

Why the U.S.-Pak Relation Lacked of Stability

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Abstract

U.S.-Pak relation had fluctuated wildly. America had formed military ally with Pakistan in 1954. U.S.-Pak relation was extremely close in that period. However, U.S.-Pak relation was very tight in some eras. America had issued sanctions against Pakistan because of the nuclear problems. U.S.-Pak relation had severe concussions between intimacy and alienation, extremely unstable. What factors led U.S.-Pak relation to so unstable state. This article attempts to study some factors resulting in the U.S.-Pak relation lacked of stability. This is very helpful for us to understand the U.S.-Pak relation.

Key words: America; Pakistan; Instability; Reason

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INTRODUCTION

U.S.-Pak relation fluctuated radically in the history. In the age of 1950-1960, America and Pakistan formed military

allies. U.S.-Pak relation was very close in that period. Pakistan became the most allied ally of America in Asia. However, U.S.-Pak relation began to transform cold in the mid 1960's. In late 1970's, America and Pakistan had very sharp contradiction in nuclear development issue. By the end of 1979, Pakistani mobs in its capital, Islamabad, had ransacked and burned U.S. Embassy in Pakistan. U.S.-Pak relation was down to freezing point. Some days later, the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan. Pakistan had been the front-line state of America. U.S.-Pak relation rapidly warmed. America and Pakistan became the paramilitary allies. U.S.-Pak relation was very close in that period. But at the end of the 1980's, result in Soviet army withdrew from Afghanistan. The U.S. and Pakistan immediately broke out a severe dispute due to the nuclear development problems. American issued sanctions on Pakistan. Thus, U.S.-Pak relation was very unstable. Why the U.S.-Pak relations showed a sharp fluctuations state? There are certain structural factors in U.S.-Pak relation, caused the radical fluctuation of U.S.-Pak relation. These organizational factors mainly include the following three points: the conflict of two countries' national interests; the weak civil foundation; the asymmetry of power and influence.

1. THE CONFLICT OF TWO COUNTRIES' NATIONAL INTERESTS

The national interests of U.S. and Pakistan had serious conflict. While the U.S. focus was worldwide, Pakistan's primary focus remained regional. (Kheli, 1982, p.151) U.S. attached great importance to the global cold war with the Soviet Union and China, could not back up the Pakistani dread against India, and also questioned the authenticity of Pakistani fear against India. Pakistan attached importance to the Indian invasion, was difficult to follow U.S. to contain the Soviet Union and China for a long time, and began to improve relations with the Soviet Union and

China from the early 1960's. National interests between the two countries were also reflected in the orientation of the nuclear issue.

Americans formed an alliance with Pakistan. The main intention of America was to improve the containment system towards the Soviet Union and China, and to collect intelligence on the Soviet Union and China by using bases in Pakistan. U.S. only viewed Pakistan as its small partner. In 1963, Pakistan improved its relation with China and Soviet Union. When Pakistan changed the course of her foreign policy, the United States resented the move. (Chaudhri, 1970, p.52) So, U.S. Deputy Secretary of State George Ball warned Pakistani: "We very much hope President Ayub will not carry relations with Red China to a point where it impairs a relationship which we have." (Jain, 2007, p.48)

As for the disputes between Pakistan and India, U.S. could know Pakistani concerns about India, but could not understand the feelings of Pakistan. U.S. believed that Pakistani concerns about India were overblown. Cause India did not want to take the initiative to invade Pakistan. President Kennedy had expressed this idea. In August 12, 1963, President Kennedy met with the Secretary of state Dean Rusk and Deputy Secretary of State George Ball and other officials to discuss the problems of U.S.-Pak relation. During the meeting, President Kennedy admitted that he totally didn't agree with Pakistani views about India: "Pakistan was not worried about the threat from India, but worried about the loss of ability to contend with India. India would not take the initiative to attack Pakistan, because it will cost a billion dollars in military expenditure." (Smith, 1996, pp.635-639) In order to eliminate the concerns of Pakistan for India, Secretary of state Rusk suggested that the United States could provide a nuclear umbrella to Pakistan. But President Kennedy refused to adopt this proposal. President Kennedy's statement had been challenged in the third Indo-Pak war. Because India had taken initiative to invade East Pakistan, did not want to lose the opportunity of dismembering Pakistan even it would consume a large number of military expenditure. In this war, Nixon and Kissinger claimed that vigorous American action deterred India from dismembering West Pakistan (Venkataramani, 1984, pp.397-398). In fact, except President Nixon deter India from invade and annex western Pakistan territory in the third Indo-Pak War, U.S. would never stand in Pakistan against India (Kux, 2001, pp.360-361).

