear desire was to produce an ‘Islamic bomb’ funded by Arab money, key FCO officials were unanimous in doubting the real or potential existence of an “Arab bomb.”<sup>109</sup> The JNU’s David Carter described evidence for this as “woefully thin.”<sup>110</sup>

Meanwhile, Islamabad responded to the Symington Amendment’s imposition by making the embargo a pan-Islamic issue. Agha Shahi argued that it was “discriminatory, based on false charges, and designed to keep nuclear power out of the hands of Muslim countries.”<sup>111</sup> Shahi contended that the restriction was the fault of a “Zionist lobby” and denied that Libya or *any* Islamic nation was funding the nuclear programme.<sup>112</sup> During this

---

<sup>104</sup> UKE Bern to FCO, ‘Pakistan Nuclear,’ May 3, 1979, TNA FCO96/953.

<sup>105</sup> Alston to Whyte, ‘Pakistan Nuclear,’ May 3, 1979, TNA FCO96/953, 2.

<sup>106</sup> FCO to UKE Islamabad, ‘Speaking Note,’ May 3, 1979, TNA FCO37/2203.

<sup>107</sup> FCO to UKE Islamabad, ‘Pakistan: Nuclear,’ June 4, 1979, TNA FCO37/2205.

<sup>108</sup> White to Holloway, ‘Pakistan/Afghanistan,’ April 17, 1979, TNA FCO96/952.

<sup>109</sup> UKHC New Delhi to FCO, ‘Pakistan,’ April 19, 1979, TNA FCO96/952, 1; Alston to White, ‘South Asia–Nuclear Issues,’ April 19, 1979, TNA FCO96/952, 1; Mallaby to Alston, ‘South Asia–Nuclear Issues,’ April 23, 1979, TNA FCO96/953, 1.

<sup>110</sup> Carter to Granger, ‘Pakistan,’ April 20, 1979, TNA FCO37/2203.

<sup>111</sup> White House Situation Room to Zbigniew Brzezinski, ‘Additional Information Items,’ April 10, 1979, JCPL, RAC NLC-1-10-3-25-9, 2.

<sup>112</sup> USE Islamabad to State, ‘GOP [Government of Pakistan] Reacts to US Aid Decision: More Political Leaders Attack US Move,’ April 9, 1979, RG59, RWC, Box 57, Pakistan.

tense period, State Department guidance for US consular officials emphasised the problem of regional and global proliferation and *not* religious affiliation:

Q: What would be the implications for the Middle East of what has been described as a “Muslim bomb” to balance the Israeli bomb?

A: As you know the Israelis have repeatedly stated in the past that they would not be the first to introduce nuclear weapons in the region. In our view, any proliferation of nuclear weapons anywhere can only have the most serious consequences for world security.<sup>113</sup>

US discussion guidelines for consular officials illustrated that policymakers—despite what individuals might think in private—realised the ‘Islamic bomb’ was a propaganda problem by stressing that the issue was *not* one of discrimination, emphasising extensive US nuclear cooperation with Islamic nations like Indonesia, Iran, and Turkey.<sup>114</sup>

Over time, it became apparent that the evidence for an ‘Islamic bomb’ was limited at best, non-existent at worst. In bilateral US-UK discussions, Pickering highlighted fragmentary Australian indications about Libya and Iraq.<sup>115</sup> He observed that while Saudi Arabia had been a substantial aid donor to Pakistan, it was doubtful the Saudis explicitly intended to finance the nuclear programme, especially as Riyadh had been making disapproving noises about Pakistani atomic intentions.<sup>116</sup> John Bushell, in his valedictory dispatch from Islamabad, echoed doubts about the willingness of Muslim states to align themselves with the Pakistani nuclear project and a concurrent unwillingness in Pakistan to ally with more extreme, Iranian-style political Islam. Bushell argued that “cooperation with Muslim brothers, yes, alliance on the basis of fundamentalist Islam, no thank you.”<sup>117</sup> The ambassador contended that Pakistan was indeed a significant Muslim nation in terms of its population, but other Islamic states might treat the thought of Pakistan as an “arsenal of Islam” with caution.<sup>118</sup> Furthermore, Bushell asked, “In Islamic terms an ‘arsenal’ Pakistan may be: but now an arsenal in nuclear terms also? With the problems of its politics and

---

<sup>113</sup> State to USE Islamabad, ‘Contingency Press Guidance,’ April 6, 1979, JCPL, RAC NLC-16-116-2-10-3, 4.

<sup>114</sup> State to USE Amman et al, ‘The Pak Nuclear Problem and the Suspension of US Aid,’ May 23, 1979, JCPL, RAC NLC-16-116-4-10-1, 3.

<sup>115</sup> State to USE Canberra, ‘Pakistan’s Nuclear Program,’ April 7, 1979, JCPL, RAC NLC-16-116-2-18-5.

<sup>116</sup> Alston to Fearn, ‘Pakistan Nuclear Programme,’ April 20, 1979, TNA FCO96/952, 3.

<sup>117</sup> Bushell to Owen, ‘Pakistan–Valedictory Dispatch,’ April 26, 1979, TNA FCO96/955, 7

<sup>118</sup> Ibid.

policies post-Bhutto, which Arabs can seriously want to become engaged with Pakistan?”<sup>119</sup> Following up, the outgoing ambassador argued that the further Pakistan went with a nuclear programme, the harder it would be for Zia to give it up, particularly if nuclear technology became an asset in Pakistani relations with the wider Muslim world.<sup>120</sup>

By late spring, the US government was making efforts to persuade interested parties that the ‘Islamic bomb’ was little more than propaganda. The Americans voiced fears of a nuclear arms race on the sub-continent and tried to demolish the Indian belief that the real danger posed by Pakistan lay in an Israeli/Islamic nuclear confrontation.<sup>121</sup> In Washington, Pickering faced questioning in Congress. He noted that the administration believed Pakistan was aiming for a nuclear weapons capability but refused to discuss alleged Libyan financing in open session, leading to further media comment about the Gaddafi connection.<sup>122</sup>

In meetings between Vance, Smith, and Agha Shahi, Shahi stressed that the ‘Islamic bomb’ was pure speculation, highlighting that Pakistan had turned down Saudi offers of finance for the reprocessing plant. Castigating the ‘Islamic bomb’ as nonsensical was a theme in Shahi’s representations throughout 1979.<sup>123</sup> US officials felt that Pakistan was working hard to get the right reaction from the Muslim and developing worlds, in case they had to publicly justify the nuclear programme’s military nature.<sup>124</sup> From using the ‘Islamic bomb’ as a threat, the Pakistanis had moved to belittling the very idea they had helped create. For Vance, writing on June 6, Pakistani nuclear sharing was a serious prospect, which could be addressed by distributing nuclear technology amongst Pakistan’s “Islamic friends,” giving the US “a much better chance of exerting influence against any GOP [Government of

---

<sup>119</sup> Ibid, 7-8.

<sup>120</sup> Bushell to Parsons, ‘Pakistan, India, and Nuclear Weapons,’ April 29, 1979, TNA FCO96/953, 2.

<sup>121</sup> Carter, *White House Diary*, 314; UKE Washington to FCO, ‘US/Indian Nuclear Discussions,’ April 30, 1979, FCO96/953, 1.

<sup>122</sup> , ‘Testimony, Assistant Secretary Thomas R. Pickering, Subcommittee on Energy, Nuclear Proliferation and Federal Services,’ May 1, 1979, TNA FCO96/953, 12; Stuart Auerbach, ‘Panel Told Pakistan Gained A-Weapons Ability By “End Runs”,’ *WP*, May 2, 1979, A15.

<sup>123</sup> Extract from US telegram, FCO to UKE Islamabad, ‘Pakistan Consortium Meeting 5-6 June,’ June 8, 1979, TNA FCO96/955, 2.

<sup>124</sup> UKE Washington to FCO, ‘Agha Shahi’s Talks in Washington,’ May 8, 1979, TNA FCO96/954, 3.

Pakistan] move to contribute to a so-called Islamic bomb.’<sup>125</sup> Thus, Vance advocated undercutting the Pakistani position by offering Muslim states the fruits of nuclear technology without the threat of nuclear weapons.

Meanwhile, the State Department and CIA vacillated on the Islamic proliferation issue. The State Department acknowledged that the ‘Islamic bomb’ was the subject of feverish speculation and believed that Pakistan might have a *material* interest in spreading nuclear technology, but analysts had no substantive evidence for pan-Islamic nuclear cooperation.<sup>126</sup> However, the CIA suggested that offers of political and financial support from oil-rich sympathisers in the Islamic world could tempt Pakistan. Indeed, Saudi Arabia, Libya, or Iraq might have induced Pakistan to share sensitive nuclear equipment and to propose terms for future nuclear cooperation.<sup>127</sup> The CIA later reversed its position on the Iraqi example, casting doubt on Pakistani willingness to provide nuclear technology or materials to Baghdad because of Islamic solidarity.<sup>128</sup>

As media speculation mounted, Western European leaders came under pressure from the nation most fearful of Islamic nuclear capability. Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin contacted British, French, and West German leaders warning of the danger posed by the ‘Islamic bomb’ and demanding action. Writing to Thatcher, Begin described in dire terms the consequences of a Pakistani nuclear weapon in the hands of Gaddafi.<sup>129</sup> The attached Israeli briefing drew links between Pakistan and the Arab world, but none of the Israeli intelligence was new and nothing confirmed the existence of pan-Islamic nuclear cooperation.<sup>130</sup>

---

<sup>125</sup> State to USE New Delhi, ‘Non-proliferation in South Asia,’ June 6, 1979, Wilson Center History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive (hereafter WCDA), <http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/114198> (accessed on September 9, 2013), 6-7.

<sup>126</sup> Thornton to Brzezinski, ‘Minutes–May 23 PRC Meeting on Pakistan and Subcontinent Issues,’ May 25, 1979, JCPL, RAC NLC-24-102-10-6-5, 4.

<sup>127</sup> NIO for Nuclear Proliferation to Director of Central Intelligence, ‘Monthly Warning Report—Nuclear Proliferation,’ July 24, 1979, USPQB, Doc.41, 2.

<sup>128</sup> CIA, ‘Interagency Intelligence Memorandum: Iraq’s Nuclear Interests, Programs, and Options,’ October 1, 1979, JCPL, RAC NLC-6-34-4-10-3, 10.

<sup>129</sup> Begin to Thatcher, Letter, May 17, 1979, TNA FCO96/954.

<sup>130</sup> ‘Pakistani Activity in the Nuclear Field,’ appended to Begin to Thatcher, May 17, 1979.

The FCO's Paul Lever did not subscribe to Begin's assertions, stating:

While we share their concern, we believe that they may be making over much of Pakistani-Arab links. Although the Pakistanis are getting financial aid from Arab states the limited evidence available to us (and the Americans) does not support the suggestion that there is any plan to produce an "Islamic Bomb" or to produce weapons-usable material in Pakistan for other Islamic countries.<sup>131</sup>

The speaking note prepared for Thatcher's May 23 meeting with Begin reflected this viewpoint, shared throughout the FCO and other departments.<sup>132</sup> Despite the media exposure, JNU chief Robert Alston emphasised that the conclusion of earlier British intelligence reporting that there was little evidence of Arab assistance for the Pakistani nuclear programme still held true.<sup>133</sup> In the face of widening media coverage, the FCO advised British consular officials worldwide that there was "virtually no evidence" for "Arab financing" of the Pakistani nuclear programme.<sup>134</sup>

Thatcher did not raise the matter with Begin face-to-face and responded via a letter to the Israeli leader that she took a personal hand in drafting.<sup>135</sup> Thatcher sympathised with Israel's position, but repeated the FCO's analysis, pointing out that, "None of the evidence currently available to us suggests there is any arrangement to transfer weapons-useable material from Pakistan to other Islamic states or organisations."<sup>136</sup> She went on to outline the many steps Britain had taken to thwart the clandestine Pakistani purchasing programme and urged Begin to consider his *own* country's role in preventing Middle Eastern nuclear proliferation.<sup>137</sup> A month later, Peter Carrington probed Indian Foreign Minister Shyam Nandan Mishra at the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in Lusaka, Zambia. Carrington asked if the Pakistanis were developing an Islamic bomb or a Pakistani bomb. Mishra's aide, Jagat Mehta, could not discern an "integrated Islamic political strategy"

---

<sup>131</sup> Lever to Cartledge, 'Pakistan's Nuclear Programme,' May 22, 1979, TNA FCO96/954, 4.

<sup>132</sup> Alston to Moberly, 'Pakistan's Nuclear Programme,' May 22, 1979, TNA FCO96/954; 'Briefs for Quadripartite Ministerial Dinner in the Hague on 29 May,' May 22, 1979, TNA FCO37/2204.

<sup>133</sup> Alston to Moberly, 'Pakistan's Nuclear Programme,' June 5, 1979, TNA FCO96/955, 1. Like the majority of British secret intelligence sources, this particular JIC report remains classified. The conclusions can be apprehended from Alston's statements in his briefing.

<sup>134</sup> 'Pakistan Nuclear,' May 3, 1979, TNA FCO96/953, 2; FCO to UKE Washington et al, 'Pakistan Nuclear: Publicity,' May 4, 1979, TNA FCO37/2203, 2.

<sup>135</sup> Alston to Moberly, June 5, 1979.

<sup>136</sup> Thatcher to Begin, Letter, June 19, 1979, FCO96/955, 1.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid, 1-2.

behind the bomb programme. Carrington replied that if it did prove to be an Islamic bomb, “it would make the Middle East even more unstable.”<sup>138</sup> The Thatcher-Begin letters and the related FCO discussions illustrate the way in which fears created by the ‘Islamic bomb’ paradigm needed to be addressed. Despite the media coverage—and as the FCO pointed out—there was little evidence pointing to a pan-Islamic nuclear project.

As the British government transitioned from Labour to Conservative, there was no reduction in the pace of British and American efforts to shut down Pakistani access to sensitive materials. There was a requirement to persuade key suppliers such as France, Switzerland, and West Germany of the need to take more—and stronger—action on export controls despite considerable resistance, particularly from the Germans and Swiss, neither of whom were convinced that the danger was as pressing as the UK and US insisted.<sup>139</sup> France agreed to watch Calorstat carefully and Helmut Schmidt eventually assured Carter that his government would investigate the improvement of statutory export controls.<sup>140</sup> The Swiss—whose companies were major suppliers to the Pakistanis—were unresponsive, arguing that the NSG guidelines and the NPT stipulations meant there was little they could do at present.<sup>141</sup> The Swiss government—like its West German neighbour—closely adhered to the existing regulations, even when it became apparent that those regulations were wholly inadequate in the face of new approaches to the acquisition of sensitive nuclear technologies.

British officials were aghast that the Dutch had neither informed the UK of their misgivings about Khan nor terminated his employment when he came under suspicion in 1975.<sup>142</sup> The FCO opined that initial Dutch explanations were inadequate and demanded a

---

<sup>138</sup> ‘Note of a Conversation Between the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary and Indian Foreign Minister in Lusaka,’ August 3, 1979, TNA PREM19/155.

<sup>139</sup> Carter to Clark, ‘Pakistan Nuclear,’ May 24, 1979, FCO96/954; ‘UK/US Non-proliferation Bilateral, Pakistan Nuclear,’ May 11, 1979, TNA FCO 96/953; ‘Call at FCO by Mr. T. Pickering,’ May 14, 1979, TNA FCO96/953, 9-10.

<sup>140</sup> UKE Paris to FCO, ‘Pakistan Nuclear,’ May 17, 1979, TNA FCO 96/954, 1; Schmidt to Carter, Letter, May 21, 1979, DDRS, DDRS-272419-i1-4.

<sup>141</sup> Pakenham to Alston, ‘US/Swiss Discussion on Argentina/Pakistan,’ June 8, 1979, TNA FCO96/955, 1.

<sup>142</sup> Carter (FCO JNU), Handwritten Note, July 6, 1979, TNA FCO96/957.



clearer account.<sup>143</sup> There was dissatisfaction about Dutch handling of the matter, their initial report characterised as “unconvincing and difficult to understand.”<sup>144</sup>

Members of Thatcher’s government stressed to the Pakistanis they were just as concerned about the nuclear issue as Callaghan and Owen had been. Douglas Hurd, Minister of State in the FCO, pressed the matter home, urging the Pakistani ambassador to understand that although Britain did not want to single out its friends in South Asia, the UK was extremely anxious about the nuclear programme.<sup>145</sup> The new British ambassador in Islamabad, Oliver Forster, noted that in his first meeting with Agha Shahi, the foreign minister had launched into a “bitter tirade” about the Americans and “Jewish lobbies” in the US that were behind the campaign against Pakistan, contrasting this with what he saw as a more proportional British response. Forster disliked this attempt to drive a wedge between the US and UK, but declined to respond to Shahi’s provocations. Forster suggested, in a point that Thomson in New Delhi agreed with, that an aggressive “big stick” policy by the UK would provoke the same violent and emotional reaction. Quietly persuasive diplomacy was the way forward.<sup>146</sup>

Quiet diplomacy was a theme that also surfaced in multilateral discussions. Gerard Smith proposed an informal summit to impress upon Western European nuclear supplier nations the situation’s urgency. The UK would attend but the government expressed reservations about any appearance of developed world countries ‘ganging up’ on Pakistan, the new British Foreign Secretary Peter Carrington noting that he had serious misgivings about the meeting becoming public knowledge.<sup>147</sup> While the French refused to attend, Carrington instructed his representatives to support the US, underline the seriousness of Pakistan’s ambitions, and emphasise the need for international controls and communication.<sup>148</sup> Robert Gallucci opened the meeting by stressing the US intelligence

---

<sup>143</sup> FCO to UKE The Hague, ‘Theft of Secrets from Almelo: “The Khan Affair”,’ July 23, 1979, TNA FCO37/2206; UKE The Hague to FCO, ‘Theft of Secrets from Almelo: “The Khan Affair”,’ July 31, 1979, TNA FCO96/957.

<sup>144</sup> Carter to Thorp, Untitled, August 20, 1979, TNA FCO96/959.

<sup>145</sup> FCO to UKE Islamabad, ‘Pakistan Nuclear,’ June 7, 1979, TNA FCO96/955.

<sup>146</sup> UKE Islamabad to FCO, ‘Pakistan Nuclear,’ July 23, 1979, TNA FCO96/957; New Delhi to FCO, ‘Pakistan Nuclear,’ July 26, 1979, TNA FCO96/957.

<sup>147</sup> FCO to UKE Vienna, ‘Pakistan Nuclear,’ June 19, 1979, TNA FCO96/955.

<sup>148</sup> UKE Washington to FCO, ‘Vienna Discussions on Pakistan,’ June 25, 1979, TNA FCO96/956; FCO to UKE Vienna, ‘Pakistan Nuclear,’ June 26, 1979, TNA FCO96/955.

assessment that the Pakistani centrifuge programme strongly suggested a nuclear weapons project. The attendees reached the consensus that subtle diplomacy and the more effective application of export controls were the best way forward.<sup>149</sup>

As media attention to Pakistan's so-called 'Islamic bomb' increased with the CBS report, the *8 Days* article, and the publicising of the Khan Affair, public speculation began to affect bilateral relations between both the US and Pakistan and the UK and Pakistan. Robin Fearn in Islamabad described the Pakistanis as being in a state of "mounting exasperation" over the never-ending revelations about their clandestine nuclear programme.<sup>150</sup> The most damaging story was American journalist Richard Burt's feature on Pakistan in the *New York Times*.<sup>151</sup> As one of three potential solutions to the Pakistani problem, Burt suggested that the US was planning military strikes against nuclear installations.<sup>152</sup> Pakistani Foreign Secretary Sardar Shah Nawaz protested vigorously to Hummel, claiming that the article had been "inspired" by the US government.<sup>153</sup> In the midst of this, Shah Nawaz submitted a letter Zia had composed before the Burt article. According to Zia, the US Congress had misunderstood the Pakistani nuclear programme which, making matters worse, was described as a "Muslim atom bomb." Zia offered Carter a "firm assurance that Pakistan's nuclear programme is entirely peaceful in nature and that Pakistan has no intention of acquiring or manufacturing nuclear weapons."<sup>154</sup> This assurance—something that US officials had sought for months—was not as unequivocal as the administration desired and fell short of explicitly ruling out nuclear testing or the transfer of materials to other states, but that did not stop Zia repeating similar formulations for the rest of the year.<sup>155</sup>

---

<sup>149</sup> UKE Vienna to FCO, 'Informal Consultation on Pakistan's Nuclear Weapon Activities,' June 27, 1979, TNA FCO96/956, 1, 4-5.

<sup>150</sup> UKE Islamabad to FCO, 'Pakistan Nuclear,' July 2, 1979, TNA FCO96/956, 1.

<sup>151</sup> A prominent media critic of Carter's non-proliferation policy, Burt was appointed Director of the Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs in the State Department after Ronald Reagan came to the presidency.

<sup>152</sup> Richard Burt, 'U.S. Will Press Pakistan to halt A-Arms Project,' *NYT*, August 12, 1979, 1.

<sup>153</sup> USE Islamabad to State, 'Letter from President Zia-ul-Haq to President Carter,' August 14, 1979, JCPL, Records of the National Security Staff, Box 96, Pakistan: Presidential Correspondence: 1-12/79. Within the Pakistani foreign service, the foreign secretary was the bureaucratic head of the ministry, while the foreign minister was diplomatic and executive head.

<sup>154</sup> Zia to Carter, Letter, August 9, 1979, JCPL, Records of the National Security Staff, Box 96, Pakistan: Presidential Correspondence: 1-12/79, 2, 4.

<sup>155</sup> Tarnoff to Brzezinski, 'Letter of August 9 from President Zia of Pakistan to President Carter,' August 27, 1979, JCPL, Records of the National Security Staff, Box 96, Pakistan: Presidential Correspondence: 1-12/79, 1;

The Burt article elicited hasty US government repudiations in public and private, and concurrent Pakistani moves to increase defences around the 'peaceful' enrichment facilities at Kahuta.<sup>156</sup> Here was a key instance of the media coverage surrounding Pakistan's nuclear aspirations and the notion of an 'Islamic bomb' having a demonstrable and damaging effect on the chances for a diplomatic solution by further alienating Pakistan. State Department spokespeople hurried to deny that the US was planning to strike at its South Asian ally while the Pakistani Ministry of Foreign Affairs summoned Hummel for a dressing-down.<sup>157</sup> In conversation with British consular officials, Mike Hornblow of the State Department's Pakistan desk denied strike plans were in place but conjectured that Burt might have misunderstood "unknown individuals" who were speculating about Indian or Israeli military action.<sup>158</sup> American rebuttals failed to prevent a stern rebuke from the Pakistani government, which castigated the Burt article and the CBS report as part of a campaign to incite "Israel, India, and even the Soviet Union to destroy Pakistan's budding nuclear facilities."<sup>159</sup> Such was the Pakistani response, the US Embassy in Islamabad opined that there was likely to be lasting damage to bilateral relations and a reduction in the scope for "rational dialogue" on the nuclear issue.<sup>160</sup> The Pakistani ambassador to Britain attacked the media speculation as inspired by the US government. The suggestion of an 'Islamic bomb' prompted him to ask: "why should Pakistan, which depended a great deal on economic support from its Islamic friends, so exacerbate the Arab/Israel situation as to threaten the continuation of this help[?]"<sup>161</sup> Zia expanded upon this theme when British parliamentarians visited Pakistan, treating them to a tirade on the "American conspiracy" and the "myth of an Islamic bomb."<sup>162</sup>

---

Tarnoff to Brzezinski, 'Response to Letter of August 9 and September 29 from President Zia of Pakistan to President Carter,' October 10, 1979, JCPL, Records of the National Security Staff, Box 96, Pakistan: Presidential Correspondence: 1-12/79; Zia to Carter, Letter, September 29, 1979, JCPL, Records of the National Security Staff, Box 96, Pakistan: Presidential Correspondence: 1-12/79, 2.

<sup>156</sup> Fabian to Lavers, 'Pakistan Nuclear,' July 30, 1979, TNA FCO 96/957, 1; Came to Gould, Untitled, July 30, 1979, TNA FCO37/2206.

<sup>157</sup> Pakistan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Press Release, August 14, 1979, TNA FCO96/958.

<sup>158</sup> Fortescue to Holloway, 'US/Pakistan,' August 14, 1979, TNA FCO96/958.

<sup>159</sup> UKE Islamabad to FCO, 'Pakistan Nuclear,' August 16, 1979, TNA FCO96/958, 1-2.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid, 2.

<sup>161</sup> Murray to Archer, Untitled, August 15, 1979, TNA FCO96/958, 2.

<sup>162</sup> Forster to White, 'Visit of British Parliamentarians,' September 23, 1979, TNA FCO96/959, 2.

Within the US General Advisory Committee on Arms Control and Disarmament (GAC), there was speculation that it was the Israelis—supposedly working on a plan named ‘Entebbe 2’—who were most motivated to strike at Pakistani nuclear facilities out of fear of Middle Eastern proliferation.<sup>163</sup> ACDA’s Charles van Doren noted that Burt had made things a lot harder for the US. While military options had *not* been under consideration, the categorical denials about the fracas issued by the State Department made it all the more difficult to *ever* consider such an option.<sup>164</sup>

Violent misunderstandings rooted in misconceptions about US attitudes towards Islam provoked another damaging episode in US-Pakistani relations. Armed radicals stormed the Al-Masjid al-Haram in Mecca, igniting protests around the globe when rumours circulated that the United States and Israel were behind the defilement of Islam’s holiest site, rumours that Carter believed were started by the Ayatollah Khomeini.<sup>165</sup> The most serious protest was the burning of the US Embassy in Islamabad. Occurring in the month American hostages were taken in Tehran, Brzezinski was fearful that the situation was becoming one of America versus Islam.<sup>166</sup> Dreading more, and increasingly deadly, attacks on US facilities, Vance ordered the evacuation of non-essential personnel from sensitive posts throughout the Middle East and South Asia.<sup>167</sup> Zia later privately commented—espousing a view of his people more often associated with Western observers—that the attack was evidence the US needed a strong leader in Pakistan to control the emotional and volatile Pakistani nation.<sup>168</sup> Thomas Thornton—interviewed in 1995—argued that after the embassy incident, US relations with Pakistan were “about as bad as with any country in the world, except perhaps Albania or North Korea.”<sup>169</sup> Back in 1979, Thornton commented to Brzezinski that there was little way he could see to engage in sensible policy-making about Pakistan. A worry—shared

---

<sup>163</sup> General Advisory Committee on Arms Control and Disarmament, ‘Friday Morning Session,’ September 14, 1979, USPQB, Doc.42, 12-13.

<sup>164</sup> *Ibid*, 15. There is no clear evidence of whether or not the US did actually formulate plans for military strikes on Pakistan. Corera argues—from uncited “private memos” and post-facto interviews—that the option had been suggested. These memos have not surfaced during archival research. See Corera, 28.

<sup>165</sup> Carter, *White House Diary*, 371.

<sup>166</sup> Brzezinski, 484.

<sup>167</sup> Gerges, 67.

<sup>168</sup> Haqqani, 183.

<sup>169</sup> Thomas Thornton, quoted in Kux, *Disenchanted Allies*, 245.

by the National Security Adviser—was that any punitive action on nuclear matters could finally destroy what remained of the relationship with a strategically important ally.<sup>170</sup>

Faced with Islamic opposition to the United States and a deteriorating situation in South Asia, in London the Cabinet saw the attacks as evidence that “the influence of Islamic extremism” was spreading from Iran to Pakistan.<sup>171</sup> Despite this, FCO observers opined that non-proliferation diplomacy relying upon generalisations about an ‘Islamic bomb’ could prove damaging rather than useful: “It seems dangerous, for instance, to put about suggestions of an ‘Islamic bomb’. In general, we think it would be a mistake to make quite sweeping generalisations without backing them up with proposals for action which might be taken to remedy the situation.”<sup>172</sup> Here, the FCO displayed a nuanced view of the situation, recognising that lumping the entire Muslim world into a single monolithic group was counter-productive. Likewise, the British analysts argued that panicked fear-mongering of the kind seen in the media served no purpose without solutions to address the root causes of the problem. Finally, like many of their American counterparts, British policymakers saw financial incentives as a greater motivator for Pakistan to proliferate to nations such as Libya or Saudi Arabia than any sense of Islamic solidarity.<sup>173</sup> The Islamic links posited in the *Observer* ‘Dr Khan’ article were, in the FCO’s view, so speculative as to be unworthy of comment.<sup>174</sup>

Just as the ‘Islamic bomb’ became embedded in public discourses, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979 forced rapid bridge-building between the West and the Islamic world. While covert governmental and overt Congressional pressure continued on Pakistan during the 1980s, the dominant American foreign policy apparatus—and its British partner—recognised that action against Pakistan must be subservient to anti-Soviet action in Afghanistan. It became the case that it was not enough to simply repair relations with Pakistan, but better relations between the West and the wider Muslim sphere

---

<sup>170</sup> Thornton to Brzezinski, ‘Evening Report,’ November 26, 1979, JCPL, RAC NLC-10-25-4-21-6, 2.

<sup>171</sup> ‘Conclusions of a Meeting of the Cabinet Held at 10 Downing Street,’ November 22, 1979, TNA CAB128/66, 2.

<sup>172</sup> Asia Group Meeting, ‘Agenda Item 3(a): Pakistan’s Nuclear Weapons Development Programme,’ December 13, 1979, TNA FCO37/2208, 4.

<sup>173</sup> ‘Asia Group: Verbatim Report, 13 December; Pakistan Nuclear Development Programme,’ December 13, 1979, TNA FCO96/961, 2.

<sup>174</sup> ‘Additional Advice for the Prime Minister: Nuclear Proliferation (Second *Observer* Article),’ December 18, 1979, TNA FCO96/961, 2.

were needed to foster a coalition against the USSR. Mention of the ‘Islamic bomb’ required curtailing lest it create rifts in the emerging alliance between the ‘free world’ and the ‘Muslim world.’

For British and American policymakers, understandings of the ‘Islamic bomb’ were subtler than those of the media and peripheral political figures. Senior politicians, government officials, and diplomats recognised that faith was a cloak concealing a nationalistic desire for nuclear capability. They correctly assessed that Pakistan had an economic and political stake in portraying itself as the custodian of Muslim nuclear power but found no evidence to suggest plans for wider, pan-Islamic proliferation.

For policymakers on both sides of the Atlantic, media coverage of the ‘Islamic bomb’ transformed public perceptions of Pakistan’s nuclear ambitions spatially from a regional, South Asian matter to a multi-regional problem affecting the Middle East and beyond. Although policymakers assessed that proliferation because of faith was not especially likely, the public perception of a potential Islamic nuclear capability that this created needed to be combated. The US press guidance in April, Thatcher’s June response to Begin, and the diplomatic fallout from the Burt article demonstrate that this media-generated perception forced reactions from the foreign policy establishments in Washington and London. Mention of an the ‘Islamic bomb’—regardless of its flimsy reality—required a response in the febrile, fragile atmosphere of the post-Camp David Accords era. There were scintillae of doubt about trans-Islamic proliferation. The “what ifs?” surrounding the ‘Islamic bomb’ exposed niggling fears—founded in long-standing tropes about the Islamic world’s violence and irrationality—that if Muslim states did acquire nuclear weapons, the threat was much more serious than other forms of proliferation. The ‘Islamic bomb’—the merest mention of which could provoke anxiety and outrage—represented a collision of culture, geopolitics, and international security.

### **From Prevention to Mitigation**

As the ‘Islamic bomb’ was becoming a significant public issue, the US and UK governments continued to seek political solutions to the problem of Pakistani nuclear ambitions. Indeed,

despite the responses that the ‘Islamic bomb’ required, the idea prompted little—if any—change in policy towards Pakistan. What did change policy was the recalcitrance and stubbornness of Zia and his government. While continuing to make efforts to inhibit Pakistani access to the materials required for its enrichment programme and thus increase the time it would take for Islamabad to attain nuclear capability, American and British non-proliferation policy towards Zia’s government underwent a significant change during 1979. By mid-year, the Carter administration and the new Thatcher government had realised that the Pakistanis were not going to abandon their atomic aspirations. Policy therefore changed from attempting to *prevent* Pakistani acquisition of nuclear capability to *mitigating* the worst effects of acquisition. Core to this mitigation strategy was seeking Pakistani assurances not to test a nuclear ‘device.’ Carter and his advisers still attempted to maintain pressure on Zia by resisting Pakistani demands for arms shipments and aid but by mid-1979 had effectively resigned themselves to an eventual Pakistani nuclear capability. Peter Constable—Deputy Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs—typified this attitude when—in early June—he argued that the US government had reached a “dead end” and recommended a strategy based on asking Zia not to test.<sup>175</sup> The cut-off of aid under the terms of the Symington Amendment in April of 1979 was a significant marker of the maintenance of pressure, but beneath the sanctions, there was little hope that Islamabad would ever abandon the bomb. Although British policymakers spent time considering possible pressures and inducements for Pakistan, they were far less wedded to directly pressuring Zia than their American counterparts. This created occasional friction between the allies, as American policymakers believed that the British government lacked serious commitment to non-proliferation goals. Initial British solutions revolved around a regional security treaty involving India, Pakistan, and China. When this proved unworkable, the UK suggested a global solution in the form of a “universal declaration” on nuclear trade and non-proliferation. Despite British zeal for a political endeavour seen as complementing and enhancing the NPT, there was little enthusiasm in the United States and Europe. Regardless of the different approaches taken, by the end of 1979 American and British solutions to the

---

<sup>175</sup> State to USE New Delhi, June 6, 1979, 1-2.

Pakistani nuclear problem had both coalesced around policies of mitigation, rather than prevention.

Bilateral traffic between the US and the UK on Pakistan during early 1979 highlighted the confusion within American foreign policy circles about the right way to approach the Pakistani nuclear problem. In mid-January, Thomas Pickering consulted with British representatives in London and Washington. He made it clear that although the State Department wanted pressure put on the Pakistanis, excessive publicity would make the situation with Congress even more difficult.<sup>176</sup> The FCO was most alarmed at the lack of concrete ideas on how to deal with the problem. Just after Pickering left London, the NSC's Tom Thornton arrived without tangible plans for Pakistan. Thornton did not favour military support for Zia, preferring dialogue between Pakistan, India, and China to promote a stable South Asia. FCO SAD's Kelvin White advocated trying to ease Pakistani fears about India by getting the Indians to agree to safeguards and inspections. Thornton agreed, but had no idea how to achieve this.<sup>177</sup> A week later, Jack Mikloss arrived with more opinions, advocating enhanced US financial support for Pakistan.<sup>178</sup> The FCO found itself having to divine American intentions from these visitations. British officials concluded that Pickering wanted to hit the Pakistanis hard, Thornton wanted to leave them alone for a while, and Mikloss wanted to cosset them.<sup>179</sup> In the face of this confusing disparity of opinion, the British drove forward with plans for regional, then universal, political solutions.

Bilateral, multilateral, and regional nuclear treaties had been a part of discussions on the South Asian nuclear situation ever since 1974. The Pakistanis had proposed a South Asian Nuclear Weapon Free Zone (SANWFZ) in the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) every year since the Indian test. This proposal—based on the expectation it would put greater international pressure on India—had never gained traction and, more importantly,

---

<sup>176</sup> Moberly to Alston, 'Pakistan Nuclear,' January 16, 1979, TNA FCO96/947.

<sup>177</sup> 'Summary Record of a Meeting Held in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Between Mr D F Murray, Assistant Under Secretary of State, and Mr Tom Thornton, National Security Council,' January 16, 1979, TNA FCO96/947, 2-3.

<sup>178</sup> 'Summary record of a Call on Mr Donald Murray, CMG, Assistant Under Secretary of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, by Mr Jack Mikloss, Assistant Secretary of State at the State Department,' January 22, 1979, TNA FCO96/947, 2.

<sup>179</sup> White to Weston, 'Pakistan: Nuclear,' January 25, 1979, TNA FCO96/947, 1.



India consistently rejected such notions. Pakistan had also frequently expressed a willingness to sign the NPT as soon as India did. As Naeem Salik argues, this “provided a convenient shelter for Pakistan to hide behind when subjected to international pressure.”<sup>180</sup> The failing of this, as Salik notes, was that Pakistani policy was hostage to Indian policy decisions and actions.<sup>181</sup> It was within the context of American indecision, sub-continental recalcitrance, and the realisation that ‘sticks and carrots’ were not enough that the UK attempted to forge an agreement to arrest the Indo-Pakistani nuclear arms race.<sup>182</sup>

Because of these factors, British thinking on halting that arms race underwent a speedy evolution during the spring and early summer of 1979. From proposals for a modified SANWFZ, there was a rapid transformation when ACDD chief Christopher Mallaby proposed an Indo-Pakistani regional security treaty (RST).<sup>183</sup> Mallaby wanted to reshape the old SANWFZ idea, changing the name, geographical scope, and political concessions that both sides would have to make.<sup>184</sup> Senior officials thought the proposal worth considering, if China could be included to assuage Indian fears. Moberly and Cortazzi immediately informed the US embassy about British plans for the RST proposal. US consular staff responded favourably and agreed that UK leadership in the matter might elicit better results from South Asia and China.<sup>185</sup> French officials indicated that the RST—should Britain get it moving—was something they would be happy to support.<sup>186</sup> It was at this point that Thomson outlined what he saw as the political complexities militating *against* a regional solution and sketched the plan that he devoted considerable energy to advocating: a global, ‘universal declaration’ on nuclear trade and non-proliferation.<sup>187</sup> FCO arms control experts were extremely sceptical about Thomson’s proposal while accepting the difficulties of implementing the RST. ACDD suggested various alternatives, from building on the on-going

---

<sup>180</sup> Salik, 153-154.

<sup>181</sup> Ibid, 154.

<sup>182</sup> Fearn to Lavers, ‘Pakistan: Economic Angles,’ March 5, 1979, TNA FCO96/949, 1.

<sup>183</sup> Bushell to Moberly, ‘South Asian Nuclear Weapons Free Zone (SANWFZ),’ February 21, 1979, TNA FCO96/948; Mallaby to Moberly, ‘India, Pakistan and Nuclear Weapons,’ March 8, 1979, TNA FCO96/948.

<sup>184</sup> Ibid.

<sup>185</sup> Cortazzi, ‘India, Pakistan, and Nuclear Weapons,’ March 9, 1979, TNA FCO96/949, 2.

<sup>186</sup> ‘Record of a Conversation Between Mr H A H Cortazzi and M. Jean Noiville: South Asian Nuclear Matters,’ March 21, 1979, TNA FCO96/952; James to Cortazzi, ‘South Asian Nuclear Security Treaty,’ April 12, 1979, TNA FCO 96/952, 1.

<sup>187</sup> Thomson to Holloway, ‘Regional Security Threat,’ March 15, 1979, TNA FCO96/950, 4.

(and ultimately fruitless) Comprehensive Test Ban (CTB) negotiations to a massive “son of NPT.”<sup>188</sup> A wrinkle appeared in these discussions when David Owen sternly rebuked his staff for discussing matters with the US without first appraising ministers of the proposals and for effectively ignoring Thomson’s proposals.<sup>189</sup>

By mid-June, Margaret Thatcher had ushered the Callaghan government from office. This change coincided with—but did not create—a shift in policy towards Pakistan’s nuclear aspirations. The Symington Amendment’s imposition and the accumulating publicity about the Khan Affair and the ‘Islamic bomb’ demanded new and wide-ranging thinking on policy.<sup>190</sup> Thomson, who by this time had ensured his universal declaration became the dominant political means of dealing with the sub-continental nuclear question, effected the strategy change.<sup>191</sup> This change had not been smooth. The JNU and ACDD continued to advocate the RST, despite Indian hostility to such a proposal and Owen’s scepticism in the weeks before he left office.<sup>192</sup> The delay in formulating a new policy stemmed from the American desire to try out approaches to Pakistani and regional security concerns before employing ‘new thinking.’<sup>193</sup>

The American approach was subtly different from that of the British government and illustrates the Carter administration’s gradual turn from prevention to eventual mitigation. While the British strategy prior to the adoption of Thomson’s plan focussed on an Indo-Pakistani security treaty, the US tended towards a treaty specifically linked to both states neither producing nor using nuclear weapons. There was agreement between Pickering and State Department human rights advocates that it might be worthwhile pursuing a solution to the Indo-Pakistani problem through a bilateral nuclear accord.<sup>194</sup> The NSC thought such an

---

<sup>188</sup> Burns to Parsons, ‘Pakistan Nuclear,’ Undated, TNA FCO96/950, 6-9.

<sup>189</sup> Alston to Moberly, ‘Pakistan’s Nuclear Ambitions,’ March 22, 1979, TNA FCO96/950, 1.

<sup>190</sup> Cortazzi to Rose, ‘Pakistan and China: Nuclear Questions,’ April 12, 1979, TNA FCO96/950, 1.

<sup>191</sup> Moberly to Bondi, ‘Non-proliferation After INFCE,’ June 11, 1979, TNA FCO96/955, 1.

<sup>192</sup> Alston to Moberly, ‘Non-proliferation Policy,’ June 1, 1979, TNA FCO37/2205; ‘India/Pakistan Nuclear: Record of a Meeting,’ June 5, 1979, TNA FCO96/955, 1; UKHC New Delhi to FCO, ‘India/Pakistan Nuclear,’ April 12, 1979, TNA FCO96/952; Wall to Mallaby, ‘Pakistan and Nuclear Weapons,’ April 2, 1979, TNA FCO96/951, 1.

<sup>193</sup> FCO to UKE Islamabad, ‘Pakistan, India, and Nuclear Weapons,’ April 6, 1979, TNA FCO96/951; FCO to 10 Downing Street, ‘Pakistan Nuclear Programme,’ April 30, 1979, TNA FCO96/953.

<sup>194</sup> Schneider to Christopher, ‘Pakistan,’ March 9, 1979, NARA, RG59, RWC, Box 56, 1.

accord, focusing on a joint non-production/non-use agreement between India and Pakistan, worthy of implementation.<sup>195</sup> This proposal—although still advocating an active non-proliferation stance through the quest for promises not to produce nuclear weapons—was a small step on the road to mitigation. Although requests not to produce weapons were mitigation of a sort, such a suggestion implicitly accepted eventual Pakistani *ability* to produce nuclear weapons alongside the pre-existing Indian capability. Vance argued that the US-Pakistan security relationship and the Carter administration's non-proliferation policy were often in conflict. According to Vance, the most notable facet of this conflict was the situation in Afghanistan and the threat it posed to Pakistani and US interests in South Asia.<sup>196</sup> Zia was relieved that US ties with Pakistan were not entirely focussed on the nuclear issue and from this came Hummel's observation that Zia might be persuaded to agree a 'freeze' on the enrichment programme, allowing the resumption of aid and giving time for broader, more lasting non-proliferation agreements to be constructed.<sup>197</sup> Although it was another 'long shot', the State Department alerted the FCO to this new initiative—carried out under Hummel and Pickering's auspices—in order to use classified British intelligence on the clandestine enrichment programme in discussion with the Pakistanis.<sup>198</sup> For Pickering, it was vital to pin Islamabad down to a deal before bringing New Delhi into any bilateral accord.<sup>199</sup> Like the failed inspection team visit, the freeze proposal died in the face of Zia's obduracy.<sup>200</sup>

After the freeze proposal's failure, it became apparent that—once again—nothing short of massive US support to alleviate Pakistan's security fears regarding India and Afghanistan would have any influence on nuclear ambitions. Shah Nawaz and Munir Ahmad Khan admitted as much to Hummel and Robert Gallucci in Islamabad on April 25, while

---

<sup>195</sup> Memorandum for Brzezinski, 'While You Were Away,' March 13, 1979, JCPL, RAC NLC-10-19-1-19-9, 1.

<sup>196</sup> Raphael to Christopher et al, 'Policy Toward Pakistan,' April 9, 1979, NARA, RG59, RWC, Box 57, Pakistan, 1-2.

<sup>197</sup> Brzezinski to Carter, 'Daily Report,' April 11, 1979, JCPL, RAC NLC 1-10-4-1-4, 1-2; Christopher to Carter, Memorandum, April 16, 1979, JCPL, RAC 128-14-6-12-5, 2.

<sup>198</sup> State to USE London, 'Pakistan's Nuclear Problem,' April 13, 1979, JCPL, RAC NLC-16-116-2-40-0, 1-2.

<sup>199</sup> Alston to Fearn, 'Pakistan Nuclear Programme,' April 20, 1979, TNA FCO96/952, 2-3.

<sup>200</sup> Thornton to Brzezinski, 'Evening Report,' April 23, 1979, JCPL, RAC 24-100-4-22-6, 1.

maintaining the perennial claim of a peaceful nuclear programme.<sup>201</sup> Agha Shahi and Zia were of a similar mind when they met with Vance and Hummel respectively in early May, both Pakistani statesmen reiterating the long-standing offer to sign a bilateral or regional Indo-Pakistani non-proliferation agreement.<sup>202</sup> As usual, Indian reluctance to sign a regional agreement that did not include China undermined this offer.<sup>203</sup> Gerard Smith was exasperated by Vance's agreement with Shahi to explore Congressional attitudes towards arms sales, believing that this would confuse key allies over the American stance on the Pakistani problem.<sup>204</sup> Furthermore, the US Embassy in Islamabad believed that opportunities for further bilateral US-Pakistan progress were severely limited.<sup>205</sup> Because of these colliding factors, the NSC suggested a complex approach that combined a range of actions and strategies. The approach brought together Pickering and Saunders' Indo-Pakistani 'non-use/non-production' idea, a potential resumption of aid, a coordinated diplomatic campaign aimed at key Pakistani allies, continued efforts to frustrate the clandestine programme, and enhanced talks with India.<sup>206</sup> Vance, in conversation with Carrington, clung to the hope that he could persuade India and Pakistan to agree to a regional pact.<sup>207</sup>

Within the elite PRC, the conflict between ardent non-proliferationists such as Smith and the regionally focused State Department bureaux was clear. Smith wanted to set up an international group to assess the Pakistani problem, something that Christopher felt should be on an informal basis lest it appear that the developed world was ganging up on Pakistan.<sup>208</sup> Smith argued that it was not simply a matter of dealing with Pakistani perceptions, but *global* perceptions about America's commitment to non-proliferation.<sup>209</sup> A suggestion previously put forward by Paul Kreisberg of the Policy Planning Staff (PPS) was

---

<sup>201</sup> USE Islamabad to State, 'Luncheon Discussion of Nuclear Issues,' April 26, 1979, NARA, RG59, RWC, Box 57, Pakistan, 3.

<sup>202</sup> Tarnoff to Brzezinski, 'Issues Paper: U.S. Nuclear Strategy Towards India and Pakistan,' May 16, 1979, JCPL, RAC NLC-132-75-5-9-8, 1.

<sup>203</sup> 'Ibid, 2.

<sup>204</sup> Saunders and Pickering to Newsom, 'Consultations With Congress on Arms Sales to Pakistan,' May 12, 1979, NARA, RG59, RWC, Box 57, Pakistan.

<sup>205</sup> UKE Islamabad to FCO, 'Pakistan Nuclear,' May 13, 1979, TNA FCO96/953, 1.

<sup>206</sup> Tarnoff to Brzezinski, May 16, 1979, 3.

<sup>207</sup> 'Record of a Discussion Between the Secretary of State and Mr Cyrus Vance at the FCO,' May 21, 1979, TNA FCO37/2204, 2.

<sup>208</sup> 'PRC on Pakistan and Subcontinent Matters,' May 23, 1979, JCPL, RAC NLC-132-75-5-2-5, 2.

<sup>209</sup> 'Ibid, 10.

for an independent, well-respected figure to act as a mediator in South Asia.<sup>210</sup> The suggestion received tacit approval, but only if there were reasonable prospects for an Indo-Pakistani non-development/non-use agreement. Preparatory to this, Ambassador Robert Goheen in New Delhi should have exploratory discussions with the Indians. CIA chief Admiral Stansfield Turner injected a note of alarm into proceedings when he drew attention to intelligence reporting suggesting that Pakistan might carry out a nuclear test before November, well in advance of US and UK estimates of when it might have nuclear explosive capability.<sup>211</sup> Rumours of an imminent Pakistani test in part drove US diplomacy in the coming months. Avoiding a Pakistani nuclear test would form a cornerstone of the mitigation strategy. Were Pakistan to test a nuclear device it would damage American credibility by showing the world that US non-proliferation policy had failed. Persuading Pakistan to remain in a state of “nuclear ambiguity” would give the appearance of non-proliferation success whilst allowing regional security concerns—such as the evolving situation in Afghanistan and the tensions between India and Pakistan—to be addressed.

These rumours about a test—there was precious-little hard intelligence to support them—and their appearance in the media threaded their way through discussions throughout late May and beyond. The rumours connected to debates within the Carter administration, debates that led Peter Constable to clearly elucidate the change in policy from prevention to mitigation. Robert Goheen received instructions to approach Desai with the bilateral plan and potential third party mediation.<sup>212</sup> The politically embattled Indian prime minister would not countenance a non-development/non-use agreement. Desai reminded Goheen that India had already made a non-development pledge and, if Zia did the same, that would be as good as any formal arrangement. More dramatically, Desai stated that if Pakistan did test a bomb—or indicated it was about to test one—India would act at once “to smash it.”<sup>213</sup> In light of this confrontational response, Goheen eschewed mentioning third-party mediation plans. Rumours of an impending Pakistani test reached the media because of comments by none other than Indian Foreign Minister Vajpayee during his visit to the USA in late

---

<sup>210</sup> Kreisberg to Christopher, ‘A Mediator for the South Asian Nuclear Problem,’ May 22, 1979, NARA, RG59, RAL, Box 5.

<sup>211</sup> ‘PRC on Pakistan and Subcontinent Matters,’ May 23, 1979, 4.

<sup>212</sup> State to USE New Delhi, ‘Nuclear Dialogue With India,’ June 2, 1979, USPQB, Doc 35A, 2-3.

<sup>213</sup> USE New Delhi to State, ‘India and the Pakistan Nuclear Problem,’ June 7, 1979, USPQB, Doc 35B, 1-2.

April.<sup>214</sup> The American attempts to gain an Indo-Pakistani agreement bore little fruit because of intransigence on both sides, media speculation about the Pakistan bomb project, and a lack of focus on the administration's part.

The telegrams to and from Goheen bracketed Constable's gloomy June 6 telegram where he fretted about the 'Islamic bomb.' Constable—backed by Cyrus Vance—argued that the US had “come to a dead end in our bilateral and multilateral efforts to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons technology to the nations of South Asia.”<sup>215</sup> The only solution was a new strategy that—rather than seeking to prevent the spread of nuclear technology to South Asia—sought Pakistani assurances they would not detonate a PNE, formal assurance of India's commitment not to further develop nuclear weapons, and Chinese assurances against deploying nuclear force in a hypothetical Sino-Indian conflict.<sup>216</sup> While the Carter administration had resigned himself to the fact that Pakistan would develop some form of nuclear capability, the State Department sought to prevent that new-found capability from being tested. At the heart of this desire to avoid public displays of atomic attainment was a fear that the weight of India and Pakistan's ascent to nuclear capability would be too much for the global non-proliferation regime to bear. Constable therefore argued that:

If we fail to act decisively, we will also jeopardise our global non-proliferation strategy, which could collapse under the weight of two additional nuclear weapons states. By treating South Asia as a 'special case', we may have a better chance to head off nuclear weapons development here, and also to preserve in the rest of the world those elements of our non-proliferation strategy which are working[.]<sup>217</sup>

Here was the clearest expression yet from a senior foreign policy figure in the Carter administration that the US government had resigned itself to the fact that Pakistan could not be prevented from gaining nuclear capability, even if that capability was couched in the disingenuous terms of a 'PNE.'

Although policy had subtly moved from prevention to mitigation, Carter himself was unwilling to make an explicit exception to policy in the case of Pakistan. In response to Constable's memo, Gerard Smith contended that acquiescing to Pakistan acquiring unsafeguarded nuclear facilities would be a mistake that would “drain most of the

---

<sup>214</sup> Perkovich, 218.

<sup>215</sup> State to USE New Delhi, June 6, 1979, 1

<sup>216</sup> Ibid, 2.