Pakistan formed an alliance with U.S. based on the intention of getting the U.S. military and economic aid, to balance the advantages of India and protect national security. The former foreign minister and Prime Minister Muhammad Ali Bogra pointed out: "Our only objective is to defend the stability and security of Pakistan. Therefore, we need to get supports of like-minded and peace-loving countries. We never hide the fact that India is the number

one threat of Pakistan." (Sayeed, 1961, p.232) For the global cold war, Pakistan could not spare no effort to support U.S. without reservation. When Muhammad Ali Bogra criticized communism, he never includes China. During the Bandung Conference in 1955, Prime Minister Muhammad Ali Bogra held two meetings with Premier Zhou Enlai. Prime Minister Muhammad Ali Bogra told the Premier Zhou Enlai: The aim of Pakistan joined Southeast Asia Treaty Organization was not to be against China, was only to prevent from the invasion of India. Pakistan would not participate in the U.S. led war towards China. Zhou Enlai was no doubt greatly impressed by Pakistani Prime Minister Muhammad Ali's straightforwardness (Sherwani, 1980, p.66). China accepted the interpretation of Pakistan. A few days later, Premier Zhou Enlai pointed out at a press conference that China had already reached a mutual understanding with Pakistan. Prime Minister Muhammad Ali Bogra was confirmed on the spot (Garver, 2001, p.191).

U.S. and Pakistan had radical contradiction on Pakistani nuclear development problems. U.S. believed that Pakistani nuclear issue related to the global non-proliferation efforts. In the beginning of 1976, the Ford administration strengthened the export control of sensitive products to some countries including Pakistan. These countries had not signed the "nuclear nonproliferation treaty", and did not permit the international community to examine all of their nuclear facilities. In August 1976, Secretary of state Kissinger visited Pakistan, tried to persuade Pakistan to stop its nuclear development. Kissinger pointed out to Ali Bhutto: the Democratic Party was likely to win the presidential election. Democrats would take more stringent measures on nuclear proliferation, and are likely to punish Pakistani nuclear development, to deter other countries like Pakistan (Kux, 2001, pp.221-222).

Pakistan viewed nuclear issue as a matter of national survival; the aim was to deter India. In 1979, U.S. insisted on sanctions to Pakistan on nuclear development (Thornton, 1982, p.967). Pakistan was very angry. What made Pakistan felt most uneven is that U.S. did not punish India, and India had really exploded a nuclear device. Just like a Pakistani senior official said:

If U.S. had imposed sanctions on India, we won't be so minded. We could understand American favor Israel. It is a special case. But we could not understand, since U.S. refused to sanction India, why U.S. pressed Pakistan so severely. (Kux, 2001, p.239)

Similarly, in 1990, U.S. imposed sanctions on Pakistan. What made Pakistan felt angry was that U.S. imposed sanctions against Pakistan, but did not impose sanctions on India. And India itself was the country which had exploded a nuclear device in 1974 (Kux, 2001, p.310).

In fact, the contradiction of Pakistan and U.S. on the nuclear issue highlights the contradiction of two countries' national interests. U.S. was the inventor of nuclear

weapons, also had many nuclear weapons than most of the countries, did not hope that more countries to hold nuclear weapons. But Pakistan was a country which always worried about Indian annexation. Pakistan engaged in nuclear development was to defend the national survival, the main objective is to balance Indian absolutely superiority of the national strength and the military force. After India had a nuclear test in 1974, Indian advantages to Pakistan expanded further. Pakistani fears about India deepened further, more unlikely to stop its nuclear development. As for Pakistani view, nuclear development issue was a life-and-death problem.