<sup>217</sup> Ibid, 3.

consistency out of your [Carter's] nuclear policy.” Annotating the memo, Carter noted that he agreed with Smith.<sup>218</sup> Because of the impasse and the threat posed to global non-proliferation *and* political relationships in the sub-continent, Vance tasked Gerard Smith with creating a committee to find a solution.<sup>219</sup>

The June debates over strategy towards Pakistan represented a hugely significant change in policy little remarked upon in the existing literature. No longer was the Carter administration attempting to halt proliferation in South Asia. Faced by Zia's stonewalling of every attempt to resolve the Pakistani situation in favour of the non-proliferation regime, Carter's flagship policy had hit a dead end. Despite Carter's agreement with Smith that an exception to policy would be untenable, the decision to seek assurances over testing demonstrated that prevention had failed and mitigation was the goal. Persuading the Pakistanis not to test a device—PNE or otherwise—would preserve the public appearance of working towards non-proliferation and head off a further deterioration in Indo-Pakistani relations. This would save American 'face' and hopefully maintain credibility on non-proliferation. While this change was taking place in Washington, a similar change was taking place in Britain as the Thatcher government made efforts to gain international backing for its universal declaration.

By early July—and despite internal debates over wording—the British universal proposal was ready for submission to key foreign capitals. The 'Draft Declaration on Nuclear Trade and Non-proliferation' was just three double-spaced pages long, and laid out nuclear energy's importance, the need to avoid proliferation, the necessity for international consensus and co-operation, for technical assistance to developing countries, and for arrangements to be made regarding nuclear technology transfers.<sup>220</sup> The declaration's stipulations were, in essence, an international suppliers and purchasers agreement coupled with a restatement of the NPT's Article IV.<sup>221</sup> The British government, in adopting the declaration as the main plank of their non-proliferation policy, tacitly accepted that Pakistan

---

<sup>218</sup> Smith to Carter, 'Nonproliferation in South Asia,' June 8, 1979, USPQB, Doc.36.

<sup>219</sup> Brzezinski to Vance, 'The South Asian Nuclear Problem,' June 19, 1979, USPQB, Doc.37.

<sup>220</sup> Moberly to Bondi, 'Non-proliferation After INFCE,' June 11, 1979, TNA FCO96/955, 3-5.

<sup>221</sup> Article IV outlined the rights of parties to the treaty to research, produce, and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination.

was going to gain nuclear capability but still wanted to delay the advent of a Pakistani bomb as much as possible. The declaration did not make any effort to undermine the Pakistani programme, but offered another layer of proliferation controls in order to try to delay eventual acquisition and to mitigate the effects of further proliferation *from* Pakistan.

Before the declaration was made ready for submission, there were the first high-level non-proliferation meetings between the US and UK since Britain's change of government. During these meetings, it became clear that avoiding a Pakistani nuclear test was core to future strategies. Douglas Hurd met with Smith and pointed out that while the pressure being exerted by Western governments on Pakistan was feeble, the US and UK should be working with the non-aligned nations on the grounds that a Pakistani nuclear test would have damaging implications for international atomic trade and thus harm developing-world nuclear prospects.<sup>222</sup> While Smith stated without much optimism that Vance had tasked him with producing an inter-agency study aimed at solving the sub-continental nuclear problems, Thomson extolled his declaration's virtues, pointing out that a global solution avoided the appearance of bullying any one nation.<sup>223</sup> Smith left London with a copy of the draft and the promise of American feedback.<sup>224</sup>

It became apparent that the much more global British policy conflicted with the American regional focus when it came to South Asia. The FCO opinion was that the declaration was a "positive way forward, rather than a negative pressurising policy."<sup>225</sup> While the Smith study was still on-going, Michael Pakenham characterised American strategy as returning to twin bilateral strands. The US would search for ways to solve the Tarapur problem with India, while dealing with Pakistan by reversion to 'sticks and carrots.'<sup>226</sup> Much of this revolved around either withholding or offering the supply of advanced military equipment and potentially giving *more* publicity to the clandestine Pakistani programme—the "sunshine approach." Regarding the universal declaration, there was little sympathy in Washington for the proposal, where officials preferred postponing

---

<sup>222</sup> Alston to Moberly, 'Call by Ambassador Smith on Mr Hurd,' June 29, 1979, TNA FCO96/956.

<sup>223</sup> 'Call at FCO by Ambassador Smith,' June 29, 1979, TNA FCO96/957, 1-3.

<sup>224</sup> Carter to Cromartie, 'Draft Declaration on Nuclear Trade and Non-proliferation,' July 2, 1979, TNA FCO37/2206, 1.

<sup>225</sup> White to Forster, 'Pakistan: Relations With HMG,' July 27, 1979, TNA FCO96/957, 2.

<sup>226</sup> Pakenham to Alston, Memorandum, August 3, 1979, TNA FCO96/958, 1.



further institutional relationships between nuclear purchasers and suppliers until the 1980s.<sup>227</sup> The Americans harboured reservations about the declaration, although Pickering had admitted that they had no coherent alternatives.<sup>228</sup> Patrick Moberly observed that the State Department felt that the declaration would end up as a “lowest common denominator approach,” becoming so diluted as to have no meaningful power. Likewise, Moberly suggested that the British approach sat awkwardly with American emphasis on supplier controls and Congressional legislation such as the Symington and Glenn Amendments and the NNPA (although these were not directly cited). The French had also raised objections relating to the on-going INFCE process. Senior negotiators in the French government observed that any universal declaration on nuclear trade could be seen by the developing world as unwisely pre-empting the results of INFCE.<sup>229</sup>

During August, Hugh Cortazzi visited Washington to drum up American support for the declaration, briefed to make it clear that the Thatcher government did not favour “bullying” Pakistan and preferred a political solution that did not target individual countries.<sup>230</sup> In discussions with Jane Coon, the newly appointed Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Sub-continent who had considerable experience of Pakistan and non-proliferation, Cortazzi emphasised the limited scope for the development of relations with Pakistan when that country was entering an economic and political crisis. Coon was sympathetic, and noted that she shared Britain’s more restrained assessment of when Pakistan might be able to test a nuclear weapon, agreeing that sober, quiet diplomacy was a better alternative to the “sunshine approach.” Still, Coon reiterated American objections to the declaration. From her perspective, it would mean acquiescing to sensitive nuclear facilities in Pakistan when there was no guarantee that safeguards were adequate.<sup>231</sup> Coon’s remarks on acquiescing to nuclear facilities did not reflect the fundamental change at the higher levels of American non-proliferation policymaking. Cortazzi departed, having failed to change minds. As for

---

<sup>227</sup> Ibid, 2, 4.

<sup>228</sup> Alston to Thomson, ‘Nonproliferation,’ August 24, 1979, TNA FCO37/2207, 1; Moberly to Thomson, ‘Non-proliferation,’ August 10, 1979, TNA FCO37/2207, 1.

<sup>229</sup> Ibid, 1-2.

<sup>230</sup> Carter to Cortazzi, ‘Briefs for Call at State Department, 9 August,’ August 7, 1979, TNA FCO96/958, 2.

<sup>231</sup> Weston to Cortazzi, ‘Pakistan,’ August 10, 1979, TNA FCO96/958.

other states, the Canadians and French were sitting on the fence while the Australians and Germans were unenthusiastic about the concept, notwithstanding brief initial interest.<sup>232</sup>

Despite vigorously promoting the universal declaration, the British government eventually conceded it was never going to gain traction. However, with the Smith Study stalled, the US still did not have an alternative. Vance was trying to paper over the widening cracks in his department, the main fault line being between the ardent non-proliferationists such as Smith and Pickering who at minimum wanted safeguards applied to Pakistani facilities and the ‘regionalists’ from the various geographical bureaux who would be content with assurances of good behaviour.<sup>233</sup> Zia had made vague noises about assurances in his letters to Carter over the preceding months and during his September visit to New York, but these were far short of the more formal guarantees that even the regionalists desired.<sup>234</sup> PPS chief Anthony Lake outlined the available options to deter proliferation while maintaining good relations with Pakistan. In most cases, these options—such as the provision of advanced F-16 fighters—conflicted with other administration policies on conventional arms restraint and there had been little—if any—consideration of what to do if *all* approaches failed. Furthermore, he noted deep divisions on all the potential avenues for progress.<sup>235</sup>

There was hope for progress when Agha Shahi visited Washington in October. The nuclear issue dominated the meeting, even though Zia had again cancelled elections and was proceeding with the Islamisation process, something the Carter administration was wary of because of the conflict this created with the human rights agenda.<sup>236</sup> Intelligence and media rumours of an imminent Pakistani nuclear test added urgency to the meeting.<sup>237</sup> From the fractious discussions came assurances that Pakistan would not develop nuclear weapons or transfer sensitive nuclear technology, promises that aligned with what Britain was attempting

---

<sup>232</sup> Alston to Thomson, August 24, 1979, 1.

<sup>233</sup> Henderson to FCO, ‘Smith Study on Nuclear South Asia,’ October 6, 1979, TNA FCO96/959.

<sup>234</sup> Zia to Carter, Letter, September 29, 1979, JCPL, Records of the National Security Staff, Box 96, Pakistan: Presidential Correspondence: 1-12/79, 2; Tarnoff to Brzezinski, ‘Response to Letters of August 9 and September 29 from President Zia of Pakistan to President Carter,’ October 10, 1979, JCPL, Records of the National Security Staff, Box 96, Pakistan: Presidential Correspondence: 1-12/79.

<sup>235</sup> Lake to Vance, ‘The Pakistan Strategy and Future Choices,’ September 8, 1979, WCDA, <http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/114217> (accessed on September 9, 2013), 4-7.

<sup>236</sup> Kux, *Disenchanted Allies*, 240-241.

<sup>237</sup> Richard Burt, ‘U.S. Aides Say Pakistan Reported to Be Building an A-Bomb Site,’ *NYT*, August 17, 1979, A6; CIA, ‘Alert Memorandum on Pakistani Plan for an Early Nuclear Test,’ October 10, 1979, USPQB, Doc.43, 1.

to achieve with its universal declaration. Assurances not to develop nuclear weapons did not, however, preclude the development of a PNE along the lines of the 1974 Indian explosion. Shahi was far less forthcoming on the most public statement of nuclear attainment: testing, although he assured Vance that Pakistan would not have the capability to test for at least six months.<sup>238</sup> Reports from the State Department and the NSC to the FCO highlighted the fault lines in the administration. Tom Pickering observed that Shahi discussed the nuclear project in terms of national pride and prestige, but the US side in the talks continually emphasised the impediment to good relations that the “pointless” bomb programme created. Furthermore, deterioration in the regional situation would not automatically cause a change in US attitudes while a nuclear test would prompt a “fundamental reconsideration” of the entire relationship.<sup>239</sup> Thus, Pickering had tacitly conceded that it was admission of nuclear capability (PNE or otherwise) through testing—and not the capability itself—that was now the administration’s prime concern. From the NSC side, Thomas Thornton was furious with the State Department’s line in the discussions. According to Thornton, there was agreement between Carter, Brzezinski, and Secretary of Defense Harold Brown that if the Afghan situation deteriorated, the US should offer aid to Pakistan. Thornton concurred with British assessments of a Pakistani test’s imminence (which firmly stated that the earliest Pakistan could test was in two to three years’ time) and argued that “unduly alarmist” appraisals of when Pakistan might explode a device were being used by Vance’s clique to pursue a strategy of pressuring Pakistan regardless of the impact on other policies.<sup>240</sup>

While the US informed the UK of the Shahi meeting, parallel discussions were taking place aimed at healing a rift in the trans-Atlantic non-proliferation alliance. In London on October 12, a quadripartite meeting had taken place between American, British, French, and West German representatives. In the run-up to the conference, British analysts saw the Pakistani problem as particularly acute: international non-proliferation efforts would be damaged, there was the chance of war with India, and a Pakistani test would bring the prospect of a “Muslim bomb” that much closer. Here again, ‘cascadology’ reared its head in

---

<sup>238</sup> Vance to Carter, Memorandum, October 17, 1979, JCPL, RAC NLC-128-14-12-11-9.

<sup>239</sup> UKE Washington to FCO, ‘Nuclear Pakistan and the U.S.’, October 19, 1979, TNA FCO37/2209, 1-2.

<sup>240</sup> On British test estimates see FCO to UKE Washington, ‘Nuclear Pakistan,’ October 19, 1979, TNA FCO96/960; On Thornton’s views see UKE Washington to FCO, ‘Nuclear Pakistan and the U.S.’ (Thornton telegram) October 19, 1979, TNA FCO37/2209, 2.

conjunction with the old trope that a lack of action in one instance of potential proliferation would irreparably damage the entire edifice. For the British, the only answer was through positive diplomatic solutions.<sup>241</sup> There was a consensus on all these points at the meeting and a shared willingness to seek new and imaginative diplomatic solutions.<sup>242</sup> After the fact, the Americans were depressed by what they perceived as British unwillingness to do anything about Pakistan. Thornton placed Britain just ahead of the FRG in terms of a desire to address the problem.<sup>243</sup> The FCO was anxious to avoid this grim view of Britain's attitude becoming common currency in Washington, even though British officials saw the US as having few, if any, constructive plans. Carrington eventually sent a stern telegram outlining the many British efforts to frustrate Pakistani nuclear ambitions and the considerable efforts they had undertaken to achieve a political solution.<sup>244</sup>

When Gerard Smith toured European capitals in early November, the FCO was at pains to point out how seriously Britain took the situation. The prospect of a Pakistani test loomed over everything, especially as Zia had refused to rule one out.<sup>245</sup> The Islamabad embassy argued there was little that could be done if the Pakistanis were determined to test, but after they had "proved their virility" with a test there could be opportunities for progress.<sup>246</sup> From New Delhi, Thomson averred that testing was likely to provoke a military response from India and again advocated the lapsed universal declaration idea.<sup>247</sup> The FCO concluded that British objectives must be to discourage testing, maintain tight controls on sensitive supplies, and continue diplomatic contacts with Pakistan.<sup>248</sup> This was, in the baldest terms, acceptance from the British foreign policy community that prevention had indeed failed and that mitigation was now the only option. Patrick Moberly located Pakistan at the centre of a nexus of proliferation anxieties: a Pakistani test could open the door to a proliferation cascade, perhaps even re-invigorating the old question of West German nuclear

---

<sup>241</sup> 'Speaking Note for Consultations on Pakistani Nuclear,' October 11, 1979, TNA FCO96/959, 1-2.

<sup>242</sup> FCO to UKE Islamabad, 'Pakistan Nuclear,' October 15, 1979, TNA FCO96/960, 1-2.

<sup>243</sup> Robinson to Moberly, 'Nuclear Pakistan,' October 22, 1979, TNA FCO96/960.

<sup>244</sup> FCO to UKE Washington, 'Nuclear Pakistan,' October 25, 1979, TNA FCO96/960.

<sup>245</sup> Anon., 'Zia Says he Has Not Ruled Out An Atom Bomb Test In Pakistan,' *NYT*, October 28, 1979, 9.

<sup>246</sup> UKE Islamabad to FCO, 'Nuclear Pakistan,' October 26, 1979, TNA FCO96/960, 1.

<sup>247</sup> UKHC New Delhi to FCO, 'Nuclear Proliferation,' October 30, 1979, TNA FCO96/960, 2.

<sup>248</sup> Anon., 'India/Pakistan and Non-proliferation,' October 20, 1979, TNA FCO96/960, 8-9.

weapons. American and British non-proliferation policy—typified by the NPT—was frequently predicated on keeping nuclear weapons out of West Germany’s hands.<sup>249</sup> The British reaction to a test would affect credibility and the ability to exert influence in all future cases. Moberly was disappointed that a tougher, more combative line against Pakistan was not recommended.<sup>250</sup> Cortazzi agreed that a strong line was needed, but felt that Britain carried little weight in Pakistani eyes and was therefore limited in influence.<sup>251</sup> When Smith, Pickering, and van Doren arrived in London, Cortazzi was at pains to point out that the UK was not complacent, despite what the US delegation might think. He suggested that the universal declaration was still a viable idea, as it addressed the problems presented by Pakistan *and* India.<sup>252</sup> Smith responded by highlighting how important the CTB negotiations were in showing the developing world that the nuclear weapon states were taking vertical proliferation seriously but he also espoused scepticism about the universal solution’s viability because of its linkages to the international nuclear trade.<sup>253</sup>

Smith offered a gloomy assessment of his sojourn in Europe when he returned to Washington. West Germany lacked commitment to non-proliferation, the Netherlands was supportive, France stressed it was the only nation other than the US to take concrete action against Pakistan, and Britain doubted that ‘sticks and carrots’ would have any effect. The UK and FRG had also cited the Chinese point of view on the entire issue.<sup>254</sup> Chinese officials had defended the right of states to acquire nuclear weapons and advised against a tough line on Pakistan due to its importance in the South Asian anti-Soviet structure.<sup>255</sup> Despite this, Chinese diplomats had frequently advised American counterparts that they disapproved of the “unwise” Pakistani weapons programme. A later CIA estimate challenged this position, suggesting China was actually aiding the Pakistani programme as part of its anti-Soviet

---

<sup>249</sup> Maddock, 125-126, 247-248.

<sup>250</sup> Moberly, ‘The Sub-continent: Nuclear Issues,’ October 30, 1979, TNA FCO96/960, 1-2.

<sup>251</sup> Cortazzi, ‘The Sub-continent: Nuclear Issues,’ October 30, 1979, TNA FCO96/960.

<sup>252</sup> ‘Anglo-US Talks, FCO, London,’ November 1, 1979, TNA FCO37/2208, 2.

<sup>253</sup> Ibid, 4; FCO to Washington, ‘Pakistan Nuclear,’ November 5, 1979, TNA FCO96/960, 1.

<sup>254</sup> Smith to Vance, ‘Consultation in Europe on Pakistan,’ November 15, 1979, USPQB, Doc45, 2.

<sup>255</sup> Alston to White, ‘Visit of Chairman Hua to Paris: Pakistan Nuclear,’ October 25, 1979, TNA FCO96/960; FCO to Peking, ‘Premier Hua’s Visit,’ November 6, 1979, TNA FCO96/960, 4.

posture.<sup>256</sup> Smith saw the PRC as “preaching the need to bolster Pakistan as a barrier to Soviet adventurism in the region” and argued there was “little enthusiasm in Europe to emulate our position with Pakistan.”<sup>257</sup>

The British still attempted diplomacy to encourage change in Pakistan, despite American doubts. There were fraught meetings in London between Shah Nawaz, Minister for Foreign & Commonwealth Affairs Peter Blaker, and Hugh Cortazzi. Shah Nawaz found suggestions of Libyan funding for the nuclear programme “utter nonsense” and harangued his hosts about all the efforts—SANWFZ, offers for joint inspections with India—that Pakistan had made to defuse the situation.<sup>258</sup> Cortazzi pointed out that the cancellation of elections and the imposition of Islamic punishments were seriously affecting Pakistan’s image in British eyes, an image that could be further damaged should Pakistan carry out a nuclear test.<sup>259</sup> Kelvin White of SAD thought Shah Nawaz’s comments were “flannel” but noted that, over lunch, Shah Nawaz had stated that Pakistan should enter a state of nuclear ambiguity, just like Israel.<sup>260</sup> This was exactly what both Britain and America, in their own ways, sought from the Pakistani leadership. Cortazzi then visited Pakistan, meeting with Zia and Shahi. Despite once more outlining British concerns and clarifying that Britain had no desire to deprive the developing world of access to nuclear power, beyond expressions of goodwill and mutual respect, little was gained by Cortazzi’s sojourn.<sup>261</sup>

By this time, the State Department was searching for any solutions to the Pakistan problem. Aside from continuing with diplomatic efforts and attempts at reassuring Pakistan about its security, a proposal was made to offer Zia funding for a civilian nuclear energy programme, the reason he and Bhutto had claimed for the reprocessing and enrichment projects in the first place.<sup>262</sup> This was a last throw of the dice for the Americans. The

---

<sup>256</sup> CIA, ‘A Review of the Evidence of Chinese Involvement in Pakistan’s Nuclear Weapons Program,’ December 7, 1979, JCPL, RAC NLC-15-37-6-3-6.

<sup>257</sup> Smith to Vance, ‘Consultation in Europe,’ November 15, 1979, 1.

<sup>258</sup> , ‘Summary Record of a Call on Mr Peter Blaker MP, Minister of State, by Shah Nawaz, Pakistan Secretary for Foreign Affairs,’ November 12, 1979, TNA FCO96/961, 1-2.

<sup>259</sup> Ibid, 6.

<sup>260</sup> White to Masfield, ‘Pakistan: Talks With Shah Nawaz,’ November 16, 1979, TNA FCO96/961, 1-2.

<sup>261</sup> UKE Islamabad to FCO, ‘Pakistan Nuclear,’ December 3, 1979, TNA FCO96/961, 1-2; UKE Islamabad to FCO, ‘Anglo/Pakistan Relations,’ December 5, 1979, TNA FCO96/961, 1-3.

<sup>262</sup> Saunders, Pickering, and Lake to Vance, ‘November 14 PRC Meeting on South Asian Nuclear Issues,’ November 10, 1979, USPQB, Doc44, 7.

Islamabad embassy sacking did yet more damage to the US-Pakistan relationship and the hostage crisis in Tehran occupied the administration's attention.<sup>263</sup> In the end, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan would force the Carter administration to make concessions on the supply of arms to Pakistan, the 'sticks and carrots' that so much faith had been placed in.

The political efforts to combat Pakistani nuclear aspirations underwent dramatic, but little commented upon, change during 1979. The gradual switch from prevention to mitigation was a significant alteration in policy, especially for the ardently anti-proliferationist Carter administration. This switch in focus came about because of Pakistani intransigence and an unwillingness of Zia and his subordinates to make any concessions on the nuclear front. Factional disagreements within the US foreign policy establishment and an almost overwhelming faith in the ability of bribery or coercion to solve proliferation problems also hampered the search for solutions. The move to mitigation did not, however, go unchallenged. Ardent non-proliferationists on both sides of the Atlantic sought to maintain a more stringent non-proliferation policy. British efforts to provide a global political answer foundered because of reticence amongst the nuclear weapon states and nuclear supplier states—particularly America—to consider yet another nuclear agreement at a time when SALT II, the CTB, and in particular INFCE were all being discussed.

### **Conclusion**

For American and British policymakers, 1979 was a year of confusion and tension. Publicity surrounding the Pakistani programme contributed to a more heated environment, less conducive to rational diplomacy. The 'Islamic bomb' stories in the media presumed a change in the geopolitical scope of the Pakistani nuclear problem. In public, Pakistani atomic aspirations were no longer a regional, South Asian issue, but an issue with far-reaching consequences extending to the Middle East. While the 'Islamic bomb' paradigm prompted the American and British governments to react to the propaganda problem it created, the intense public discussion about the supposed pan-Islamic nuclear ambitions did little to alter the actual policies or strategies used against Pakistan. What did dramatically alter policy was the intransigence of Zia and his government. The key policy change was the move from

---

<sup>263</sup> UKE Washington to FCO, 'Nuclear South Asia,' December 13, 1979, TNA FCO96/961.

preventing Pakistan acquisition of nuclear capability to mitigating such an acquisition. This was a crucial and little commented upon alteration. The Carter and Thatcher administrations essentially acquiesced to the inevitability of Pakistani nuclear weapons provided the US and UK could maintain the appearance of standing against proliferation. The request for Pakistan not to test a nuclear device was at the crux of this. Such a demand would maintain non-proliferation credibility by removing the potential for a very public embarrassment. In the final analysis, it was not the cultural factor of religion that exerted the greatest influence, but ideas of credibility and face-saving. As 1979 ended, the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan changed the terrain even more. In addition to the tacit acceptance of Pakistani nuclear ambitions contained within the attempts to gain 'no testing' assurances, the invasion meant that Pakistan would be offered arms and aid, even while pursuing its nuclear weapons programme.



## Chapter 6: “Peanuts”

### December 1980 to January 1981

---

On January 18, 1980, Muhammad Zia ul-Haq stood before American journalists and disparaged Jimmy Carter’s offer of military and economic assistance for Pakistan, describing as “peanuts” the US government’s proposed \$400 million aid package.<sup>1</sup> Carter’s abandonment of the embargo put in place by the April 1979 implementation of the Symington Amendment stemmed from the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. US policy towards Pakistan had undergone profound change during 1979, from aiming to prevent Pakistan gaining nuclear capability to endeavouring simply to mitigate the effects of inevitable attainment. Now, Carter’s policies underwent yet another alteration, casting conventional arms restraint aside in an attempt to maintain the appearance of an active non-proliferation stance in South Asia and bolster Pakistan in the face of Soviet adventurism. American *and* British policy transitioned during 1980 from one of mitigation coupled with an embargo on arms sales and aid to one of mitigation, with arms sales and aid becoming de-linked from nuclear policy. As Scott Kaufman persuasively argues, after the invasion of Afghanistan, Carter’s policies on human rights, conventional arms restraint, and non-proliferation vanished.<sup>2</sup>

Vital to this story were American, British, and Pakistani attempts to maintain appearances and credibility. For the Western states, this appearance was one of active non-proliferation activity. The core means for realising this aim were requests to Pakistan not to undertake nuclear testing. Testing would be the most public demonstration that Islamabad had attained nuclear capability and if Pakistan *were* to test, the impact would throw the entire trilateral relationship into doubt. In the face of Soviet expansionism in Afghanistan, none of the three nations could afford for this to occur. Pakistan’s sometimes contrary desire was to avoid being seen as acquiescing to American demands in order to retain standing and influence in the Muslim and non-aligned worlds.

---

<sup>1</sup> USE Islamabad to State, ‘Zia’s Remarks to US Newsmen on US Aid Offer, Bilateral Aid, Nuclear Issue,’ January 18, 1980, DNSA, NP01720, 2.

<sup>2</sup> Kaufman, 231.

Media attention focusing on the nuclear programme also caused frustration, particularly within the British government. Stories about the Khan Affair, the ‘Islamic bomb’, and the clandestine purchasing project threaded through media coverage. This coverage—particularly that related to the Khan Affair—shone a light on efforts to impose global controls on sensitive exports. The reluctance and recalcitrance of key developed world nuclear technology supplier states were also parts of a complex and often frustrating situation for the American and British governments. However, the clandestine purchasing programme was one area where the UK and US governments did continue to make genuine efforts to retard the Pakistani nuclear programme through export controls and international diplomacy.

This chapter will not cover general responses to the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. Many fine scholarly works offer in-depth analyses of policy and motivation, especially as it relates to the Carter administration.<sup>3</sup> Rather, this chapter examines the invasion’s impact on responses to the Pakistani nuclear programme. America and Britain were determined to confront what they saw as renewed Soviet aggression in the developing world, but both faced the dilemma of balancing non-proliferation with the wider needs of a reinvigorated Cold War.

### **The Khan Affair and the ‘Islamic Bomb’ Redux**

Clandestine procurement, the Khan Affair, the ‘Islamic bomb,’ and the media attention paid to these connected issues created serious problems for the US and UK governments during 1980. Margaret Thatcher’s government in particular came under pressure from parliamentarians and journalists, both of whom kept the Pakistani nuclear programme in the public eye. The propaganda predicament this created, while the Anglo-American alliance attempted to fashion a Muslim bulwark against Soviet expansionism, was a thorn in the side of administrations juggling the challenges of non-proliferation and the Soviet threat.

---

<sup>3</sup> Both Kaufman and Kux offer informative overviews (Kaufman, 209-219; Kux, *Disenchanted Allies*, 245-255) and Westad provides a comprehensive account from the Soviet point of view, also touching on US responses (Westad, 299-330). Grasselli provides an account of American and British responses, while Daniel James Lahey updates Grasselli’s analysis in ‘The Thatcher government’s response to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, 1979-1980,’ *Cold War History*, 13:1 (2013), 21-42.

By January 1980, the British government was expressing frustration at Dutch delays in publishing their report on the Khan Affair. Thatcher, Peter Carrington, Douglas Hurd, and other ministers were being bombarded daily with parliamentary questions on the affair, exports, and the Islamic connection. Consequently, the FCO pressed their Dutch counterparts to release the report in the hope of gaining a respite from the ceaseless parliamentary attentions.<sup>4</sup> The British Embassy in The Hague reported that Dutch contacts regarded their own government as being evasive, a consequence of the potential for international embarrassment upon publication of the report and infighting between the Foreign Ministry and the Ministry of Economic Affairs.<sup>5</sup> British diplomats in the Netherlands portrayed Gijs van Aardenne, Minister of Economic Affairs, as deliberately delaying release.<sup>6</sup> Such were the delays that Secretary of State for Energy David Howell wrote to van Aardenne, pointedly asking for a publication date.<sup>7</sup> British irritation with the Dutch continued up to the report's release on February 29. In preparation, the FCO briefed embassies to prepare for extensive media coverage, stressing British innocence in the affair, concern about the laxity of Dutch security, emphasis on export controls, and the extent of diplomatic representations to the Pakistanis.<sup>8</sup>

In parliament, Thatcher's government remained under pressure from opposition parties in the Commons and Lords. The Liberal Lord Avebury, the Labour Lord Wynne-Jones, and the usual 'awkward squad' of anti-nuclear MPs such as Frank Allaun and Tam Dalyell all asked questions about the Pakistani programme. Dalyell personified the parliamentary pressure on the Thatcher government. His barrage of questions covered the Khan Affair, covert purchasing, and the 'Islamic bomb.' On January 17, the Prime Minister responded to Dalyell's probing on the Khan report, assuring the MP that the government was

---

<sup>4</sup> FCO to UKE The Hague, 'URENCO: Khan Affair,' January 4, 1980, TNA FCO96/1077.

<sup>5</sup> UKE The Hague to FCO, 'Khan Affair,' January 7, 1980, TNA FCO96/1077, 1; Hervey to Alston, 'Khan Affair,' January 16, 1980, TNA FCO96/1077.

<sup>6</sup> UKE The Hague to FCO, 'URENCO: Khan Affair,' February 1, 1980, TNA FCO96/1077.

<sup>7</sup> Howell to van Aardenne, Letter, February 11, 1980, TNA FCO96/1107.

<sup>8</sup> FCO to UKHC New Delhi, 'Khan Report,' February 29, 1980, TNA FCO96/107.

taking steps to prevent a repetition of the affair.<sup>9</sup> Shortly thereafter, Dalyell reiterated his “nightmare” of an ‘Islamic bomb’:

If I have nightmares, they are about a Pakistani bomb or a Libyan bomb. We are now told that the Iraqis are doing nuclear weapons for some years, should also be about an Iraqi bomb. Those nations might use a nuclear bomb. It is for that reason that I go on and on, at Prime Minister's Question Time, about the Khan incident, the Urenco incident at Almelo.<sup>10</sup>

The bombardment continued, with Dalyell putting over forty questions to the government during January and February, continually alluding to the “development of a Pakistani or Islamic nuclear weapon.”<sup>11</sup> His supplementary question on “Arab links with Pakistan’s nuclear weapons programme” received a non-committal answer from the FCO that such associations were speculative, rendering official comment impossible. In the background, the FCO underscored the persistence—especially in connection with Libya—of such rumours, but also emphasised a lack of conclusive evidence for such links.<sup>12</sup> Fellow Labour MP Frank Allaun supported Dalyell. Allaun had, in 1978, publicised the inverter issue, and used that instance of Pakistani “deceit” to interrogate Thatcher on the wisdom of arming Pakistan to resist Soviet incursions. As had been the case from 1974 onwards, the larger question was of whether or not the proliferation question could exist in compartmentalised form, hived off from other matters such as conventional arms supply. Thatcher explicitly compartmentalised the issues, contending that the government had sought Pakistani assurances on nuclear technology transfers. Thatcher argued that Pakistan was now in the “front line” of a revived Cold War, making the issue of arms sales a separate matter.<sup>13</sup>

---

<sup>9</sup> Tam Dalyell, Written Answers (Commons), ‘Nuclear Security,’ January 17, 1980, *Hansard Online*, [http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/written\\_answers/1980/jan/17/nuclear-security#S5CV0976P2\\_19800117\\_CWA\\_24](http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/written_answers/1980/jan/17/nuclear-security#S5CV0976P2_19800117_CWA_24) (accessed on October 30, 1980).

<sup>10</sup> Tam Dalyell, Speech (Commons), ‘Nuclear Weapons,’ January 22, 1980, *Hansard Online*, [http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1980/jan/24/nuclear-weapons#column\\_726](http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1980/jan/24/nuclear-weapons#column_726) (accessed on October 30, 1980).

<sup>11</sup> Caroline Moorhead, ‘Pakistanis rejected aid to protect nuclear programme,’ *TT*, March 8, 1980, 5; Tam Dalyell, Speech (Commons), ‘Nuclear Security,’ January 31, 1980, *Hansard Online*, [http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1980/jan/31/nuclear-security-1#S5CV0977P0\\_19800131\\_HOC\\_285](http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1980/jan/31/nuclear-security-1#S5CV0977P0_19800131_HOC_285) (accessed on October 30, 1980).

<sup>12</sup> ‘Draft Supplementary PQ (Mr Dalyell),’ January 25, 1980, TNA FCO96/1103.

<sup>13</sup> Frank Allaun, Question (Commons), ‘Nuclear Security,’ January 29, 1980, *Hansard Online*, [http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1980/jan/29/nuclear-security#S5CV0977P0\\_19800129\\_HOC\\_158](http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1980/jan/29/nuclear-security#S5CV0977P0_19800129_HOC_158) (accessed on October 30, 1980).

Dalyell's ceaseless prying provoked frustration and anger within a government attempting to balance support for Pakistan with attempts to delay Islamabad's eventual Pakistani nuclear capability. Senior ministers tasked Norman Lamont, DoE Parliamentary Under-secretary, with briefing Dalyell in the hope of persuading the MP to moderate his inquisition. Reflecting on the meeting, Lamont informed Carrington that he had explained to Dalyell how troubled the government was about the Khan Affair, making repeated representations to the Dutch, but were constrained by the situation's delicacy and wider implications. Lamont concluded that his *tête-à-tête* with Dalyell might have moderated the MP's campaign.<sup>14</sup> This was a forlorn hope. FCO arms control experts concluded that the state of affairs had become absurd, each answer giving Dalyell ammunition for his next salvo.<sup>15</sup> The MP persisted, following up speculation about Libyan-Pakistani nuclear connections. The government maintained that such matters were speculative or confidential and Prime Ministerial briefings still argued that there was no "corroborative evidence" for such allegations.<sup>16</sup> Furthermore, the FCO reasoned that to develop nuclear weapons, Libya must abrogate its NPT commitments *and* a recently concluded IAEA safeguards agreement.<sup>17</sup> Dalyell's relentless interrogation led to the suggestion of *another* confidential briefing, this time with the FCO's Douglas Hurd.<sup>18</sup> For the rest of the year and far into the decade, Dalyell kept the pressure on Thatcher's government regarding Pakistan and wider nuclear issues.

By the time the FCO commented on the "absurdity" of Dalyell's relentless pursuit of answers there had been extensive discussions within the government, and between Britain and America, that emphasised that attempts to hobble the Pakistani purchasing programme could not cease. Michael Pakenham at the British Embassy in Washington observed that further revision to export controls in the US and UK might be required, now that the

---

<sup>14</sup> Lamont to Carrington, 'The Khan Affair: Tam Dalyell's Parliamentary Questions, Record of a Meeting With Tam Dalyell,' January 28, 1980, TNA FCO96/1077, 1-2.

<sup>15</sup> Reeve to Moberly, 'PQ by Mr Tam Dalyell MP: Non-proliferation Treaty,' March 7, 1980, TNA FCO37/2370.

<sup>16</sup> Tam Dalyell, Written Answers (Commons), 'Nuclear Proliferation,' March 13, *Hansard Online*, [http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/written\\_answers/1980/mar/13/nuclear-proliferation](http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/written_answers/1980/mar/13/nuclear-proliferation) (accessed on Oct.30, 2013); 'For the Prime Minister: Parliamentary Question (Background),' Undated, TNA FCO 37/2370, 1.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid*, 2.

<sup>18</sup> Alston to Moberly, 'Mr Tam Dalyell MP: Questions on Non-proliferation,' March 18, 1980, TNA FCO37/2370.

Pakistanis were aware of the efforts being made to impede their access to critical materials.<sup>19</sup> The FCO was also concerned that because America and Britain were making public moves to bolster Pakistan, some key nuclear technology suppliers “may relax on the Pakistan nuclear issue, not only in their diplomatic contacts with the Pakistanis but also in the field of export controls.” The FCO regarded the American position as critical, arguing that many other states took their cue from the US.<sup>20</sup> The State Department’s Thomas Pickering—visiting London on January 18—observed to the JNU’s Robert Alston that while no further pressure would be put on Pakistan regarding the nuclear issue and aid offers were not contingent upon a change in Pakistani nuclear policy, the Carter administration had made it abundantly clear that non-proliferation credibility remained relevant. Furthermore, the US government would continue pursuit of tough export controls and remained committed to encouraging compliance by other states.<sup>21</sup> Communications to US embassies at the end of the month clarified this stance, underscoring the continuing need for Anglo-American diplomatic cooperation to frustrate the enrichment programme.<sup>22</sup>

Mounting evidence not only of Pakistani purchasing efforts, but also of the lack of controls in key supplier states, confirmed the need for sustained attention to export restrictions. The FRG, Norway, Switzerland, Turkey, and even Britain itself, were all highlighted as somehow problematic. The geographical diversity of Pakistani purchasing compounded the difficulty and complexity of managing export controls. As more information appeared, it became clearer that the Pakistani network was well organised and global in reach. The West German attitude remained awkward, the FRG’s government unwilling to take the action on export controls that the UK and US desired.<sup>23</sup> British diplomats kept their German contacts under pressure, but the outlook was gloomy. By October, Britain’s Bonn embassy contended that the Germans had “given up” on the question of exports, and were obstructive and

---

<sup>19</sup> Pakenham to Alston, ‘Nuclear Exports: UK Controls,’ January 11, 1980, TNA FCO96/1103, 2.

<sup>20</sup> FCO to UKE Washington, ‘Pakistan Nuclear,’ January 16, 1980, TNA FCO96/1103.

<sup>21</sup> Alston to Moberly, ‘Non-proliferation: India and Pakistan: US Views,’ January 18, 1980, TNA FCO96/1103.

<sup>22</sup> State to USE Bern et al, ‘US Non-proliferation Policy and Renewed Assistance to Pakistan,’ January 30, 1980, USPQB, Doc.36.

<sup>23</sup> UKE Bonn to FCO, ‘Nuclear Exports: Export Controls,’ January 8, 1980, TNA FCO96/1103.

disinclined to put proper regulations in place.<sup>24</sup> The US and UK saw Turkey as a potentially worrying case because of Islamic ties, Turkish disillusionment with the West, Turko-Pakistani military relations, and potential Turkish interest in acquiring nuclear technology for its own use. Like Britain, Turkey was in dire economic straits and, in the florid language of one British official, would “sell her soul to the devil” for foreign trade.<sup>25</sup> However, the final analysis was that the Turks probably saw Pakistani nuclear aspirations as destabilising and—although the Turkish government relied on Islamic fundamentalist support in parliament—it was doubtful if that influenced Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel’s administration in this case.<sup>26</sup> The US made a series of representations to the Turks, who were sympathetic to the problem but as with many other nations, including the FRG, felt they could do little because of inadequate export controls and a lack of justification for the action.<sup>27</sup> In northern Europe, the Norwegians were more amenable to British and American approaches. Newspaper stories about firms supplying materials to Pakistan had recently embarrassed the Norwegian parliament.<sup>28</sup> The US and UK expressed concern and in return gained guarantees from Oslo to tighten controls and curtail the export of sensitive items to South Asia.<sup>29</sup>

Thatcher’s government remained anxious about the role of British companies in supplying Pakistan with materials for the clandestine programme. The inter-departmental Official Group on the Control of the Export of Special Materials and Equipment (OGCESME) identified several shipments to Pakistan and argued that the implications of a nuclear arms race on the sub-continent had become even more serious. Export controls had a key role to play in winning time for a political solution.<sup>30</sup> Parliamentary and public interest

---

<sup>24</sup> UKE Bonn to FCO, ‘Export Control Regulations,’ October 29, 1980, TNA FCO96/1106; UKE Bonn to FCO, untitled, November 21, 1980, TNA FCO96/1107.

<sup>25</sup> Rawlinson to Martin, ‘Turkey: Possible Sale of Nuclear Related Equipment to Pakistan,’ March 5, 1980, TNA FCO37/2370.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> ‘Pakistan Nuclear: Summary of Discussion With US Representatives on 23 April,’ April 29, 1980, TNA FCO37/2370, 5; Alston to Roberts, ‘US/Turkish Discussions on Inverters for Pakistan,’ June 25, 1980, TNA FCO96/1105.

<sup>28</sup> Jones to Alston, ‘Pakistan Nuclear,’ April 24, 1980, FCO96/1105.

<sup>29</sup> Alston to Jones, ‘Pakistan Nuclear,’ April 28, 1980, TNA FCO96/1105; Jones to Alston, ‘Pakistan Nuclear,’ May 12, 1980, TNA FCO96/1105.

<sup>30</sup> Alston to Press, ‘Official Group on the Control of the Export of Special Materials and Equipment,’ January 23, 1980, TNA FCO37/2370.

in the issue made it even more important that orders—such as one placed with (and declined by) EEIC—be prevented from leaving the country or stopped at source.<sup>31</sup>

Switzerland was one of the most intractable supplier states and the Swiss case typified the challenge of controlling sensitive exports. The American and British diplomatic efforts of 1979 had borne little fruit, and Swiss firms such as CORA and VAT remained—according to American and British intelligence—principal suppliers to the Pakistani programme. In US-UK meetings, Robert Gallucci noted the difficulties posed by Switzerland and Robert Alston clarified the need for close cooperation to combat the activities of Swiss firms.<sup>32</sup> Preparing for a meeting between Carrington and his Swiss opposite number, Pierre Aubert, Alston opined, “The Swiss are the least cooperative of all suppliers of nuclear equipment in exercising restraint in the interests of non-proliferation. They try to hide behind the letter of the minimum conditions agreed by the Nuclear Suppliers Group.”<sup>33</sup> In Washington, the NSC staff commented that the Swiss record on Pakistan was “just appalling” and that all American protestations had gone unheeded.<sup>34</sup> The Swiss government, despite *démarches* from Washington and London, remained reluctant to directly intervene, characterised by NSC Executive Secretary Peter Tarnoff as ignoring exports not explicitly identifiable as nuclear. Even high-level representations—such as Warren Christopher’s approach to Swiss ambassador Raymond Probst on the latter’s departure from the position—failed to achieve results.<sup>35</sup>

Swiss reluctance to target its ‘leaky’ firms fed the media furore surrounding the Pakistani programme. The *Washington Post* reported extensively on the matter—frequently using the ‘Islamic bomb’ as a framing device—alleging that the Carter administration had threatened to curb nuclear cooperation with Switzerland unless the Swiss government improved export controls.<sup>36</sup> Christopher made it clear that this was not strictly the case, but

---

<sup>31</sup> Carter to Gittelsohn, ‘Inverters for Pakistan,’ February 26, 1980, TNA FCO96/1104.

<sup>32</sup> ‘Pakistan Nuclear: Summary of Discussion With US representatives on 23 April,’ April 29, 1980, TNA FCO37/2370, 1-2.

<sup>33</sup> Alston to Moberly, ‘Visit of Swiss Foreign Minister: Non-proliferation,’ April 24, 1980, TNA FCO37/2370, 2.

<sup>34</sup> Global Issues to Brzezinski, ‘Evening Report,’ July 1, 1980, JCPL, RAC NLC-28-56-1-14-4.

<sup>35</sup> Tarnoff to Brzezinski, ‘Swiss Assistance to Pakistan’s Nuclear program,’ August 12, 1980, JCPL, RAC NLC-28-55-8-12-0, 1-2.

<sup>36</sup> Leonard Downie Jr, ‘Swiss Send Nuclear Aid to Pakistan,’ *WP*, September 21, A1; Leonard Downie Jr, ‘U.S. Says Evidence Shows Pakistan Planning A-bomb,’ *WP*, September 21, 1980, A20; Leonard Downie Jr, ‘U.S., Swiss At Impasse on A-Policy,’ *WP*, September 22, A1.



that the State Department had delayed Swiss requests for the transfer of US-origin fuel to the UK and Italy for reprocessing until Bern took action on exports to Pakistan.<sup>37</sup> Despite media coverage and diplomatic pressure, the Swiss continually frustrated efforts to bring them into the export control fold.<sup>38</sup> By the last few weeks of the Carter administration, the situation remained unresolved, despite a more constructive tone from Bern and a turnabout in US attitudes that—concurrent with the waning of enthusiasm for non-proliferation—saw denying approval for the transfer of Swiss fuel as less of a pressure point and more of an impediment to gaining Swiss cooperation.<sup>39</sup>

In Britain, the question of British firms being disadvantaged by a commitment to strict controls had been debated ever since the inverter issue became known. In late 1979, the outcry over the Khan Affair had rekindled these debates. Hurd argued for tighter controls in light of the Khan revelations. Although Britain could not do this alone, Hurd pointed out that strong action would send a clear signal to other supplier nations.<sup>40</sup> The DoT's Cecil Parkinson accepted the situation's seriousness, but stressed the importance of foreign trade to Britain and argued that if other countries (such as Switzerland) were not enforcing controls, why should the UK damage its economy by rigorously screening exports?<sup>41</sup> From this brief debate, export controls *were* tightened to place further restrictions on items that could potentially be used in a nuclear weapons programme.<sup>42</sup> The same debate took place in mid-1980, prompted by Swiss dissembling about their nuclear exports. Parkinson harked back to his 1979 comments and although he disagreed with a strong British stance on exports whilst competitors were profiting from the Pakistani programme, he reluctantly agreed to another tightening of export controls.<sup>43</sup>

---

<sup>37</sup> Christopher to Carter, Memorandum, September 23, 1980, JCPL, RAC NLC 128-15-9-12-1, 2.

<sup>38</sup> Brzezinski to Carter, 'Information Items,' October 31, 1980, JCPL, RAC NLC-1-17-4-29-7, 2; Alston to Roberts, 'Centrifuge Technology: Switzerland and Pakistan,' November 7, 1980, TNA FCO96/1107; State to USE Bonn, 'FRG Nuclear Exports to Pakistan,' November 30, 1980, JCPL, RAC NLC-16-121-3-26-9, 2.

<sup>39</sup> Muskie to Carter, 'Transition Issues,' November 10, 1980, JCPL, RAC NLC-15-61-5-24-7, 8; Muskie to Carter, 'US-Swiss Nuclear Cooperation Issue,' December 29, 1980, JCPL, RAC NLC-128-16-19-2, 2.

<sup>40</sup> Hurd to Parkinson, 'Control of Nuclear Exports,' August 14, 1979, TNA FCO96/958, 1-2.

<sup>41</sup> Parkinson to Hurd, 'Control of Nuclear Exports,' August 28, 1979, TNA FCO96/959, 1.

<sup>42</sup> Hurd to Parkinson, 'Control of Nuclear Exports,' September 26, 1979, TNA FCO96/959.

<sup>43</sup> Parkinson to Hurd, Letter, July 21, 1980, TNA FCO37/2371.

While Washington and London attempted to restrict Pakistani access to sensitive materials, the professed need to gain the trust and support of Muslim states in combating the Soviets in Afghanistan butted up against continued media deployment of the ‘Islamic bomb’ trope.<sup>44</sup> Throughout 1980, print and broadcast media imbued the Pakistani nuclear programme with transnational religious overtones. Just as in 1979 when the issue became a major story, the media used the ‘Islamic bomb’—often in a lazy or sensationalist manner—as shorthand for an expected proliferation cascade with dire consequences for the Middle East. The persistence of this trope created an uncomfortable tension between Pakistani nuclear aspirations, the Afghanistan crisis, and efforts to build a Muslim anti-Soviet alliance.

Since December 1979, stories had circulated about the delivery of uranium ‘yellow cake’ from the Islamic African nation of Niger to Libya and then to Pakistan with French involvement.<sup>45</sup> The possibility that these Islamic states had received raw uranium supplies outside of international controls disturbed FCO officials.<sup>46</sup> Rumours of violent uranium convoy hijackings and diversion to Libya and Pakistan precipitated hurried denials from Nigeri-French mining concerns SOMAIR and COMINAK.<sup>47</sup> The reporting on this matter once again argued that a Pakistani bomb could be a Libyan-funded ‘Islamic bomb.’<sup>48</sup> In the United States, the CIA maintained its persistent belief in the possibility of an ‘Islamic bomb.’ In an assessment of Pakistani connections in the Middle East, the agency again suggested that Libya and Pakistan were cooperating on nuclear weapons technology.<sup>49</sup> The same organisation later contended that Pakistani attainment of ‘the bomb’ might well axiomatically imply Libya nuclear capability.<sup>50</sup> The CIA’s position is at least in part explicable by reference to the position the agency found itself in at the end of the 1970s.

---

<sup>44</sup> The British government also attempted to negotiate Soviet withdrawal under the ‘Afghanistan neutrality’ plan. Such efforts involved extensive contacts with Pakistan and members of the Islamic Conference. The plan eventually came to naught. See Grasselli, 90-94.

<sup>45</sup> Tony Terry, ‘French Uranium for Libya,’ *The Sunday Times*, December 2, 1979, E28. ‘Yellow cake’ is a powdered, semi-processed form of uranium used in the preparation of fuel for nuclear reactors and other applications.

<sup>46</sup> Seton to Carter, Handwritten Memo, January 9, 1980, TNA FCO96/1103.

<sup>47</sup> ‘Translation of a Telex from Head of Public Relations of CEA to Mr Chadwick,’ January 4, 1980, TNA FCO96/1103.

<sup>48</sup> Paul Webster, ‘French deny direct sale of uranium to Pakistan,’ *TG*, January 5, 1980, 5.

<sup>49</sup> CIA (National Foreign Assessment Center), ‘Pakistan: The Middle East Connection,’ February, 1980, CIA FOIA [www.foia.cia.gov/sites/default/files/document\\_conversions/89801/DOC\\_0000631184.pdf](http://www.foia.cia.gov/sites/default/files/document_conversions/89801/DOC_0000631184.pdf) (accessed on October 30, 2013), 5.

<sup>50</sup> CIA (National Foreign Assessment Center), ‘Developments in the Libyan Nuclear Program,’ May, 1980, JCPL, RAC NLC-6-48-4-23-4, 11.

Carter was winding down the CIA, and the foregrounding of new ‘threats to national security’ would serve as a countermeasure to this. In the case of Iran, the general feeling within the US government was that the intelligence agency had failed to anticipate the rise and triumph of the clerics. Thus, a fixation on the Muslim threat may have been overcompensation for this oversight.<sup>51</sup>

In March, it became clear to British politicians and officials that a major media investigation into the alleged ‘Islamic bomb’ was underway. Having been so deeply involved in the inverter affair, EEIC again approached the British government with disturbing news. BBC journalists, as part of research for a documentary on Pakistani nuclear ambitions, had approached the company.<sup>52</sup> Company management had denied the BBC permission to film at the factory, but that did not stop production going ahead. The programme—which eventually appeared in June—was hugely significant for the ‘Islamic bomb’ concept. In the intervening months, stories about Pakistani nuclear aspirations were continually framed within a pan-Islamic context. Discussion of Libya seemed to require a mention of alleged Libyan-Pakistani cooperation.<sup>53</sup> Journalists couched their commentary in the now familiar language of an Islamic proliferation cascade. For example, Jack Anderson wrote in the *Washington Post*:

When Pakistan does get its nuclear bomb, the world will enter a new and more dangerous era. A shaky dictatorship like Gen. Zia ul-Haq’s, armed with a nuclear arsenal is frightening enough. What makes the situation far worse is that Pakistan will likely share its nuclear know-how with even less responsible Arab nations, like the fanatic Muammar Qaddafi’s Libya, which is a protector of terrorists and an implacable foe of Israel.<sup>54</sup>

Echoing Dalyell’s December 1979 address, Anderson’s piece illustrates how entrenched the belief that Pakistan would share its nuclear technology with its co-religionists had become. As Rodney Jones argues, coverage of the ‘Islamic bomb’ implicitly (and sometimes

---

<sup>51</sup> Rhodri Jeffreys-Jones, Personal Emails to the Author, June 4, 2012, and December 4, 2013. I am indebted to Emeritus Professor Jeffreys-Jones for his insights into this matter and his generosity in taking the time to discuss the CIA’s position during the period under study.

<sup>52</sup> Gittelsohn to Parkin, ‘BBC Television: Pakistan,’ March 20, 1980, TNA FCO96/1105.

<sup>53</sup> Paul Webster, ‘President’s positions fall to rebel forces in Chad,’ *TG*, April 5, 1980, 5.

<sup>54</sup> Jack Anderson, ‘Pakistan Near Entry Into Atomic Club,’ *WP*, April 11, 1980, B9.

explicitly) contains within it “worst-case scenarios about threats to the security and perhaps survival of Israel.”<sup>55</sup>

On June 16, the BBC aired ‘Project 706: The Islamic Bomb’ as part of the popular *Panorama* current affairs strand. The documentary underscored alleged Pakistani-Libyan connections, uranium from Niger, the complicity of British, German, Italian, and Swiss industry, and the threat of an Islamic proliferation cascade.<sup>56</sup> The opening monologue by reporter Philip Tibenham drew upon ‘Islamic bomb’ speculation, alarmingly informing viewers that:

This convoy grinding across the empty Sahara is carrying what could be the raw material for the world’s first nuclear war. The trucks are heading for a dusty desert air strip with a cargo of uranium yellow cake. It’s been mined in the Islamic state of Niger. It’ll be flown on to Islamic Libya; then on to Islamic Pakistan. Tonight, *Panorama* reports exclusively on payments of millions of pounds by Libya’s Colonel Gaddafi to finance Pakistan’s efforts to build the ‘Islamic bomb’.<sup>57</sup>

The JNU assessed the documentary as, in the broadest sense, a substantially accurate account of Pakistani efforts. In detail, however, the programme was characterised as speculative and inaccurate. Analysts contended that by far the most important allegation was the Libyan/‘Islamic’ bomb, but that there was *still* no substantive evidence that Libya had provided finance *or* that Pakistan had agreed to proliferate. Anonymous allegations in the documentary were “sensational” but carried “little conviction” (although DoE analysts were slightly more convinced of the interviewee’s sincerity).<sup>58</sup> On-the-record government responses stressed Libyan adherence to the NPT and Pakistani non-proliferation assurances. For Thatcher’s government, the most embarrassing element was the broadcasting of the programme during a visit to London by Agha Shahi, provoking anger amongst the Pakistani delegation.<sup>59</sup> Government analysts argued that, overall, European industrial firms—including EEIC—came off far worse than governments, Dutch laxity receiving no coverage at all.

---

<sup>55</sup> Rodney W. Jones, *Nuclear Proliferation: Islam, the Bomb, and South Asia* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, for the Center for International and Strategic Studies, 1981), 44.

<sup>56</sup> A low-quality recording of the documentary is available at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=mu99D4l6ja0](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mu99D4l6ja0) (accessed on December 16, 2013).

<sup>57</sup> Transcript, ‘Panorama Contents Monday 17<sup>th</sup> June 1980 5340/5525 2042-2100 BBC-1; Project 706: The Islamic Bomb,’ BBC Written Archives Centre, File T67/13/1, Panorama-Project706-The Islamic Bomb, 1.

<sup>58</sup> Roberts to Acland, ‘Panorama Documentary on Pakistan Nuclear Programme,’ June 17, 1980, TNA FCO37/2370, 1.

<sup>59</sup> Lavers to Roberts, ‘Pakistan Nuclear: Panorama Programme, 16 June,’ June 18, 1980, TNA FCO37/2370.

Furthermore, the documentary offered an “extremely shallow” analysis of the links between civilian and military nuclear technology. Crucially, British experts did not see the film as harmful to the government or detrimental to international anti-proliferation efforts.<sup>60</sup> In the face of media reporting on the documentary—particularly in the *Guardian*, the paper that led reporting on the ‘Islamic bomb’—the Thatcher government stressed Pakistani assurances and a lack of evidence for an Islamic connection.<sup>61</sup>

As the media continued to draw attention to the Pakistani nuclear programme’s supposed religious aspects, journalists drew other states aspirations into the fold. The *Daily Express* cited Islamic—but secular—Ba’athist Iraq as the next nation likely to “go nuclear” in a lurid story about murders, smugglers, and Parisian chambermaids. As part of a report on Egyptian physicist Yehya al-Meshad’s killing by persons unknown (allegedly because of his role in Saddam Hussein’s nuclear programme), the newspaper warned its readers that, “Arab states have lost all hope of winning a conventional war against Israel. So a terrifying premium has been placed on the alternative—a nuclear bomb. Pakistan, funded by Libya’s Colonel Gaddafi, already has the know-how.”<sup>62</sup> The *Guardian*’s Eric Silver, reporting from Jerusalem, observed, “no one here doubts the danger from an Arab or Islamic bomb.”<sup>63</sup> In an editorial also criticising the Israeli nuclear stance, the normally sober *Times* asked if by 1985 might there not be nuclear weapons in the hands of “fanatical Islamic revolutionaries?” or could the Libyan-Pakistani ‘Islamic bomb’ have eventuated?<sup>64</sup> This last piece did not go unchallenged. Syed Aziz Pasha, General Secretary of the Union of Muslim Organisations of UK and Eire, castigated the *Times* for causing “anger and distress” not only to British, but to all Muslims. Aziz contended that the so-called ‘Islamic bomb’ did not actually exist and argued that no other nuclear programme had ever been named for the religious affiliations of

---

<sup>60</sup> Fullerton to Manley, ‘Panorama Programme on Pakistan Nuclear Bomb,’ June 18, 1980, TNA FCO96/1105, 1-2.

<sup>61</sup> FCO to UKE Islamabad, Untitled, June 18, 1980, TNA FCO37/2371, 2.

<sup>62</sup> Jeffrey Richelson, *Spying on the Bomb: American Nuclear Intelligence from Nazi Germany to Iran and North Korea* (New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Co., 2006), 321; Jack Gee, ‘The chambermaid who stumbled on a secret A-war,’ *The Daily Express*, July 8, 1980, 9.

<sup>63</sup> Eric Silver, ‘French nuclear sale angers Israel,’ *TG*, July 18, 1980, 6.

<sup>64</sup> Editorial, ‘Is There An Islamic Bomb?,’ *TT*, July 22, 1980, 13.

the originating state. The paper rather primly added, “The phrase ‘Islamic bomb’, which has passed into common usage, did not originate with the *The Times*.”<sup>65</sup>

The protest by Aziz did not stop the *The Times* publishing another piece on Pakistan that explicitly connected nuclear ambitions and Islam. Going back to Bhutto’s death cell testimony, the article concluded “Pakistan’s nuclear activity—and the implications of an Islamic bomb, if ever such a thing should exist—threaten to usher in a new age of uncertainty.”<sup>66</sup> Veteran journalist James Cameron, even while satirising attitudes towards nuclear weapons, asserted that Islam was “the originator of spreading God’s word by the sword” and that he would not “especially like to be sent into eternity by a General Zia finger on the button, let alone a Khomeini finger.”<sup>67</sup> Even in satire, the media portrayed Islam as violent and the ‘Islamic bomb’ as leading to an almost inevitable Middle Eastern apocalypse.

The American press also weighed in, bringing together a mix of the Khan Affair, Islam, Swiss obduracy, and Libyan anti-Americanism. Revelations surrounding ‘Billygate,’ the Libyan business connections of Carter’s wayward brother, then under investigation by the Justice Department did not help the situation.<sup>68</sup> In a *Washington Post* article that liberally referenced the Panorama documentary, an anonymous US official made a thinly veiled swipe at the Europeans, commenting, “Some countries were lax and bureaucratically inept ... but some others knew what was happening and allowed it to go ahead for political or commercial reasons.”<sup>69</sup> By the end of the year, the same newspaper reported alleged fissures in the ‘Islamic bomb’ project, Libya portrayed as frustrated by a lack of Pakistani progress.<sup>70</sup> The issue that dominated the American media when it came to Islam was not the potential for a Muslim nuclear weapon. The Iranian hostage crisis occupied far more column inches and hours of broadcasting. The encounter with an unrealised Islamic nuclear weapon remained less significant than the very real encounter with the new form of political Islam represented by Iran.

---

<sup>65</sup> Syed Aziz Pasha, Letter ‘Nuclear bomb,’ *TT*, July 29, 1980, 13.

<sup>66</sup> Trevor Fishlock, ‘National pride could push General Zia to Islamic bomb,’ *TT*, August 13, 1980, 6.

<sup>67</sup> James Cameron, ‘Gods of war,’ *TG*, August 19, 1980, 8.

<sup>68</sup> Kaufman and Kaufman, 228-230.

<sup>69</sup> Leonard Downie Jr., ‘U.S. says evidence shows Pakistan planning A-bomb,’ *WP*, September 21, 1980, A20.

<sup>70</sup> John K. Cooley and Lisa Kaufman, ‘Deterring a Qaddafi Bomb,’ *WP*, December 23, 1980, A15.

In public at least, the idea that a Pakistani nuclear bomb was *axiomatically* an Islamic bomb had—by 1980—become so firmly embedded in the media that it went almost totally unchallenged. The Libyan connection, Bhutto and Zia’s inflammatory rhetoric, and the perceived certainty of a pan-Islamic proliferation cascade became accepted as fact. Rebuttals by Muslim leaders such as Syed Aziz Pasha and official governmental comment that such assertions were speculative at best went unheeded. Unlike in 1979, a remarkable aspect of this is the *lack* of comment on the issue within the available official documents, the declassified record showing little in the way of high-level internal discussion. What is unsurprising is the disparity in coverage of the issue in Britain and America. In Britain, the topic was far more pervasive. British partnership in Urenco, the Khan Affair’s public prominence, and Pakistani procurement’s European focus explain the British media’s fascination with the ‘Islamic bomb.’ In America, the issue was subsumed beneath the more pressing topics of the Iranian hostage crisis and Afghanistan. The ‘Islamic bomb’—while terrifying—was a yet-to-be-attained capability. In Iran, by contrast, what was portrayed as a violent, irrational, radical Islamic state directly threatened American citizens.

### **Non-proliferation and the Impact of Afghanistan**

As Soviet troops entered Kabul and détente was in its death throes, Carter determined to make the Kremlin’s actions as costly as possible. He noted in his diary, “I sent messages to our allies, key non-aligned leaders, plus all the Muslim countries—urging them to speak out strongly against the Soviet action.”<sup>71</sup> This Soviet act of “brutality” posed a direct threat to the oil fields of the Persian Gulf and to Afghanistan’s neighbour, Pakistan.<sup>72</sup> Soviet intervention fed perceptions that—from Angola to the Horn of Africa and to Vietnam—the forces of communism were once more on the march.<sup>73</sup> Pakistan—the pivotal state in the region since American loss of influence in Iran—was one of the first states considered in the

---

<sup>71</sup> Carter, *White House Diary*, 382.

<sup>72</sup> Carter, *Keeping the Faith*, 471-472; Jimmy Carter, ‘Address to the Nation on the Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan,’ January 4, 1980, PPPJC, [www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=32911&st=&st1=#axzz2j6opB200](http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=32911&st=&st1=#axzz2j6opB200) (accessed on October 29, 2013).

<sup>73</sup> Richard Vinen, ‘Thatcherism and the Cold War,’ in Ben Jackson and Robert Saunders (eds.), *Making Thatcher’s Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 199.

aftermath of invasion, the need to bolster Pakistan overriding other regional concerns.<sup>74</sup> The relationship with Britain remained vital to building a consensus amongst America's European allies. For Thatcher's government, Afghanistan presented the first major test of their commitment to the trans-Atlantic foreign policy relationship.<sup>75</sup> Thatcher supported Carter when it came to the need for resolute action.<sup>76</sup> Finally, the Islamic world—as Carter had indicated—was key. During 1977 and 1978, the 'Islamic bomb' had featured in discussions about how to deal with the Pakistani nuclear programme but had failed to influence actual policy. By the time of the Afghanistan crisis, there was a confirmed need for the West to make use of the bonds of Islam in order to build a vigorous Muslim anti-Soviet alliance. As Andrew Preston has noted, the assembling of an Islamic coalition to resist the Soviets was founded in a belief that this would “realign the Islamic world's sympathies towards the United States.”<sup>77</sup> Unlike the image created in public, within government Islam was now viewed as a positive force for good in the reinvigorated Cold War.

The need to reinforce and reassure Pakistan gave rise to another change in US government policy. Despite the mid-1979 move to mitigating, rather than preventing, eventual Pakistani nuclear capability, the Carter administration had been determined not to offer the Pakistanis arms and aid. Furthermore, mitigation did not mean that efforts to delay Pakistani nuclear acquisition had ended and the issues of non-proliferation and the supply of conventional arms were still intimately linked. As has been demonstrated, export controls and international diplomacy were used to hinder the programme. However, with the crisis in Afghanistan, Carter's policy mutated again, moving from one of mitigation with punishment (in the form of withholding arms and aid), to one of simple mitigation, where Afghanistan caused arms supplies to be de-linked from the nuclear issue. However, major challenges remained. Carter's previous zeal for non-proliferation—and Congress's concurrent enthusiasm—created difficulties when attempting to bolster Pakistan. Changes were not the sole province of the US government. The shift from prevention to mitigation had also been apparent in British policy during 1979. This change remained in 1980, with Thatcher's

---

<sup>74</sup> Haqqani, 184; Brzezinski, 429.

<sup>75</sup> Lahey, 21.

<sup>76</sup> Carter to Thatcher, transcript of telephone conversation, December 28, 1979, TMSS, THCR3/1/4 (Personal Message T180A/79T), [www.margaretthatcher.org/document/112219](http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/112219) (accessed on October 29, 2013), 3-4.

<sup>77</sup> Preston, 578.



government following the American lead. There were voices within both governments that still called for a strong non-proliferation policy. Non-proliferation advocates like Gerald Smith in Washington and Robert Alston in London made the case for continued pursuit of active non-proliferation policies in the case of Pakistan, but their entreaties were largely ignored by more senior figures who remained committed to mitigation.

For America, Britain, and Pakistan, appearances were vital and it was crucial that—in public at least—perceptions did not arise that sub-continental non-proliferation policy was being abandoned. Consequently, there were persistent demands to Zia's government for assurances that they would not conduct the most public and visible statement of nuclear attainment, a nuclear test. Thus, Pakistan would enter a state of 'nuclear ambiguity' similar to Israel. Concurrently, Islamabad did not wish the appearance of allying too closely with the West in order to maintain standing in the Muslim and non-aligned worlds. Consequently, Zia rejected Carter administration offers of aid and military equipment.

From the moment the Soviets intervened in Afghanistan, the Pakistani nuclear programme influenced thinking on how to bolster and aid a nation that became the lynchpin of the anti-Soviet effort. As the NSC's Thomas Thornton recalled, the American position on Pakistan changed literally overnight.<sup>78</sup> The embargo on military sales underwent swift reassessment in the face of a drastically changed situation in South Asia. Even though the Carter administration had acquiesced to eventual Pakistani nuclear capability, Cyrus Vance still contended that the nuclear programme precluded significant economic aid and credit for military purchases. Secretary of Defense Harold Brown suggested distinguishing between the Pakistani programme as was, and a Pakistani programme involving nuclear testing.<sup>79</sup> This was a key point. A Pakistani test would dramatically demonstrate the failure of non-proliferation policy. Exerting pressure on Zia not to test at least preserved the outward appearance of a successful stance on proliferation. However, certain legislation blocked the way to full-blown aid for Pakistan: the Symington Amendment.

---

<sup>78</sup> Kux, *Disenchanted Allies*, 245.

<sup>79</sup> PRC Meeting, 'Southwest Asia,' December 27, 1979, JCPL, RAC NLC-24-102-1-13-7, 5.

The Amendment impeded acceptance of what Vance, articulating the policy of acquiescence, observed as the “facts of nuclear life” regarding Pakistan.<sup>80</sup> Given that the administration had, by mid-1979, abandoned efforts to totally prevent Pakistani acquisition of nuclear capability, the “facts of life” were that at some point Pakistan would become at least a tacit nuclear weapon state. Several options were presented to Carter, including a presidential waiver, exploring Saudi financing for Pakistani arms purchases, or seeking a one-time Congressional appropriation for military purchases. A waiver was unlikely because of overwhelming intelligence pointing to a Pakistani nuclear weapons programme.<sup>81</sup> Regardless of means, from the outset it was imperative that Pakistan be brought into the fold in order to construct a strong anti-Soviet front in Afghanistan. In Islamabad, Arthur Hummel was convinced that if the Amendment could not be bypassed, the ability to aid Pakistan would be severely muted. The ambassador recommended that the administration deal urgently with the threat to Pakistan, and rationalised the abandonment of efforts to prevent Pakistani nuclear acquisition by stating that the nuclear programme’s slow pace permitted the sidelining of non-proliferation matters for the time being.<sup>82</sup> In the face of a renewed Soviet threat, non-proliferationist Democratic members of Congress such as Jonathan Bingham (D-NY), Frank Church (D-ID), and Clement Zablocki (D-WI) supported special authorisation for aid to Pakistan, overriding the US legislation.<sup>83</sup> Thus, the most ardently non-proliferationist members of Congress actively supported the mitigation policy of de-linking arms sales and the nuclear issue. The Symington Amendment notwithstanding, the administration very quickly deprioritised the nuclear programme. As Brown admitted to his Chinese hosts in Beijing at the end of January, the administration had moved from a policy of prevention to one of mitigation. “Our big problem with Pakistan was their attempts to get a nuclear program,” stated the Secretary of Defense, “Although we still object to their doing

---

<sup>80</sup> UKE Washington to FCO, ‘Afghanistan,’ December 28, 1979, TNA FCO96/961.

<sup>81</sup> Saunders to Vance, ‘NSC Discussion of Support for Pakistan,’ January 1, 1980, DNSA, NP01707, 2-4.

<sup>82</sup> Brzezinski to Carter, ‘Daily Report,’ January 3, 1980, JCPL, RAC NLC-1-13-7-5-4.

<sup>83</sup> UKE Washington to FCO, ‘Nuclear South Asia,’ January 4, 1980, TNA FCO37/2370.

so, we will now set that aside for the time being and concentrate on strengthening Pakistan against potential Soviet action.”<sup>84</sup>

With the USSR having invaded a non-aligned Islamic state, Islam and independent nationalism became significant issues for the Carter administration in mobilising regional resistance to Soviet adventurism.<sup>85</sup> Gaining Islamic support for US objectives meant demonstrating that America was not solely guided by oil and Israel, a demonstration that policymakers hoped would win over states distrustful of America because of anti-colonialist, pan-Arab, and Islamic ideologies.<sup>86</sup> Zia also hoped that by sponsoring an “Afghan jihad” he could gain prestige in the Islamic world.<sup>87</sup>

There was a raft of suggestions regarding how to achieve US goals in relation to Pakistan, from a resurrection of A-7 sales, to debt relief, food aid, refugee assistance, and oil supplies.<sup>88</sup> These suggestions were tied together into a \$400 million deal offered to Agha Shahi when he visited Washington in mid-January.<sup>89</sup> Brzezinski had wanted a much more substantial package for Pakistan, and was frustrated when budgetary restraints, lingering non-proliferation worries, and human rights concerns militated against a larger offer.<sup>90</sup> Seeking a commitment from Pakistan to not test a nuclear weapon was a component of the proposed deal.<sup>91</sup> Vance informed the Pakistani foreign minister that the nuclear issue could be set aside for the time being but was at pains to point out that a test would drastically alter the US-Pakistan relationship. In response, Shahi made a vague commitment that Pakistan would “do nothing to embarrass” the United States.<sup>92</sup> Thomas Pickering had, during his visit to London, made it clear to his British counterparts that the Carter administration still took

---

<sup>84</sup> Brown to Smith, ‘Extract of Memorandum of Conversation,’ January 31, 1980, NSAEBB ‘New Documents Spotlight Reagan-era Tensions Over Pakistani Nuclear Problem’ (hereafter RTPP), [www2.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nukevault/ebb377](http://www2.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nukevault/ebb377) (accessed on October 29, 2013), Doc.33.

<sup>85</sup> ‘Agenda: SCC Meeting, January 14, 1980,’ January 11, 1980, JCPL, RAC NLC-17-18-28-4-0, 1.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>87</sup> Haqqani, 185.

<sup>88</sup> Turner to Carter, ‘Memorandum for the President,’ January 10, 1980, JCPL, Records of the Office of the National Security Advisor (Carter Administration) 1977-1981, Box 59, Pakistan 1/80, 1; USE Islamabad to State, ‘Economic Assistance Package for Pakistan,’ January 10, 1980, DNSA, NP01713, 1.

<sup>89</sup> State to USE Islamabad, ‘US-Pakistan Talks: Economic Assistance and Debt,’ January 15, 1980, DNSA, NP01716, 2.

<sup>90</sup> Brzezinski, 448.

<sup>91</sup> ‘Agenda: SCC Meeting,’ January 11, 1980, 5.

<sup>92</sup> UKE Washington to FCO, ‘US/Pakistan Talks in Washington: 12 January,’ January 15, 1980, TNA FCO96/1103.

the appearance of proliferation seriously. The US representative emphasised to his hosts that while further pressure would not be put on Pakistan regarding the nuclear issue and aid offers were not contingent upon changes in Pakistani nuclear policy, the US government believed it had made it clear that proliferation remained relevant. Pickering argued that a nuclear test would radically alter US-Pakistani relations, making it almost impossible to obtain Congressional approval of military aid.<sup>93</sup> However, Islamabad did not welcome with open arms the \$400 million package put to Shahi in Washington. Zia publicly scoffed at the offer, famously stating it was “peanuts.”<sup>94</sup> Zia’s disparagement represented not just a blow for administration credibility over Pakistan, but a very public strike at the heart of non-proliferation policy.

The UK, recalling the heady days of MacMillan and Kennedy, was a key US ally in the reinvigorated Cold War. US officials highlighted to the British government that the administration’s nuclear policy towards Pakistan had essentially been “put on ice” and that nuclear questions should not prevent swift, decisive action on Afghanistan.<sup>95</sup> The FCO was happy to follow the US lead and saw little that Britain could actually do for Zia, but did not want to let the question of a more “forthcoming” Western policy towards Pakistan “run into the sands.” The UK, Carrington’s FCO suggested, was in a position to discretely encourage other NATO nations to support US action. At all levels there was an awareness of Indian concerns about both the Pakistani nuclear programme and Western re-arming of their neighbour, but the FCO believed that action could not be totally constrained by the traditional Indo-Pakistani rivalry.<sup>96</sup>

Senior British figures, from the Foreign Secretary down, allied themselves with the American approach. Carrington’s high-profile visit to Islamabad in mid-January was not simply to show solidarity with Pakistan but pressed home British views on Zia’s nuclear aspirations. Patrick Moberly, one of Carrington’s top advisers, reaffirmed the centrality of the ‘no testing’ paradigm by contending that “an explosion would endanger Pakistan’s

---

<sup>93</sup> Alston to Moberly, January 18, 1980.

<sup>94</sup> USE Islamabad to State, January 18, 1980, 2.

<sup>95</sup> UKE Washington to FCO, ‘Nuclear South Asia,’ January 4, 1980, TNA FCO96/1103.

<sup>96</sup> FCO to UKE Islamabad, ‘Afghanistan: Support for Pakistan,’ January 1, 1980, TNA FCO96/1103.

security by alarming her neighbours, alerting her enemies and scaring off her friends.”<sup>97</sup>

Moberly also thought it too early to discern how the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan and the Western reaction to it influenced Zia on the nuclear issue: he might be more disposed to listen to reason, but equally he might see Afghanistan as giving him leeway to ignore diplomatic appeals.<sup>98</sup> In Islamabad, Carrington enjoyed extensive discussions with Zia and Agha Shahi. Covering the nuclear issue, Shahi assured Carrington that a Pakistani test would not take place for at least six months and that the “next government” would make any decision for such an action and reiterated Pakistan’s commitment not to transfer nuclear technology or manufacture nuclear weapons.<sup>99</sup>

Carrington’s post-journey report to Thatcher failed to mention the nuclear issue, illustrating the extent to which it had been deprioritised since mid-1979. The Foreign Secretary did highlight the leading role that Saudi Arabia and Pakistan were taking in mobilising Muslim opinion against the USSR. The Pakistanis, Carrington argued, were quite justified in being affronted at the meagreness of the US aid offer when their existing military equipment was so out-dated and ill-suited for purpose.<sup>100</sup> In the face of this, the Foreign Secretary contended that the UK should encourage Carter to meet Pakistan’s military needs up to a level that gave India “no justifiable reasons for concern.”<sup>101</sup> The Pakistanis certainly saw Britain’s role as a conduit for their own interests. While visiting Islamabad, Carrington had taken it upon himself to act as a messenger between Pakistan and India and the Western states, something that Zia valued highly.<sup>102</sup> British diplomats believed they were expected to encourage Saudi Arabia to fund Pakistani defence purchases, lead Western opinion, and urge the US to do more.<sup>103</sup> The British relationship with the Saudis was, however, severely compromised by the Islamic world’s reaction to the ‘Death of a Princess’ affair.<sup>104</sup> During

---

<sup>97</sup> Moberly to Cortazzi, ‘Pakistan: Nuclear Programme,’ January 11, 1980, TNA FCO37/2370.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

<sup>99</sup> UKE Islamabad to FCO, ‘Secretary of State’s Discussions With Agha Shahi,’ January 15, 1980, TNA FCO96/1103, 3.

<sup>100</sup> Carrington to Thatcher, ‘Afghanistan,’ January 19, 1980, TNA FCO96/1104, 2.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid, 4.

<sup>102</sup> ‘Summary Record of a Meeting Between the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary and President Zia of Pakistan,’ January 15, 1980, TNA FCO96/1104, 3-5.

<sup>103</sup> UKE Islamabad to FCO, ‘Follow-up to Your Visit,’ January 22, 1980, TNA FCO96/1103, 3.

<sup>104</sup> *Death of a Princess* was a lightly fictionalised drama-documentary based on the real-life execution of a young Saudi noblewoman for adultery. It was, as Alan Rosenthal argues, an investigation of the “social pressures, ideals,

multilateral talks in London at the end of January, British officials insisted that the nuclear issue should not be “pushed into the shadows,” but only because of the regionally disastrous consequences of a Pakistani test. The US side argued that they had made the dire consequences of a test abundantly clear.<sup>105</sup> However, British policy in these early days evolved into a ‘wait-and-see’ stance, holding back on major commitments to Pakistan until Brzezinski and Christopher had visited Islamabad for talks and Zia had hosted a major gathering of Islamic states.<sup>106</sup> More widely, as Daniel James Lahey points out, British commitments on Afghanistan were diplomatic, rather than economic, in nature. Thatcher could ill-afford anti-Soviet trade restrictions that damaged the fragile British economy.<sup>107</sup> Thus, initial British policy towards Pakistan during the early days of the Afghanistan crisis was founded in diplomatic and moral support. Britain adopted a ‘light touch’ approach emphasising quiet diplomacy that supported US efforts and the campaign against the clandestine purchasing programme.

The Christopher-Brzezinski mission to Islamabad and Riyadh in early February left the US officials feeling optimistic about the future of US-Pakistani relations, despite continued Pakistan intransigence.<sup>108</sup> American refusals to extend security commitments to cover an attack by India (one of the issues driving the nuclear programme) concerned the Pakistanis, but experienced South Asia hands Thomas Thornton and Jane Coon remained puzzled by Zia’s overall attitude.<sup>109</sup> Overtures to Zia had the side effect of upsetting and angering India. In January 1980, Indira Gandhi had returned to power and, while—prompted by Carrington’s efforts—denouncing Soviet adventurism, was even more anxious about US

---

and strains of modern Arab society.” Saudi Arabia—and the wider Islamic world—reacted furiously to the Anglo-American co-production. The British ambassador was expelled from Riyadh, commercial contracts were cancelled, and even overflights by the supersonic *Concorde* were banned. For more, see Alan Rosenthal, ‘The Politics of Passion: An Interview With Anthony Thomas,’ *Journal of Film and Video*, 49:1-2 (Spring/Summer, 1997), 95.

<sup>105</sup> State to USE London, ‘London Meets on Assistance for Pakistan in Light of Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan,’ January 30, 1980, JCPL, RAC NLC-16-120-3-40-4.

<sup>106</sup> UKE Islamabad to FCO, ‘Arms Sales to Pakistan,’ January 30, 1980, TNA FCO96/1104.

<sup>107</sup> Lahey, 27-29.

<sup>108</sup> Brzezinski, 448-449.

<sup>109</sup> Kux, *Disenchanted Allies*, 251.

efforts to turn Pakistan “into an arsenal.”<sup>110</sup> Indian disquiet moved Carter to approve the shipment of nuclear fuel for the reactors at Tarapur, overturning a decision by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC.)<sup>111</sup> In trying to balance Pakistan, India, Afghanistan, and national security policy, Carter only hastened the demise of his flagship non-proliferation policy.

On leaving Pakistan, Brzezinski was, according to one British official, euphoric.<sup>112</sup> The National Security Adviser commented to Sir Robert Wade-Gery, British Deputy Secretary of the Cabinet, that the “material for a successful Southwest Asia policy is there for us to work with.”<sup>113</sup> For Brzezinski, a “successful Southwest Asia policy” was one that continued to deprioritise Pakistani nuclear ambitions while emphasising the communist threat. Reporting back to colleagues in Washington, Brzezinski and Christopher observed that during talks with the Pakistanis, there had been some indications that a nuclear test might be imminent, but these were judged as purely a negotiating tactic, and Shahi vociferously denied there would be a test, in an echo of his earlier remarks to Carrington about the testing issue. Brzezinski argued that the administration should only present Congress with modifications to the 1959 US-Pakistan security agreement and a waiver of the Symington Amendment as part of specific aid proposals, rather than as independent actions. Christopher suggested that Pakistan preferred an “Islamic option,” whereby it should count on a US security umbrella but rely on Muslim states for direct cooperation and support.<sup>114</sup>

Reporting to Carter, Brzezinski stated that the Pakistanis realised the US stood four square behind the 1959 agreement and, as a result, there had been no need to increase the \$400 million package or offer a formal security treaty. On broader geopolitical matters, he contended that effectively mobilising Muslim support required increased efforts on the Palestinian situation and military aid to Saudi Arabia.<sup>115</sup> News from Beijing that Pakistan might imminently conduct a nuclear test put the ‘no testing’ question in alarming perspective.

---

<sup>110</sup> Sir Donald Maitland, transcript of interview by Malcolm McBain, December 11, 1997, BDOHP, [www.chu.cam.ac.uk/archives/collections/BDOHP/Maitland.pdf](http://www.chu.cam.ac.uk/archives/collections/BDOHP/Maitland.pdf) (accessed on November 2, 2013), 36; Kaufman, 218.

<sup>111</sup> Kaufman, 218-219.

<sup>112</sup> Armstrong to Palliser, ‘South West Asia,’ February 5, 1980, TNA PREM19/136.

<sup>113</sup> Brzezinski to Wade-Gery, teletype, February 4, 1980, TNA PREM19/136.

<sup>114</sup> ‘Special Coordination Committee Meeting,’ February 6, 1980, JCPL, RAC NLC-128-10-7-11-0, 2.

<sup>115</sup> Brzezinski to Carter, ‘Summary Report and Recommendations: Pakistan/Saudi Arabia,’ February 6, 1980, DDCS, DDCS-264074-i1-3, 1-2.

The US ambassador to China reported that although the Chinese had discouraged Pakistani nuclear development, a test *was* imminent.<sup>116</sup> As it transpired, the ambassador was mistaken, but there was momentary alarm that Islamabad had *already* attained nuclear capability.<sup>117</sup>

Within the Carter administration there were voices demanding a less relaxed non-proliferation policy. Ardent non-proliferationist Gerald Smith took a dim view of the damage US overtures to Zia were doing to global anti-proliferation efforts. However, by this point Smith's views had been smothered by the mitigationist policy adopted by more influential figures in the administration. Smith recounted that, despite continued demands, Zia had still not definitively ruled out a nuclear test. Smith also recognised that overtures to Pakistan were damaging to Carter's wider non-proliferation efforts. The ambassador saw risks in courting Pakistan: what, Smith wondered, would happen if Zia used US guns to protect the enrichment plant at Kahuta? How should the US react if Pakistan tested a device after a Soviet invasion of their territory, just as America was due to come to their aid? Conversely, Smith subscribed to the West German view that military supplies to Pakistan probably gave leverage over their nuclear decision-making and there was general agreement that there must be no decrease in efforts to rigorously control exports to Pakistan.<sup>118</sup>

Despite the American and British governments stressing that non-proliferation remained important, it became clear that in Washington the policy of mitigating Pakistani acquisition of nuclear capability was increasingly de-linked from the issue of arms sales. As it became clearer that non-proliferation objectives were being divorced from the broader anti-Soviet policy, the NSC articulated the policy of acquiescence to Pakistani nuclear ambitions, stating that although elements of US support should be founded on a request to Pakistan for the strongest non-proliferation statement possible, aid should not be made conditional on the content and nature of such a statement.<sup>119</sup> As the NSC—and Brzezinski in particular—gained pre-eminence in foreign policy and the perception built that the Soviets were on the march in the developing world, hawkish attitudes towards the USSR overrode the humanitarian elements of Carter's policies.

---

<sup>116</sup> UKE Peking to FCO, 'Pakistan Nuclear,' February 14, 1980, TNA FCO96/1104.

<sup>117</sup> Pakenham to Carter, 'Possible Nuclear Test by Pakistan,' February 20, 1980, TNA FCO96/1104.

<sup>118</sup> Pakenham to Alston, 'Nuclear Pakistan,' February 7, 1980, TNA FCO37/2370.

<sup>119</sup> 'Issues Paper for SCC, February 29, 1980,' Undated, JCPL, Zbigniew Brzezinski Collection, Geographic File, Southwest Asia/Persian Gulf, Box 15, 3.



As the US and UK governments pursued the policy of mitigation, primarily through seeking ‘no test’ assurances, it became apparent the Pakistanis also put a great deal of store in the wider perception of their actions. Given the significance that Western media attached to the Pakistani nuclear programme, a consensus in Washington and London emerged that the nuclear issue was *not* a major factor in Pakistani refusal to accept the American aid package after Agha Shahi formally and publicly rejected the offer on March 5. Instead, Shahi emphasised reliance on Pakistan’s growing friendships with China, the Islamic world, and non-aligned states, arguing that a closer relationship with the US could damage these increasingly vital connections.<sup>120</sup> However, speculation remained that the nuclear issue was one of the key reasons for refusal. Although Shah Nawaz had indicated that the Pakistani government thought that nuclear strings *were* attached to the aid offer, Carter surmised that Zia had concluded the value of the aid package was outweighed by the risks of allying too closely with the US. Thus, Carter concluded, the main financing for aid should come from Islamic states.<sup>121</sup> Thatcher agreed and noted that the UK would quietly continue to encourage closer relations between Pakistan and the wider Islamic world.<sup>122</sup> The State Department and the FCO agreed that the nuclear issue was not a major factor governing Pakistani decision-making. The area where Robert Gallucci felt nuclear matters may have had influence was over overt US statements on nuclear testing. Gallucci argued the mantra that a test would “drastically change the relationship” made Zia doubt the depth of Carter’s commitment to Pakistani security. Gallucci continued that, if the administration eventually reached an arrangement with Zia (and he stressed that this might never actually happen), it was doubtful it would provide additional leverage in the nuclear area. At best, it would allow for continued dialogue.<sup>123</sup> The British Embassy in Islamabad concurred with Gallucci’s assessment. Fresh indications had come to light that cast doubt on existing assessments of

---

<sup>120</sup> USE Islamabad to State, ‘Agha Shahi Publicly Rejects Proposed US Assistance Package,’ March 6, 1980, DNSA, NP01749.

<sup>121</sup> UKE Islamabad to FCO, ‘Pakistan Foreign Policy,’ March 9, 1980, TNA FCO96/1105; Carter to Thatcher, Letter, March 13, 1980, TMSS, THCR3/1/7 f63, [www.margaretthatcher.org/document/112691](http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/112691) (accessed on October 30, 2013), 1-2.

<sup>122</sup> Thatcher to Carter, Letter, April 8, 1980, TMSS, THCR3/1/8 f24 [T78/80], [www.margaretthatcher.org/document/112705](http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/112705) (accessed on October 30, 2013), 1.

<sup>123</sup> UKE Washington to FCO, ‘Nuclear Pakistan,’ March 18, 1980, TNA FCO96/1104, 1.

the timescale for a Pakistani test, although the dates that had been speculated about in the media were regarded as implausible.<sup>124</sup>

Alston and the JNU found themselves in a similar position to Gerald Smith in Washington. Alston's anti-proliferation stance was now superseded by an Anglo-American position that sought the appearance of non-proliferation through 'no testing' assurances but that had in reality deprioritised the goal of getting Pakistan to abandon its nuclear ambitions. Carrington had insisted that while Afghanistan was the most pressing issue, Pakistani nuclear activities were viewed no less seriously than before December 1979. Export controls were particularly important, because if Western governments dropped their guards, the Pakistanis might take it as a sign that a lower priority had been given to non-proliferation objectives.<sup>125</sup> Alston, disturbed that the Afghanistan crisis had not improved prospects for resolving the nuclear dilemma, offered a new policy. In light of Shahi's rejection of the American offer, perhaps a proposal could be formulated to boost Pakistani confidence in the face of the Soviet and Indian threats *and* address the nuclear quandary? Thus, Alston and the JNU suggested offering Pakistan a package combining enrichment, reprocessing, and power services that was intended to halt Zia's moves towards weapons capability and re-establish the pre-eminence of non-proliferation policy.<sup>126</sup> JNU's counterparts in SAD argued that the proposal was founded on false premises, contending that rejection of the US aid offer was nothing to do with its size and scope, and everything to do with appearances. SAD contended that by being *seen* to reject the aid offer, Pakistan increased its standing with Islamic and NAM countries.<sup>127</sup>

A trilateral discussion between the JNU, Oliver Forster, and John Thomson debated Alston's desire to move back towards a preventative non-proliferation policy. Thompson had been the driving force behind 1979's abortive 'universal declaration' on nuclear trade and exports, the failed policy that codified British acquiescence to eventual Pakistan nuclear capability. Afghanistan, Alston argued, had not changed the basic British attitude that the nuclear dilemma was extremely serious, even though American commitment was weakening.

---

<sup>124</sup> Fabian to Alston, 'Pakistan Nuclear,' March 24, 1980, TNA FCO96/1104.

<sup>125</sup> FCO to UKE The Hague, 'Pakistan Nuclear,' February 18, 1980, TNA FCO37/2370.

<sup>126</sup> Alston to Whyte, 'Pakistan Nuclear,' March 18, 1980, TNA FCO37/2370.

<sup>127</sup> Whyte to Alston, Handwritten Notes Appended to 'Pakistan Nuclear,' March 18, 1980, TNA FCO37/2370, 2.

The inducements that Alston outlined were, he contended, formulated to allow Zia to abandon his nuclear aspirations without losing face.<sup>128</sup> Responding, Thomson emphasised that the package should be presented in such a way as to not upset the Indians. Perhaps a similar offer could be made to them?<sup>129</sup> Forster—while supporting the basic idea—suggested that issues of prestige and national security made Zia unlikely to change his nuclear position, arguing that the invasion made it the wrong time for such an approach and Indian involvement could exacerbate anti-Western feeling in Pakistan.<sup>130</sup> SAD echoed Forster’s opinion, agreeing that it was entirely the wrong time to pressure Pakistan. One optimistic note was that Zia had so far failed to extract the economic support he expected from other Islamic states. This might offer an area for negotiation, although observers thought it unlikely that Zia would accept any deal with nuclear strings attached.<sup>131</sup>

The opportunity to explore Pakistani attitudes came in mid-June when Agha Shahi visited London. Shahi expounded upon the Pakistani-hosted Islamic Conference’s success in creating a united front against the USSR and expressed satisfaction with the extent of Western support. However, too much Western involvement, Shahi contended, would spoil Pakistan’s non-aligned credentials and remove the *appearance* of independent action.<sup>132</sup> The Pakistani Foreign Minister submitted a list of military equipment he wished to obtain from Britain and Carrington promised to attend to it as quickly as possible. Thus Britain’s most senior diplomat, by accepting the Pakistani request for military aid, fully acquiesced to the policy of simply mitigating the nuclear programme and de-linking arms and non-proliferation. The only comment on nuclear issues was when the Pakistani ambassador stated that the BBC’s ‘Muslim bomb’ documentary had been “inaccurate and unhelpful.”<sup>133</sup> The government was reticent to involve itself and suggested that the Pakistani embassy contact the BBC directly.<sup>134</sup> In conversation with Thatcher, Shahi raised many of the same points but—bringing up a subject that had been thought long buried by the British—expressed

---

<sup>128</sup> Alston to Forster, ‘Pakistan Nuclear,’ April 18, 1980, TNA FCO37/2370.

<sup>129</sup> Thomson to Alston, ‘Pakistan Nuclear,’ May 6, 1980, TNA FCO37/2370.

<sup>130</sup> Forster to Alston, ‘Pakistan Nuclear,’ May 26, 1980, TNA FCO37/2370.

<sup>131</sup> Archer to Alston, ‘India and Pakistan Nuclear,’ June 2, 1980, TNA FCO37/2370.

<sup>132</sup> ‘Call by Pakistan Foreign Minister,’ June 17, 1980, TNA PREM19/320, 1-3.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid, 3

<sup>134</sup> Ibid, 8.

worry about India's new fleet of British-made Jaguar strike aircraft.<sup>135</sup> The lack of reflection on nuclear matters in these discussions, and those conducted by Douglas Hurd in September, demonstrate how much events in Afghanistan had pushed the issue aside. Although attempts to retard the Pakistani programme continued through the means of export controls and international diplomacy, just as the FCO had suggested, direct pressure on the Zia government effectively ceased.<sup>136</sup>

Cessation of pressure on Pakistan did not halt British government consideration of non-proliferation. Following multilateral discussions at the June NATO summit in Ankara, Carrington tasked the JNU with drafting a ministerial briefing on non-proliferation. The JNU took the opportunity to try and resist the mitigationist policy by offering a gloomy, slightly alarmist view of the terrain that drew on prevailing 'Islamic bomb' ideas. The report opened bleakly: the price for stopping a proliferation cascade was eternal vigilance as, "every act of proliferation increases pressure on others to follow suit."<sup>137</sup> As far as Middle Eastern proliferation was concerned, this issue was hived off from the challenge of Pakistan. In the Middle East, the peace process was the best guarantee of non-proliferation. In Pakistan, the best guarantee was resolution of Indo-Pakistani tension.<sup>138</sup> Despite this compartmentalisation, the JNU speculated about the Libya-Pakistani connection, but again no solid evidence was provided. The report concluded by offering the same solutions that had been discussed *ad infinitum*: export controls, international consensus, access to reprocessing facilities, and safeguards.<sup>139</sup> Alston's subsequent paper was similarly alarmist about a proliferation cascade rooted in Pakistan. Stopping Pakistan was considerably more urgent than action against India, especially as it could prevent the introduction of nuclear weapons into the Middle East.<sup>140</sup>

Despite Alston and the JNU's efforts, overt non-proliferation did not make it back onto the agenda. Although Britain remained a driving force in the field of export controls, Thatcher's government followed the US lead when it came to refraining from explicit pressure on Pakistan. Zia's obduracy, US lethargy, and the exigencies of the renewed Cold

---

<sup>135</sup> Ibid.

<sup>136</sup> FCO to UKE Islamabad, 'Afghanistan,' September 9, 1980, TNA PREM19/387.

<sup>137</sup> Alston to Moberly, 'Non-proliferation Issues and Prospects,' July 23, 1980, TNA FCO37/2371, 1.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid, 2.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid, 7.

<sup>140</sup> Alston to Coles, 'South Asia: Nuclear Proliferation Issues,' July 31, 1980, TNA FCO96/1106, 1.

War had all militated against strong action against Islamabad's nuclear aspirations. British and American analysts were correct in one particular respect: the chances of persuading Zia to change direction and eschew nuclear capability were close to zero.

### **Re-calibrating Non-proliferation Policy**

The quest for a new approach to the nuclear dilemma was not confined to London. A US survey on global attitudes towards non-proliferation revealed that a majority of non-communist nations considered America an unreliable nuclear partner and, with an over-emphasis on supply and the fuel cycle (typified by INFCE and the anti-reprocessing stance), had failed to adequately focus on potential bomb-makers.<sup>141</sup> Concurrent with the JNU-SAD discussions, the elite PRC attempted to thrash out a revised Pakistan policy. Vance—in one of his last contributions to the debate before resigning from office—stated that the non-proliferation objectives laid out in 1977 still stood, but that there were questions over the methods used to achieve the desired results.<sup>142</sup> Smith then outlined three options: to continue on the present course; to accept a universal, non-discriminatory code on nuclear trade, as advocated by the UK in 1979; or to promote a regime that required safeguards on all new export agreements, indefinite deferral of reprocessing, international plutonium storage, multinational control of sensitive facilities, and improved international cooperation when dealing with 'problem countries.' The DoD, Joint Chiefs of Staff, ACDA, and the State Department all supported option three. At the same meeting, the NSC vigorously opposed any leniency towards India. The appearance of preferential treatment over fuel supplies to Tarapur would badly affect the US position with Pakistan and undercut global non-proliferation efforts.<sup>143</sup> The NSC—in the process of establishing hegemony over foreign policy decision-making as part of the tussle between Brzezinski and Vance—was dubious about Smith being assigned leadership. As far as the NSC was concerned, this would produce a one sided, non-proliferationist report for the President.<sup>144</sup> The NSC, rationalising the South Asian proliferation predicament in terms of the prevailing mitigationist viewpoint,

---

<sup>141</sup> 'March/April 1980 Non-proliferation Survey,' April 11, 1980, JCPL, RAC NLC-34-65-14-1-7.

<sup>142</sup> The final straw was the failed attempt to rescue the Iranian hostages, but Vance had bitterly contested other major foreign policy issues—such as US involvement in the Horn of Africa—with Brzezinski.

<sup>143</sup> 'Policy Review Committee Meeting,' April 9, 1980, JCPL, RAC NLC-15-108-2-3-0, 2-4.

<sup>144</sup> Oplinger to Brzezinski, 'Last Week's PRC on Non-proliferation,' April 14, 1980, JCPL, RAC NLC-15-108-2-3-0.

argued that proliferation was a long-term challenge that was subordinate to more immediate concerns.<sup>145</sup> All of this came at a time when the proliferation problem was deepening. The CIA argued the Pakistanis believed (quite perceptively, as it turned out) that the US was resigned to their having nuclear weapons capability, while India was seen as being determined to move forward with continued PNE testing. The latter thus further increased Pakistani resolve to obtain atomic weapons.<sup>146</sup>

As these discussions were taking place, moves were afoot to reassess non-proliferation policy in the wake of the INFCE meetings. Smith had canvassed the opinions of key Congressional figures and received a lengthy response from Bingham and Zablocki. Both politicians feared the effects of a Middle Eastern, Islamic proliferation cascade that would have knock-on effects in South Asia. They argued:

If Pakistan acquires nuclear weapons, India might in turn increase the level of her own weapons work or perhaps try militarily to halt the Pakistani program. And so too might the Soviet Union, which could in any event be looking for a pretext for adventure in Pakistan. The acquisition of weapons by Libya would drastically increase the pressure on our friends the Egyptians and the Sudanese as well as creating other possibilities too numerous even to formulate. One could go on in this fashion almost indefinitely.<sup>147</sup>

Amongst the worry, Bingham and Zablocki had a point: the impact of Pakistani acquisition of nuclear weapons was unknown. Which way would India jump? What would the USSR do? Would the weapons end up in Libyan hands? Carter was also subject to perceptive accusations from Congressional supporters of non-proliferation that, in light of Pakistan and the nuclear shipments to India, he had abandoned his anti-nuclear policy.<sup>148</sup>

The Carter administration sought to recalibrate non-proliferation policy in light of a changed global situation, a reinvigorated Cold War, Congressional pressure, and allied attitudes. Particularly in the case of Pakistan, this remained a preoccupation of the administration in the last few months of Carter's time in office. The NSC saw difficulties ahead, especially in the area of relations between key allies in Europe and Asia. The

---

<sup>145</sup> 'Persian Gulf-South West Asia Region,' April 29, 1980, JCPL, Zbigniew Brzezinski Collection, Geographic File, Southwest Asia/Persian Gulf, Box 15, 3.

<sup>146</sup> Special Assistant for Nuclear Proliferation Intelligence to Director of Central Intelligence, 'Warning Report—Nuclear Proliferation,' April 30, 1980, USPQB, Doc.47, 2-3.

<sup>147</sup> Bingham and Zablocki to Smith, 'Observations on State Department Draft Post-INFCE Planning Paper,' May 9, 1980, NARA, RG59, Records of Edmund Muskie (hereafter REM), Box 3, 3-4.

<sup>148</sup> Atwood to Muskie, 'The Congressional Agenda: Issues and Strategies,' May 16, 1980, DNSA, NP01781, 9-10.

countries of the developing world were hugely concerned about energy security and major nuclear states—most significantly Britain and France—were pushing ahead with extensive reprocessing programmes. Set against this backdrop was an abject lack of progress on major non-proliferation challenges such as those involving Pakistan and South Africa.<sup>149</sup> In fact, the recommendations offered for approval fell into the ‘more of the same’ category: deferment of reprocessing, strict supplier controls, and full scope safeguards.<sup>150</sup> Even after all the experiences since 1977, little new was suggested. In the White House, Gus Speth—Carter’s anti-nuclear environmental affairs adviser—suggested a stronger stance on non-proliferation and a delay in the review of policy until after the November election.<sup>151</sup> Speth’s suggestions were—like the departed Cyrus Vance’s—founded in a belief that Carter’s 1977 non-proliferation policies were still relevant. Speth unsurprisingly offered a detailed policy platform that mandated strict adherence to the original principles propounded by Carter and layered on further domestic and international restrictions.<sup>152</sup> Like Smith, Alston, and other non-proliferation advocates, Speth found his entreaties ignored.

In the midst of debates over non-proliferation, the State Department assessed Pakistani objectives as getting the Soviets out of Afghanistan as quickly as possible, minimising the Soviet incentive to put pressure on Pakistan, and preventing Soviet and Indian interests from coalescing.<sup>153</sup> Pakistani attitudes were not the only thing considered when addressing the nuclear problem. Connections with the wider Islamic world were vital. While the Islamic Conference continued to condemn Soviet aggression, it criticised the US for not doing enough to promote peace in the Middle East.<sup>154</sup> Resolving the Palestinian situation was seen as vital to bolster Islamic support for the US in Afghanistan. The US embassy in Singapore argued that a lack of American cultural connection to the “extended

---

<sup>149</sup> PRC Presidential Decision Paper, ‘Nonproliferation Planning Assumptions,’ May 12, 1980, JCPL, RAC NLC-34-65-14-2-6, 2

<sup>150</sup> Ibid, 5-6.

<sup>151</sup> Speth to Muskie, ‘Attached Non-proliferation Policy Memorandum,’ June 4, 1980, NARA, RG59, REM, Box 3.

<sup>152</sup> Speth to Muskie, ‘Implementation of the President’s Non-proliferation Policy,’ June 4, 1980, NARA, RG59, REM, Box 3.

<sup>153</sup> State Department Bureau of Intelligence and Research, ‘Pakistan faces a Dangerous and Puzzling World,’ May 20, 1980, DNSA, AF00947, 1.

<sup>154</sup> Muskie to Carter, ‘Memorandum for the President,’ May 22, 1980, JCPL, RAC NLC-128-15-5-11-6, 2-3.

Middle East”, coupled to the rise of political Islam—that incorporated social radicalism and anti-superpower “xenophobia”—was a major new factor.<sup>155</sup>

Even without the impact of wider political and cultural factors, the chances of persuading Zia to veer away from the nuclear option or for greater legal flexibility on nuclear matters were bleak. Yet again, the Symington Amendment provided a seemingly insurmountable obstacle. The NSC asked if there was any way Carter could use executive power to bypass the restrictions? Furthermore, the Tarapur situation had agitated non-proliferationists in Congress, making a legislative exception for Pakistan unlikely.<sup>156</sup> Vance’s replacement Edmund Muskie contended that bypassing the Symington Amendment would show greater US support for Pakistan. Harking back to Vietnam, Muskie likened it to “the Tonkin Gulf Resolution of the Middle East.”<sup>157</sup> David Newsom noted the US could help the Pakistanis with military equipment, if the Saudis footed the bill, but on the nuclear front the administration should expect no help from Islamabad.<sup>158</sup> There were no immediate plans to increase the aid offer to Zia, such were the restrictions of the Symington Amendment. The administration was happy to sell weapons, but could not legally provide the funds to the cash-strapped Pakistanis. Saudi Arabia was, as always, a potential source of funding, but despite Pakistani efforts to leverage Islamic brotherhood, Saudi money had not yet been forthcoming.<sup>159</sup> Here were prime examples of two key factors. Firstly, prior US enthusiasm for non-proliferation was now severely hampering efforts to constructively aid the nation that had actually *provoked* much of the concern about proliferation. Secondly, and significantly, the NSC and the State Department requests that Carter use executive power to override the Symington Amendment demonstrate how the policy of acquiescence and mitigation—originating in mid-1979 and then further influenced by the Afghanistan situation—had become the mainstream of the administration’s attitude towards Pakistan’s nuclear ambitions.

---

<sup>155</sup> USE Singapore to the White House, ‘The Extended Middle East,’ July 24, 1980, JCPL, Zbigniew Brzezinski Collection, Subject File Box 43, Weekly Reports [to the President], 121-135 [12/79–4/80].

<sup>156</sup> Thornton to Brzezinski, ‘PRC On Pakistan, July 17,’ July 16, 1980, JCPL, RAC NLC-24-103-1-2-8, 2.

<sup>157</sup> ‘Minutes–PRC Meeting on Pakistan,’ July 17, 1980, JCPL, RAC NLC-24-103-1-5-5, 6.

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>159</sup> ‘Minutes–PRC Meeting on Pakistan,’ July 22, 1980, JCPL, RAC NLC-33-10-27-1-4, 2, 7.



By autumn, with the US Presidential election campaign in full swing, prospects for a breakthrough with Pakistan had not improved. Christopher noted that there was virtually no chance of getting a waiver of the Symington Amendment. The bad blood created between the administration, the NRC, and Congress over Tarapur had poisoned that well. Christopher also pointed out how much impact media coverage of the Pakistani nuclear project had been having on Congressional willingness to authorise military aid. Stories about Swiss supplies and Pakistani purchasing had, and were continuing to have, a negative impact on the prospects for gaining Congressional agreement to a waiver of the Symington Amendment. Only a month before the election, and despite plans to sell the highly advanced F-16 fighter aircraft and other military materials to Pakistan, he stated, “nothing can be done until next spring.”<sup>160</sup> Next spring, something *would* be done, but not by Carter and his team. On October 3, Zia visited the White House. As Dennis Kux notes, by this point Zia had concluded that Reagan would win the election, so saw no need to take the initiative on security assistance. When, in the final minutes of the meeting, Carter offered Zia the F-16, the Pakistani president casually noted that as Carter was undoubtedly busy with his election campaign, such matters could easily wait.<sup>161</sup> Despite positivity in the White House and a remarkable comeback in opinion polls in the week before polling day, Ronald Reagan proved the more adept campaigner and won a landslide victory. On November 4, Carter became the first incumbent since Herbert Hoover in 1932 to fail at winning a second term.<sup>162</sup> Foreign policy had played a significant role in ensuring Carter’s election in 1976. In 1980, foreign policy was one of the primary causes of his downfall.

### **Conclusion**

For America and Britain, 1980 was a low-water mark in efforts to forestall Pakistani nuclear capability. The Carter and Thatcher governments were committed to rigorous controls on nuclear-related exports and expended considerable political capital on efforts to gain international acceptance of their standpoint. However, the obduracy of fellow supplier states such as West Germany and Switzerland diminished the effectiveness of the crusade.

---

<sup>160</sup> ‘PRC: Pakistan,’ September 29, 1980, JCPL, RAC NLC-33-10-31-3-7, 2-3.

<sup>161</sup> Kux, *Disenchanted Allies*, 254.

<sup>162</sup> Kaufman and Kaufman, 235.

Diplomatic efforts to persuade Zia to rein in his ambitions were, if anything, even less successful. The crisis in Afghanistan, Pakistani recalcitrance, and the need for all sides to keep up appearances precluded success. Carter, who began with such high hopes for his non-proliferation policy, found himself hoisted by a petard of his own making. The UK and US discovered that faced by a state determined to acquire nuclear weapons, diplomacy and aid carried little weight. This was especially true after the invasion of Afghanistan, when Pakistan was in the front line of a new Cold War. In public, the Pakistani programme was continually linked to fear of an 'Islamic bomb' and the spread of nuclear weapons to the Middle East. If nothing else, this was the true public legacy of Bhutto and Zia's nuclear ambitions. In international diplomacy, however, it was once more issues of credibility and 'face' that played the more significant role in non-proliferation discussions. Within three months of Ronald Reagan's January 1981 ascent to the White House, the new President's administration had put together an assistance package worth \$3.2 billion over five years, a figure even Zia was unlikely to dismiss as "peanuts."

## Conclusion

---

The story of American and British involvement in Pakistan's nuclear programme did not end with Jimmy Carter's departure from the White House. Like Carter, Ronald Reagan placed Pakistan at the heart of his anti-Soviet effort in Afghanistan. The major change was willingness—bolstered by Zia's assurances over production, proliferation, and most importantly testing—to offer substantial military and economic aid. The Pakistani leader did not turn down Reagan's 1981 offer of a \$3.6 billion package of arms, money, and food as "peanuts." Under Reagan, US-Pakistani cooperation over Afghanistan ballooned into a sizeable operation supporting the Afghan mujahedeen against the Soviets. Margaret Thatcher wholeheartedly supported Reagan's policy, but continued to monitor the clandestine Pakistani programme. British officials remained active in trying to combat the covert enrichment project, although by the mid-1980s, the project was well on the way to success.

Discomfort over Islamabad's nuclear ambitions did not entirely dissipate as figures in Congress and the administration questioned the American stance. Congressmen and Senators expressed unease and anger over the Pakistani nuclear situation. Senators Alan Cranston (D-CA) and John Glenn, and Congressman Stephen Solarz (D-NY) were three of the most notable figures to raise the issue.<sup>1</sup> Solarz went so far as to have an amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act (the 'Solarz Amendment') passed, barring aid to any country exploding a nuclear device. Thus, the 'no test' paradigm of acquiescence to Pakistani nuclear ambitions became US law.<sup>2</sup> Individuals within the Reagan administration also remained anxious about Zia's aspirations. In 1982, Secretary of State George Schulz warned that Zia was likely to break his promises and proliferate to "unstable Arab countries."<sup>3</sup> Four years later, ACDA Director Kenneth Adelman argued that Zia was continually lying regarding enrichment and by 1987, senior State Department officials warned that Zia was approaching

---

<sup>1</sup> Kux, *Disenchanted Allies*, 275-279.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, 260.

<sup>3</sup> Schulz to Reagan, 'How Do We Make Use of the Zia Visit to Protect Our Strategic Interests in the Face of Pakistan's Nuclear Weapons Activities,' November 26, 1982, RTPP, Doc.16.

a "threshold which he cannot cross without blatantly violating his pledge not to embarrass [i.e.: not test] the President."<sup>4</sup>

In the late 1990s and early 2000s, Western relationships with the Pakistani nuclear programme came under renewed scrutiny because of the 'Test War' between Islamabad and New Delhi and the exposure of the A. Q. Khan proliferation network. The series of nuclear tests by India and Pakistan in May 1998 alarmed observers who saw a dangerous increase in South Asian tension. The 2004 exposure of the Khan network—which had supplied centrifuge designs to Iran, Libya, and North Korea—by the American and British intelligence services prompted significant media coverage, and led directly to many of the popular books which continue to perpetuate misplaced concerns about an 'Islamic bomb.'

This thesis has given a detailed analysis of American and British responses to the Pakistani nuclear weapons programme in the 1970s. The Pakistani case highlights a strong Anglo-American non-proliferation relationship. Despite problems created by British commercial interests, Britain remained America's strongest global anti-proliferation partner. When compared to the often acrimonious American relationships with France and West Germany, the Anglo-American 'non-proliferation special relationship' was functional and productive. The case of Pakistan also demonstrates that American and British non-proliferation policy was characterised by a remarkable resistance to partisan politicisation. Across the years of three American presidencies and three British prime ministers, Pakistan's nuclear ambitions failed to become a political 'football' utilised for party-political ends. Apart from the laxity of the Nixon years and early Ford period, Washington and London took non-proliferation very seriously and the issue was one that transcended political boundaries. In the case of the 1976 US presidential election, it was precisely because of the seriousness of the issue and the casualness with which it had been treated by Nixon, Ford, and Kissinger that proliferation became a political issue.

Gerald Ford and Henry Kissinger's acquiescence to Pakistani demands for arms while receiving nothing in return demonstrated that regional security concerns overrode non-proliferation concerns, despite signs that Pakistan was actively pursuing a military atomic

---

<sup>4</sup> Adelman to Poindexter, 'Pakistan's Nuclear Weapons Program and US Security Assurances,' June 16, 1986, RTPP, Doc.20; McGoldrick to Negroponte, 'Pakistan,' April 9, 1987, RTPP, Doc.23.

programme. Cognisant of Pakistan's stubborn determination to attain nuclear capability, pressured by a Congress awakening to the dangers of proliferation, and provoked by Jimmy Carter's foregrounding of the problem, the Ford administration switched from broad tolerance to an active engagement in non-proliferation policy.

British investigations revealed the clandestine Pakistani purchasing networks feeding into a covert enrichment programme. In 1976-77, Callaghan's government did not lack the will to tackle this issue, but the incompleteness of existing proliferation controls, a dubious legal case to prevent exports, and the recalcitrance of nuclear supplier states, and a desire not to lose credibility through public embarrassment hampered British government actions. Evidence emerging in 1978 strengthened the case that Pakistan was pursuing a clandestine enrichment programme as part of its nuclear quest. Here the 'non-proliferation special relationship' became fully functional, when the British government—supported and aided by the United States—commenced a campaign conducted in the diplomatic shadows to marshal a united front amongst nuclear supplier states to prevent Pakistani acquisition of sensitive technologies.

Towards this end, the non-proliferation relationship saw a division of labour. The United States took the lead in diplomatically combating the French reprocessing plant deal, the overt element of the Pakistani programme. In turn, Britain led the campaign against the covert elements—the secret enrichment project and its associated purchasing programme—of Islamabad's nuclear ambitions. First Britain, and then America, took the clandestine Pakistani uranium enrichment programme very seriously. Britain was the first to grasp the implications of Pakistan's purchasing activities but as has been demonstrated, internal debates over the nature of Pakistani purchases and the reluctance of other key nuclear supplier states such as Switzerland to adopt the same firm stance as Britain and America limited action. When both states did act, they showed joint determination and willingness to proceed. The complementary but different approaches of the US and UK tell us much about the relative standing of each state. The Americans were able to put significant pressure on France in a very public way because of their status—even in a post-Vietnam, post-Watergate era of diminished respect for the USA—as the foremost Western power. The fact that Britain took the route of covert, more subtle diplomatic action confirms the decline of Britain to a

middle-ranking power. However, in many ways this lack of genuine global standing gave Britain greater freedom to act and allowed the luxury of being able to ignore the requirements of non-proliferation when necessary, freed of the responsibilities associated with American superpower status

Indeed, Britain and America were forced to delicately balance relations with other world powers in pursuit of their goal. The greatest success for non-proliferation diplomacy was the overt campaign against the French reprocessing plant. Although diplomatic pressure was a component of this, the French decision that non-proliferation mattered more than the reprocessing plant contract, and the concurrent realisation that they could make more money selling nuclear services when compared with selling the technology itself, was not entirely influenced by allied pressure. Additionally, Carter's decision to exempt Britain, France, and other Western European states from his reprocessing ban allowed France to maintain the domestic industry required to sell these reprocessing services. This diplomatic 'victory' was not without its problems, as when Valéry Giscard d'Estaing's government demonstrated unwillingness to publicly proclaim its decision or to definitively break the contract with Pakistan.

The final French cancellation of the reprocessing plant contract gave the US government a chance to have meaningful discussions with Pakistan over issues of aid and arms sales that had been hampered by Islamabad's determination to acquire the reprocessing plant. However, in attempting to balance non-proliferation and conventional arms control policies, Carter only succeeded in pushing Pakistan away from the United States. There was tension between Carter's multifarious policy aims: the desire to achieve non-proliferation goals conflicted with other global policy imperatives, such as regional security and human rights commitments.

Zia's unwillingness to abandon the nuclear programme prompted a policy change that has previously gone unnoticed. During 1979, the Carter administration and Thatcher's government shifted from a commitment to *prevention* of proliferation in South Asia to a policy of *mitigation* of proliferation, centred on the quest for assurances from both Pakistan and India not to undertake nuclear tests. America and Britain together strove to maintain the appearance of actively pursuing non-proliferation through requests for Pakistan not to

undertake nuclear testing, the most public demonstration of nuclear attainment. If Pakistan *were* to test, it would throw the entire trilateral relationship into doubt by publicly humiliating the US and UK governments when they had invested significant political capital in anti-proliferation activities and thus reduce the ability to take anti-proliferation action on the global stage. This change illustrates the difficulties of pursuing non-proliferation when faced with a determined and skilful state apparatus and—significantly—the role of credibility and saving ‘face’ in influencing non-proliferation policy. Media stories about the Khan Affair, the ‘Islamic bomb’, and the clandestine purchasing project heaped greater pressure on Washington and London to take stronger action against Pakistan. This again emphasises the significance of recalcitrance on the part of key supplier states in the non-proliferation arena. Despite the problem created by supplier state reluctance, the clandestine purchasing programme was the most promising avenue for non-proliferation success and the one area where the UK and US governments did continue to make genuine efforts to retard the Pakistani nuclear programme through export controls and international diplomacy.

Despite the broad harmony of the US-UK ‘non-proliferation special relationship’, the partnership was not entirely trouble free. Britain’s economic situation and the impact this had on arms sales and the nuclear industry caused problems. Throughout the period under study, British efforts to sell the nominally nuclear capable Jaguar strike aircraft to India were a persistent problem for sub-continental non-proliferation policies. In pursuing this sale, the Wilson and Callaghan governments compartmentalised arms sales and nuclear issues and indicated that, although India had joined the ‘nuclear club,’ the consequences were slight. Even though Callaghan’s government was committed to non-proliferation—David Owen being particularly dedicated—commercial considerations frequently trumped non-proliferation objectives. Britain’s dire economic situation in the 1970s was the main concern. Without massive external deals, the teetering British aerospace industry would collapse. Additionally, with Sweden out of the picture, the only other competitor to the Jaguar was the French Mirage. British officials could not countenance withdrawing from the bidding process and gifting the French a lucrative contract. The consequence of this was frustration in Washington at British intransigence over Jaguar.

Policymakers in the Carter administration repeatedly attempted to persuade London and New Delhi to abandon the Jaguar negotiations. The US had seen some success in pressuring Sweden to drop out of the tendering process and attempted to persuade their British allies to do the same. While Jaguar would not represent a significant increase in Indian capability, it was the symbolism of Pakistan's rivals being equipped with modern weapons that could potentially act as nuclear delivery systems (while the United States was using similar weapon systems as 'carrots and sticks' in its dealings with Islamabad) that was the underlying problem. The British government—faced with the potential loss of a hugely lucrative arms deal—wilfully ignored the non-proliferation complications. The ways in which Britain and America were using arms sales were quite different. For Britain, arms sales were an economic concern divorced from non-proliferation action. The sheer commitment to the Jaguar deal demonstrates that, in the face of an economic crisis, the British government was quite willing to subordinate non-proliferation to economic necessity. For the executive branch in the United States, arms sales were never a commercial concern; rather they were a bribe or a bludgeon used to try to persuade Islamabad to abandon the nuclear programme.

Britain's domestic nuclear industry also complicated non-proliferation diplomacy, with the go-ahead to build the THORP weakening British non-proliferation standing in Pakistani eyes. While the FCO had resisted pressure from the departments of Trade and Industry to take a softer line on export controls in favour of a stronger anti-proliferation stance, there was no such resistance in the face of the economic realities of the THORP. Stronger export controls might well cause the loss of a few million pounds worth of business, but the potential loss of the revenue generated by the THORP was several orders of magnitude greater. Similarly to the Jaguar deal, non-proliferation concerns had to be subservient to the commercial interests of the state when faced with the potential loss of a massive revenue generating facility. Jimmy Carter was willing to abandon commercial considerations in favour of non-proliferation, not so the Wilson and Callaghan governments. When billions of pounds worth of military aircraft or reprocessing services were at risk, economic self-interest trumped proliferation concerns. With this in mind, the United States



was in many ways the more responsible global power and Britain merely confirmed its status as a regional power, happy to act when its own interests remained unthreatened.

It is intriguing to consider whether the Anglo-American alliance against Pakistan from 1974 to 1980 was indeed a 'special relationship.' It is possible to argue that rather than a 'special relationship,' what can be seen in this period was, at least in part, a 'marriage of convenience.' Out of the United States' major Western European allies of France, the FRG, and the UK, Britain was the only one of the three not to be engaged in major nuclear deals with developing world states. Thus, it could be argued that although there was a significant relationship in play, there was also the simple fact that Britain was the only partner available to the United States when taking action against Pakistan.

When America and Britain engaged in anti-proliferation activity on the subcontinent, the historical record runs counter to popular belief. Contrary to alarmist popular analyses, the 'Islamic bomb' paradigm was never an important factor in American and British non-proliferation policymaking. While the media and peripheral political figures placed great store in the reality of an 'Islamic bomb,' at government level the concept did not affect actual policy directed against Pakistan. Although some key individuals feared—and institutions such as the CIA investigated—the 'Islamic bomb,' the majority opinion was that it was a propaganda rather a policy challenge. Thus, while Washington and London battled popular perceptions of Pakistan's nuclear aspirations as a pan-Islamic project, in private policymaking carried on as normal. What this propaganda problem did do was change public perceptions of Pakistani atomic aspirations geopolitically, from a regional South Asian problem to a much wider problem that encompassed the Middle East, with all the challenges that implied. For the American and British governments, it was the *publicity* surrounding pan-Islamic nuclear capability and the *perception* this created, not belief in the reality of an 'Islamic bomb' that created problems. In truth, the 'Islamic bomb' exerted little—if any—influence on policymaking regarding Pakistan.

Much more important to non-proliferation policy and action were ideas of credibility and 'face'. America, Britain, France, and Pakistan all—at different times and for different reasons—sought to maintain credibility in one way or another. The British government's

initial inaction regarding inverters was, in part, based on a desire not to create a humiliating diplomatic incident. Even more significantly, the entire strategy of mitigation and the requests to Zia not to test a nuclear device were founded in a need to maintain American and British credibility in global non-proliferation affairs. Thus, it was ideas of national standing and the ability to influence on the global stage that exerted the greater pressure on policymakers. This came about not because of fears of Islamic proliferation, but because of the determination and stubbornness of Zia and his government.

However, it is the ‘Islamic bomb’ paradigm that has become an abiding feature of discussions surrounding the nuclear ambitions of Muslim states. Throughout the 1980s and into the 1990s, the threat of the ‘Islamic bomb’ frequently and repeatedly emerged as shorthand for an aggressive, confrontational ‘Islamic’ quest for power.<sup>5</sup> Such notions were given an additional spur by the increasing popularity of the ‘Clash of Civilizations’ thesis propounded by Bernard Lewis and Samuel P. Huntington. Much of the reasoning for the illegal invasion of Iraq by America and Britain in 2003 was founded in an official conspiracy theory about supposed ‘weapons of mass destruction’ being developed by the ‘Islamic’ (but actually fairly secular) regime of Saddam Hussein.<sup>6</sup> More recently, the ‘Islamic bomb’ construct has come full circle, with senior Iranian figures loudly proclaiming their quest for the ‘holy Islamic bomb.’ As with Bhutto and Zia’s statements in the 1970s, these rhetorical outbursts have been utilised by proponents of a harsh policy towards Iran.<sup>7</sup>

This thesis has thrown new light on a key moment in non-proliferation history. By so doing, it illuminates the roots of cultural imaginings, brings Britain into play as a significant force in global non-proliferation policy, and moves the timeline of Western acquiescence to Pakistan’s nuclear ambitions further back in time. Nuclear non-proliferation remains a contested topic in foreign affairs. The nuclear programmes of Iran and North Korea—while at quite different stages in their development—have provoked fear, outrage, and no small amount of sabre rattling on all sides. However, if this study has demonstrated anything, it is

---

<sup>5</sup> See Gusterson, 125-126 for examples of this trend.

<sup>6</sup> Kathryn S. Olmsted, *Real Enemies: Conspiracy Theories and American Democracy, World War I to 9/11* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 207-211.

<sup>7</sup> Ahmad Hashemi, ‘Don’t be fooled: Iran wants the bomb,’ *Times of Israel*, January 13, 2013, <http://blogs.timesofisrael.com/while-iran-builds-its-holy-islamic-bomb> (accessed on February 15, 2014).

that framing nuclear proliferation in terms of a ‘clash of civilisations’ is both false and diplomatically unhelpful. Far more important than religion in this case was international credibility. By eschewing a reliance on the rhetoric of the ‘clash of civilisations’ and the ‘Islamic bomb’ it will be possible to more clearly comprehend why certain states seek nuclear capability. Hopefully a more nuanced understanding of the history of proliferation and non-proliferation will—in some small way—contribute to more fruitful, productive dialogues over the issue in the future.

## Primary Sources

---

### Unpublished Documentary Sources

#### **United Kingdom**

British Broadcasting Corporation Written Archives Centre, Caversham  
Document Archives

National Archives (Public Record Office), Kew

Records of the Cabinet Office (CAB)

CAB 128: Minutes (CM and CC Series)

CAB 129: Memoranda (CP and C Series)

CAB 130: Miscellaneous Committees: Minutes and Papers (GEN, MISC,  
and REF series)

Records of the Department of Energy (EG)

EG 8: Atomic Energy Division: Registered Files (CW Series)

Records of the Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO)

FCO 37: South Asia Department: Registered Files (S and FS series)

FCO 66: Disarmament Department and Arms Control and Disarmament  
Department: Registered Files (DS series)

FCO 96: Energy Department: Registered Files (ME series)

Records of the Ministry of Defence (DEFE)

DEFE 13: Private Office: Registered Files (all Ministers')

DEFE 19: Central Defence Scientific Staff and predecessors: Registered  
Files (CSA, AE 1, and A Series) and Papers

Records of the Prime Minister's Office (PREM)

PREM 16: Correspondence and Papers, 1974-1979

PREM 19: Correspondence and Papers, 1979-1997

#### **United States**

Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library, Ann Arbor, MI

Philip W. Buchen Files

James M. Cannon Files

National Security Adviser Files

Memoranda of Conversations

Presidential Agency File

Presidential Correspondence File

Presidential Country File for Middle East and South Asia

Presidential Briefing Materials for VIP Visits

Presidential Subject File

Presidential Transition File

White House Situation Room, Evening Reports from the NSC Staff

Study Memoranda and Decision Memoranda

Trip Briefing Books and Cables of Henry Kissinger

National Security Council Institutional Files  
Remote Archives Capture Files  
Glenn R. Schleede Files

Jimmy Carter Presidential Library and Museum, Atlanta, GA  
Carter White House Central Files  
National Security Staff Files  
Office of the Chief of Staff Files  
Records of the Domestic Policy Staff  
Records of the Office of Congressional Liaison  
Records of the Office of the National Security Adviser  
Records of the Speechwriter's Office  
Records of the Office of the Staff Secretary  
Remote Archives Capture System  
Subject File  
Zbigniew Brzezinski Collection

National Archives and Records Administration, Archives II, College Park, MD  
Record Group 59: General Records of the State Department  
Records of Warren Christopher  
Records of Anthony Lake  
Records of Edmund Muskie

National Security Archive, George Washington University, Washington D.C.  
Nuclear Non-proliferation Unpublished Collection

### **Published Documentary Sources**

#### **United Kingdom**

Churchill College Cambridge, Churchill Archives  
British Diplomatic Oral History Programme  
([www.chu.cam.ac.uk/archives/collections/BDOHP](http://www.chu.cam.ac.uk/archives/collections/BDOHP))

Hansard Online, 1803-2005  
(<http://hansard.millbanksystems.com>)

Margaret Thatcher Foundation Archives  
([www.margaretthatcher.org/archive](http://www.margaretthatcher.org/archive))

The National Archives (Public Record Office) Online Collections  
(<http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/SearchUI/Home/OnlineCollections>)

#### **United States**

Central Intelligence Agency Freedom of Information Electronic Reading Room  
([www.foia.cia.gov](http://www.foia.cia.gov))

Declassified Documents Reference System  
(<http://gdc.gale.com/products/declassified-documents-reference-system>)

Digital National Security Archive  
(<http://nsarchive.chadwyck.com/home.do>)

Gerald R Ford Presidential Library online collections  
National Security Adviser, Memoranda of Conversations  
([www.fordlibrarymuseum.gov/library/guides/findingaid/Memoranda\\_of\\_Conversations.asp](http://www.fordlibrarymuseum.gov/library/guides/findingaid/Memoranda_of_Conversations.asp))

NARA, Access to Archival Databases (AAD) system  
Wars/International Relations: Diplomatic Records  
(<http://aad.archives.gov/aad/series-list.jsp?cat=WR43>)

National Security Archive *Nuclear Vault* electronic briefing books  
Electronic Briefing Book 6: *India and Pakistan: On the Nuclear Threshold*  
(<http://www2.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB6>)  
Electronic Briefing Book 114: *China, Pakistan, and the Bomb*  
(<http://www2.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB114>)  
Electronic Briefing Book 155: *National Intelligence Estimates of the Nuclear proliferation problem, the First ten years, 1957-1967*  
(<http://www2.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB155/index.htm>)  
Electronic Briefing Book 240: *In 1974 Estimate, CIA Found that Israel Already Had a Nuclear Stockpile and that "Many Countries" Would Soon Have Nuclear Capabilities*  
(<http://www2.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB240/index.htm>)  
Electronic Briefing Book 333: *The United States and Pakistan's Quest for the Bomb*  
(<http://www2.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nukevault/ebb333/index.htm>)  
Electronic Briefing Book 352: *Non-papers and Demarches*  
(<http://www2.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nukevault/ebb352/index.htm>)  
Electronic Briefing Book 377: *New Documents Spotlight Reagan-era Tensions over Pakistani Nuclear Program*  
(<http://www2.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nukevault/ebb377>)  
Electronic Briefing Book 451: *Proliferation Watch; U.S. Intelligence Assessments of Potential Nuclear Powers, 1977-2001*  
(<http://www2.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nukevault/ebb451>)

US Department of State  
*Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS)* series  
*FRUS 1969-1976, Volume E8 'Documents on South Asia, 1973-1976'*  
(<http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76ve08>)  
*FRUS 1977-1980, Vol.XIII, China*  
(<http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v13>)

US Library of Congress  
The Foreign Affairs Oral History Collection of the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training  
(<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/collections/diplomacy>)

Wilson Center Digital Archive  
The Non-proliferation International History Project  
(<http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/theme/nuclear-history>)

**Germany**

*Akten zur Auswartigen Politik de Bundesrepublik Deutschland, 1977 1 Januar bis 30 Juni*  
(Munich: Oldenburger Wissenschaftsverlag Gmbh, 2008)

**Newspapers****United Kingdom**

*The Daily Express*

*The Guardian*

*The Observer*

*The Times*

*The Sunday Times*

**United States**

*The New York Times*

*The Washington Post*

## **Bibliography**

---

### **Autobiographies & Memoirs**

- Bhutto, Zulfikar Ali, *If I Am Assassinated* (New Delhi: Vikas Press, 1979)
- Brzezinski, Zbigniew, *Power and Principle: Memoirs of the National Security Adviser, 1977-1981* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 1983),
- Callaghan, James, *Time and Chance* (London: Collins, 1987),
- Carter, Jimmy, *Keeping Faith: Memoirs of a President* (London: Collins, 1982)
- \_\_\_\_\_ *White House Diary* (New York, NY: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2010)
- Kissinger, Henry, *Years of Upheaval* (New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1981)
- Owen, David, *Time to Declare* (London: Penguin, 1992)
- Thatcher, Margaret, *The Downing Street Years* (New York, NY: HarperPerennial, 1995)
- Vance, Cyrus, *Hard Choices: Critical Years In American Foreign Policy* (New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1983)
- Wilson, Harold, *Final Term: The Labour Government, 1974-1976* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1979)

### **Books**

- Anthony, Ian, Christer Ahlstrom, and Vitaly Fedchenko, *SIPRI Research Report No.22: Reforming Nuclear Export Controls: The Future of the Nuclear Suppliers Group* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007)
- Armstrong, David, and Joseph Trento, *America and the Islamic Bomb* (Hanover, NH: Steerforth Press, 2007)
- Bartlett, C. J., *British Foreign Policy in the Twentieth Century* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1989)
- Basrur, Rajesh M., *South Asia's Cold War: Nuclear Weapons and Conflict in Comparative Perspective* (London: Routledge, 2008)
- Baylis, John, *Anglo-American Defence Relations 1939-1980*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (London: Macmillan, 1984)
- Brenner, Michael J., *Nuclear Power and Non-proliferation: The Remaking of U.S Policy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981)



- Botti, Timothy J., *The Long Wait: The Forging of the Anglo-American Nuclear Alliance, 1945-1958* (New York, NY: Greenwood Press, 1987)
- Callaghan, John, *The Labour Party and Foreign Policy* (London: Routledge, 2007)
- Campbell, John L., *Collapse of an Industry: Nuclear Power and the Contradictions of U.S. Policy* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1988)
- Campbell, Kurt M., Robert J. Einhorn, and Mitchell B. Reiss, *The Nuclear Tipping Point: Why States Reconsider Their Nuclear Choices* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2004)
- Chakma, Bhumitra, *Strategic Dynamics and Nuclear Weapons Proliferation in South Asia: A Historical Analysis* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2004)
- Chawla, Shalini, *Nuclear Pakistan* (New Delhi: Centre for Air Power Studies/Kalpana Shukla, 2012)
- Cirincione, Joseph, *Bomb Scare: The History and Future of Nuclear Weapons* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2007)
- Clausen, Peter A., *Nonproliferation and the National Interest: America's Response to the Spread of Nuclear Weapons* (New York, NY: HarperCollins College Publishers, 1993)
- Cohen, Avner, *Israel and the Bomb* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1998)
- Cohen, Stephen Philip, *The Idea of Pakistan* (Washington D.C.: The Brookings Institution Press, 2004)
- Corera, Gordon, *Shopping for Bombs: Nuclear Proliferation, Global Insecurity, and the Rise and Fall of the A. Q. Khan Network* (London: Hurst & Co., 2006)
- Cosgrave, Patrick, *Carrington: A Life and a Policy* (London: J.M. Dent & Sons, 1985)
- Curtis, Mark, *The Ambiguities of Power: British Foreign Policy Since 1945* (London: Zed Books, 1995)
- Dallek, Robert, *Nixon and Kissinger: Partners in Power* (New York, NY: HarperCollins, 2007)
- Dumbrell, John, *A Special Relationship: Anglo-American Relations in the Cold War and After* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2001)
- Engel, Jeffrey A., *Cold War at 30,000 Feet: The Anglo-American Fight for Aviation Supremacy* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2007)
- Fischer, Georges, (trans. David Willey), *The Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons* (London: Europa, 1971)
- Frantz, Douglas, and Catherine Collins, *The Man From Pakistan: The True Story of the World's Most Dangerous Nuclear Smuggler* (New York, NY: Hachette Book Group, 2007)

- Freeman, J. P. G., *Britain's Nuclear Arms Control Policy in the Context of Anglo-American Relations, 1957-68* (Basingstoke: MacMillan, 1986)
- Ganguly, Sumit, and S. Paul Kapur, *India, Pakistan, and the Bomb: Debating Nuclear Stability in South Asia* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2010)
- Gavin, Francis J., *Nuclear Statecraft: History and Strategy in America's Atomic Age* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2012)
- Gerges, Fawaz, *America and Political Islam: Clash of Cultures or Clash of Interests?* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999)
- GhaneaBassiri, Kambiz, *A History of Islam in America* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2010)
- Glad, Betty, *An Outsider in the White House: Jimmy Carter, His Advisors, and the Making of American Foreign Policy* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2009)
- Graselli, Gabriella, *British and American Responses to the Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan* (Aldershot: Dartmouth, 1996)
- Greenwood, Sean, *Britain and the Cold War, 1945-91* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 2000)
- Hanhimäki, Jussi, *The Flawed Architect: Henry Kissinger and American Foreign Policy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004)
- Haqqani, Husain, *Pakistan: Between Mosque and Military* (Washington D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2005)
- Harris, Kenneth, *David Owen: Personally Speaking to Kenneth Harris* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1987)
- Hegghammer, Thomas, *Jihad in Saudi Arabia: Violence and Pan-Islamism Since 1979* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010)
- Heuser, Beatrice, *NATO, Britain, France and the FRG: Nuclear Strategies and Forces for Europe, 1949-2000* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1997)
- Hunt, Michael H., *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1987)
- Hymans, Jaques E. C., *The Psychology of Nuclear Proliferation: Identity, Emotions and Foreign Policy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006)
- Jeffreys-Jones, Rhodri, *In Spies We Trust: The Story of Western Intelligence* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013)
- \_\_\_\_\_, *The CIA and American Democracy*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003)

Jones, Matthew, *After Hiroshima: The United States, Race, and Nuclear Weapons in Asia, 1945-1965* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010)

Jones, Rodney W., *Nuclear Proliferation: Islam, the Bomb, and South Asia* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage/Center for International and Strategic Studies, 1981)

Kapur, Ashok, *Pakistan's Nuclear Development* (Beckenham: Croom Helm, 1987)

Kaufman, Burton I, and Scott Kaufman, *The Presidency of James Earl Carter*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, revised (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2006)

Kaufman, Scott, *Plans Unravelling: The Foreign Policy of the Carter Administration* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2008)

Khan, Feroz Hassan, *Eating Grass: The Making of the Pakistani Bomb* (Stanford, CA: Stanford Security Studies/Stanford University Press, 2012)

Kirby, Dianne (ed.), *Religion and the Cold War* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2003)

Kux, Dennis, *Estranged Democracies: India and the United States, 1941-1991* (Washington D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1993)

\_\_\_\_\_, *Disenchanted Allies: The United States and Pakistan, 1947-2000* (Washington D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2001)

Levy, Adrian, and Catherine Scott-Clark, *Deception: Pakistan, the United States, and the Secret Trade in Nuclear Weapons* (New York, NY: Walker & Co, 2007)

Little, Douglas, *American Orientalism: The United States and the Middle East Since 1945* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002)

Lyons, Jonathan, *Islam Through Western Eyes: From the Crusades to the War on Terrorism* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2012)

Maddock, Shane J., *Nuclear Apartheid: The Quest for American Atomic Supremacy from World War II to the Present* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010)

Mamdani, Mahmood, *Good Muslim, Bad Muslim: America, the Cold War, and the Roots of Terror* (New York: Pantheon, 2004)

Matinuddin, Kamal, *The Nuclearization of South Asia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002)

McGarr, Paul M., *The Cold War in South Asia: Britain, the United States, and the Indian Subcontinent, 1945-1965* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013)

Melissen, Jan, *The Struggle for Nuclear Partnership: Britain, the United States, and the Making of an Ambiguous Alliance, 1952-1959* (Groningen: Styx Publications, 1993)

Meyer, Stephen M., *The Dynamics of Nuclear Proliferation* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1984)

Mieczkowski, Yanek, *Gerald Ford and the Challenges of the 1970s* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2005)

Morgan, Kenneth O., *Callaghan: A Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997)

Muehlenbeck, Philip (ed.), *Religion and the Cold War: A Global Perspective* (Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press, 2012)

Mueller, John, *Atomic Obsession: Nuclear Alarmism from Hiroshima to Al-Qaeda* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010)

Müller, Harald, David Fischer, and Wolfgang Kötter, *Non-proliferation and Global Order* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994)

Nossiter, Bernard, *Soft State: A Newspaperman's Chronicle of India* (New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1970)

Olmsted, Kathryn S., *Real Enemies: Conspiracy Theories and American Democracy, World War I to 9/11* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009)

Ovendale, Ritchie, *Anglo-American Relations in the Twentieth Century* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1998)

Palit, D K, and P K S Namboodiri, *Pakistan's Islamic Bomb* (New Delhi; Vikas Press, 1979)

Perkovich, George, *India's Nuclear Bomb: The Impact On Global Proliferation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999)

Phythian, Mark, *The Politics of British Arms Sales Since 1964* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000)

Pilat, Joseph F. (ed.), *The Nonproliferation Predicament* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 1985)

Pimlott, Ben, *Harold Wilson* (London: HarperCollins, 1993)

Potter, William C., *Nuclear Power and Nonproliferation: An Interdisciplinary Perspective* (Cambridge, MA: Oelgeschlager, Gunn & Hain, Publishers Inc., 1982)

Powaski, Ronald E, *Entangling Alliance: The United States and European Security, 1950-1993* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1994)

\_\_\_\_\_, *March to Armageddon: The United States and the Nuclear Arms Race, 1939 to the Present* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987)

Preston, Andrew, *Sword of the Spirit, Shield of Faith: Religion in American War and Diplomacy* (New York, NY: Anchor Books, 2012)

Quester, George, *The Politics of Nuclear Proliferation* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973)

- Reiss, Mitchell, *Bridled Ambition: Why Countries Constrain Their Nuclear Capabilities* (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 1995)
- Rhodes, Richard, *Dark Sun: The Making of the Hydrogen Bomb* (New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1995)
- Richelson, Jeffrey, *Spying on the Bomb: American Nuclear Intelligence from Nazi Germany to Iran and North Korea* (New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Co., 2006)
- Rossbach, Niklas H., *Heath, Nixon and the Rebirth of the Special Relationship: Britain, the US and the EC, 1969-74* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009)
- Ruston, Roger, *A Say In The End of the World: Morals and British Nuclear Weapons Policy, 1941-1987* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989)
- Said, Edward, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin, 2003)
- Salik, Naim, *The Genesis of South Asian Nuclear Deterrence: Pakistan's Perspective* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009)
- Sandbrook, Dominic, *Seasons in the Sun: The Battle for Britain, 1974-1979* (London: Penguin, 2013)
- Schrafstetter, Susan, and Stephen Twigge, *Avoiding Armageddon: Europe, the United States, and the Struggle for Nuclear Nonproliferation, 1945-1970* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2004)
- Scott, Len, and Stephen Twigge, *Planning Armageddon: Britain, the United States, and Command of Western Nuclear Forces, 1945-1964* (Amsterdam: Harwood Academic, 2000)
- Shaker, Mohammed I., *The Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty: Origin and Implementation, 1959-1979* (London: Oceana Publications, 1980);
- Simpson, John, *The Independent Nuclear State: The United States, Britain, and the Military Atom*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (London: Macmillan, 1986)
- Simpson, John, Jenny Neilsen, Marion Swinerd, and Isabelle Anstey (eds.), *NPT Briefing Book, 2012 Edition* (London: Kings College London Centre for Science & Security Studies, 2012)
- Strong, Robert A., *Working in the World: Jimmy Carter and the Making of American Foreign Policy* (Baton Rouge; Louisiana State University Press, 2000)
- Suri, Jeremi, *Henry Kissinger and the American Century* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007)
- Tannenwald, Nina, *The Nuclear Taboo: The United States and the Non-use of Nuclear Weapons Since 1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007)
- Venter, Al, *Allah's Bomb: The Islamic Quest For Nuclear Weapons* (Guilford, CT: The Lyons Press, 2007)

Vickers, Rhiannon, *The Labour Party and the World, Volume 2: Labour's Foreign Policy 1951-2009* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011)

Walker, William, *Nuclear Entrapment: THORP and the Politics of Commitment* (London: Institute for Public Policy Research, 1999)

Weissman, Steve, and Herbert Krosney *The Islamic Bomb: The Nuclear Threat to Israel and the Middle East* (New York, NY: Times Books, 1981)

Westad, Odd Arne, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007)

Wittner, Lawrence S., *The Struggle Against the Bomb, Volume 3: Toward Nuclear Abolition* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003)

Young, John W, *Twentieth-Century Diplomacy: A Case Study of British Practice, 1963–1976* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012)

Yusuf, Moeed, *Predicting Proliferation: The History of the Future of Nuclear Weapons* (Boston, MA: Brookings Institution, 2009)

#### **Journal Articles & Chapters From Edited Collections**

Ahmed, Samina, 'Pakistan's Nuclear Weapons Program: Turning Points and Nuclear Choices,' *International Security*, 23:4 (Spring, 1999), 178-204

Albright, David, and Mark Hibbs, 'Pakistan's Bomb: Out of the Closet,' *The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, July/August 1992, 38-43

Boyer, Paul, 'From Activism to Apathy: The American People and Nuclear Weapons, 1963–1980,' *The Journal of American History*, 70:4 (March, 1984), 821-844

Brands, Hal, 'Non-Proliferation and the Dynamics of the Middle Cold War: The Superpowers, the MLF, and the NPT,' *Cold War History*, 7:3 (August., 2007), 389-423

\_\_\_\_\_, 'Progress Unseen: U.S. Arms Control Policy and the Origins of Detente, 1963-1968,' *Diplomatic History*, 30:2 (April, 2006), 253-285

\_\_\_\_\_, 'Rethinking Nonproliferation: LBJ, the Gilpatric Committee, and U.S. National Security Policy,' *Journal of Cold War Studies*, 8:2 (Spring, 2006), 83-113

Burr, William, 'A Scheme of "Control": The United States and the Origins of the Nuclear Suppliers' Group, 1974-1976,' *The International History Review*, 2014, online publication <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/07075332.2013.864690> (accessed on February 7, 2014), 1-25

Chafetz, Glenn, 'The Political Psychology of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Regime,' *The Journal of Politics*, 57:3 (August, 1995), 743-775

Chakma, Bhumitra, 'Pakistan's nuclear weapons programme: Past and future,' in Olav Njolstad (ed.), *Nuclear Proliferation and International Order: Challenges to the Non-Proliferation Treaty* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2011), 26-38

\_\_\_\_\_, 'Road to Chagai: Pakistan's Nuclear Programme, Its Sources and Motivations,' *Modern Asian Studies*, 36:4 (October, 2002), 871-912

Cordle, Daniel, 'Beyond the apocalypse of closure: nuclear anxiety in the postmodern literature of the United States,' in Hammond, Andrew (ed.), *Cold War Literature: Writing the Global Conflict* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2006)

Emery, Christian, 'The transatlantic and Cold War dynamics of Iran sanctions, 1979-80,' *Cold War History*, 10:3 (2010), 371-396

Forden, Geoffrey E., 'How the World's Most Underdeveloped Nations Get the World's Most Dangerous Weapons,' *Technology and Culture*, 48:1 (January, 2007), 92-103

Ganguly, Sumit, 'The Indian and Pakistani Nuclear Programmes: A Race to Oblivion?,' in Raju G. C. Thomas (ed.), *The Nuclear Non-proliferation Regime: Prospects for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1998), 272-283

Gray, William Glenn, 'Commercial Liberties and Nuclear Anxieties: The US-German Feud Over Brazil, 1975-7,' *The International History Review*, 34:3 (2012), 449-474

Gummett, Philip, 'From NPT to INFCE: Developments in Thinking About Nuclear Non-Proliferation,' *International Affairs*, 57:4 (Autumn, 1981), 549-567

Gusterson, Hugh, 'Nuclear Weapons and the Other in the Western Imagination,' *Cultural Anthropology*, 14:1 (February, 1999), 111-143

Hilfrich, Fabian, 'The Roots of Animosity: Bonn's Reaction to US Pressures in Nuclear Proliferation,' *The International History Review*, 2014, online publication  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/07075332.2013.864694> (accessed on February 6, 2014), 1-25

Hill, Patricia R., 'Commentary: Religion as a Category of Diplomatic Analysis,' *Diplomatic History*, 24:4 (Fall, 2000), 633-640

Hoodbhoy, Pervez, 'Myth Building: The "Islamic Bomb",' *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, June, 1993, 42-49

Huntington, Samuel P., 'The Clash of Civilizations?,' *Foreign Affairs* 72:3 (Summer, 1993), 22-49

Jones, Matthew, and John W. Young, 'Polaris, East of Suez: British Plans for a Nuclear Force in the Indo-Pacific, 1964-1968,' *Journal of Strategic Studies*, 33:6 (December, 2010), 847-870.

Kemp, R Scott, 'The End of Manhattan: How the Gas Centrifuge Changed the Quest for Nuclear Weapons,' *Technology and Culture*, 53:2 (April, 2012), 272-305

- Krige, John, 'US Technological Superiority and the Special Nuclear Relationship: Contrasting British and US Policies for Controlling the Proliferation of Gas Centrifuge Enrichment,' *The International History Review*, 2014, online edition <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/07075332.2013.864691> (accessed on February 6, 2014), 1-22
- Lahey, Daniel James, 'The Thatcher Government's Response to the Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan, 1979-1980,' *Cold War History*, 13:1 (2013), 21-42
- Lane, Ann, 'Foreign and defence policy,' in Seldon, Anthony, and Kevin Hickson (eds.), *New Labour, Old Labour: the Wilson and Callaghan Governments, 1974-79* (London: Routledge, 2004)
- Lavoy, Peter, 'Nuclear myths and the causes of nuclear proliferation,' *Security Studies* 2:3 (1993), 192-212
- Lewis, Bernard, 'The Roots of Muslim Rage,' *The Atlantic Monthly*, September 1990, <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1990/09/the-roots-of-muslim-rage/304643> (accessed on February 10, 2014)
- Marwah, Onkar, 'India and Pakistan: Nuclear Rivals in South Asia,' in George H Quester (ed.), *Nuclear Proliferation: Breaking the Chain* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1981)
- Metz, William D, 'Ford-MITRE Study: Nuclear Power Yes, Plutonium No,' *Science*, New Series, 196:4285 (April 1, 1977), 41
- Nye, Joseph S, 'Nonproliferation: A Long-Term Strategy,' *Foreign Affairs* 56 (April 1978), 601-623
- Pelopidas, Benoit, 'The Oracles of Proliferation: How Experts Maintain a Biased Historical Reading that Limits Policy Innovation,' *The Nonproliferation Review*, 18:1 (2011), 297-314
- Priest, Andrew, "'In Common Cause": The NATO Multilateral Force and the Mixed-Manning Demonstration on the USS Claude V. Ricketts, 1964-1965,' *The Journal of Military History*, 69:3 (July, 2005), 759-789
- Ritchie, Nick, 'Relinquishing nuclear weapons: Identities, networks and the British bomb,' *International Affairs*, 86:2 (2010), 465-487
- Rosenthal, Alan, 'The Politics of Passion: An Interview With Anthony Thomas,' *Journal of Film and Video*, 49:1-2 (Spring/Summer 1997), 94-102
- Rotter, Andrew J., 'Christians, Muslims, and Hindus: Religion and U.S.-South Asian Relations, 1947-1954,' *Diplomatic History*, 24:4 (Fall, 2000), 593-613.
- \_\_\_\_\_, 'Saidism Without Said: Orientalism and U.S. Diplomatic History,' *The American Historical Review*, 105:4 (October, 2000), 1205-1217
- Sagan, Scott, 'Why do states build nuclear weapons? Three models in search of a bomb,' *International Security*, 21:3 (Winter, 1996/97), 54-86



Said, Mohamed Kadry, 'Israel's nuclear capability: implications on Middle East security,' in Olav Njolstad (ed.), *Nuclear Proliferation and International Order: Challenges to the Non-Proliferation Treaty* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2011)

Schmidt, Fritz, 'NPT Export Controls and Zangger Committee,' *The Non-proliferation Review*, 7:3 (Fall-Winter 2000), 136-145

Schrafstetter, Susanna, 'Preventing the "Smiling Buddha"; British-Indian Nuclear Relations and the Commonwealth Nuclear Force, 1964-68,' *The Journal of Strategic Studies*, 25:3 (September 2002), 87-108

Schrafstetter, Susanna, and Stephen R. Twigge, 'Spinning into Europe: Britain, West Germany and the Netherlands: Uranium Enrichment and the Development of the Gas Centrifuge 1964-1970,' *Contemporary European History*, 11:2 (May, 2002), 253-272

Shaikh, Farzana, 'Pakistan's Nuclear Bomb: Beyond the non-proliferation regime,' *International Affairs*, 78:1 (2002), 29-48

Singh, S. Nihal, 'Why India Goes to Moscow for Arms,' *Asian Survey*, 24:7 (July, 1984), 707-720

Skjoldebrand, R, 'The International Nuclear Fuel Cycle Evaluation – INFCE,' *The IAEA Bulletin*, 22:2, 30-33

Stoddart, Kristan, 'The Labour Government and the development of Chevaline, 1974-1979,' *Cold War History*, 10:3 (September, 2010), 287-314

Suter, Keith D., 'The 1975 review conference of the nuclear non-proliferation treaty,' *Australian Outlook*, 30:2 (1976), 322-340

Tow, William T., and Douglas T. Stuart, 'China's Military Turns to the West,' *International Affairs*, 57:2 (Spring, 1981), 286-300

Twigge, Stephen R., 'Operation Hullabaloo: Henry Kissinger, British Diplomacy, and the Agreement on the Prevention of Nuclear War,' *Diplomatic History*, 33:4 (September, 2009), 689-701.

Vinen, Richard, 'Thatcherism and the Cold War,' in Jackson, Ben and Robert Saunders (eds.), *Making Thatcher's Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012)

Walker, J. Samuel, 'Nuclear Order and Disorder,' *International Affairs*, 76:4 (2000), 703-724

\_\_\_\_\_, 'Nuclear Power and Nonproliferation: The Controversy Over Nuclear Exports, 1974-1980,' *Diplomatic History*, 25:2 (Spring, 2001), 215-249

Walker, William, 'Destination Unknown: Rokkasho and the International Future of Nuclear Reprocessing,' *International Affairs*, 82:4 (July, 2006), 743-761

Yasmeen, Samina, 'Is Pakistan's Nuclear Bomb an Islamic Bomb?,' *Asian Studies Review*, 25:2 (June 2001), 201-215

### **Dissertations**

Abbasi, Rizwana Karim, 'Understanding Pakistan's Nuclear Behaviour (1950s–2010): Assessing the State Motivation and its International Ramifications (a Three Models Approach)' (Ph.D diss., University of Leicester, 2010)

Pande, Aparna, 'Foreign Policy of an Ideological State: Islam in Pakistan's International Relations' (Ph.D diss., Boston University, 2010)

Sexton, Mary DuBois, 'The Wages of Principle and Power: Cyrus R. Vance and the Making of Foreign Policy in the Carter Administration' (Ph.D diss., Georgetown University, 2009)

### **Reviews**

Davis, Eric, review, 'The Middle East Arms Race,' *Middle East Research and Information Project Reports*, 111, Rapid Deployment and Nuclear War (January, 1983), 26-27

Hibbs, Mark, review, 'Pakistan's Bomb: Mission Unstoppable,' *Nonproliferation Review* 15:2 (July, 2008), 381-391

Maddux, Thomas, and Diane Labrosse (eds.), H-Diplo/ISSF Review Roundtable, *Nuclear Apartheid: The Quest for American Atomic Supremacy from World War II to the Present*, June 17, 2011, [www.h-net.org/~diplo/ISSF/PDF/ISSF-Roundtable-2-10.pdf](http://www.h-net.org/~diplo/ISSF/PDF/ISSF-Roundtable-2-10.pdf)