2. THE WEAK CIVIL FOUNDATION

Civilian foundation of U.S.-Pak relation was very weak. This problem existed in both Pakistan and America, but the performances were different. Pakistan people generally paid great attention to America, and had a deep emotion to America. Such emotion was not positive, but was a very deep disgust. Normal American had a long-term isolationism tradition for the rest of the world, lacked of interest to other countries, lacked in understanding to Pakistan which located in South Asia. In addition to the volume of trade between Pakistan and America was not too much, radiation crowd was not too wide. These factors led U.S.-Pak relation functioned more in the aspects of two countries' government operation, lack of solid civilian foundation.

America and Pakistan were the ones which had greatly differences in the historical origin, ethnic composition, the mainstream culture and the social values and other aspects. Ordinary people of both Pakistan and America lacked of in-depth understanding of another country. As for America, American owing to their traditional isolationism, lack of interests and understanding to other countries. As for Pakistan which located in southern Asia, and the economy was not very developed, Americans lacked the interests to understand it. Therefore, on the list of countries which the American public interested in, Pakistan was very difficult in the forefront. (Kux, 2001, p.366) Americans lacked of interests of understanding to Pakistan, therefore lacked of in-depth understanding of Pakistan, so it was hard to form a solid and beneficial civilian foundation for the operation of U.S.-Pak relation.

In Pakistan, ordinary people generally held an awful impression on America. This bad impression came from various factors, and enhanced day by day. In the early years after partition, the bad impression of Pakistani ordinary people on America came from religious emotion. Because America tilt toward Israel on the Middle East issue, led to the bad impression of Muslim which including most of Pakistan. Anti-American feelings of Pakistan had been fully demonstrated in the critical moments. From 1953 to 1954, the principal mass media

in Pakistan continued to attack the deepening U.S.-Pak relation, opposed strongly to the U.S.-Pak military alliance. After the Sino-Indo border conflict in 1962, America provided military assistance to India. Pakistan emerged a lot of mass protests toward American military assistance to India.

Since then, disgust of Pakistani people toward America continued to deepen. In addition to the original religious emotion, Pakistani people also felt considerable frustration on the communication process between Pakistan and America. Pakistani people felt that Pakistan had received repeated unjust treatment by America. The Pakistani people had concentrated hatred and suspicion toward America. The Pakistani people criticized America for three main points: Firstly, U.S. not only refused to help Pakistan in the second Indo-Pak war, but also suspended the military assistance to Pakistan; secondly, after the Soviet Army withdrew from Afghanistan, America no longer needed joint Pakistan to fight against Soviet Union, and then burn the bridge after crossing it, Pakistan was discarded immediately; finally, on the nuclear issue, America had tilt toward India, and punished Pakistan. For the same nuclear development, America adopted differential treatment on Pakistan and India. America only implemented discriminatory sanctions against Pakistan, but did not punish India.

Although on the whole, Pakistani people had a bad impression on America, but the elite and ordinary people of Pakistan had a certain difference about the impression of America. Administrative officer, senior officers, civil servants, the landlords and the managers of industry and commerce, held a more positive view about American. Although the upper members of the Pakistan Society were discontented with the American policy toward Pakistan, however, they wanted to construct better relation with America. In contrast, majority of Pakistani people held a more negative view about America. They believed America was not friendly or even hostile to Pakistan and the entire Islamic world (Kux, 2001, pp.365-366).

Because Pakistani elite and ordinary people had some differences on the attitude toward America, if Pakistan government pursued a pro America foreign policy, they would face resistance from the ordinary people who had strong anti America sentiment. Prime Minister Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy confessed:

The alliance between Pakistan and America just like a business which was resolved by a few ministers in secret plan. As a result, this alliance was required determined from the law, but from the understanding of ordinary people, they did not fully feel this alliance is compulsory. Our commitment was made in secret, without public debate. This mad these obligations under suspicion. Ordinary people believed these obligations were somehow placed us in a subordinate position, and then taken away our autonomy. (Harrison, 1984, p.51)

America also understood there is a great difference between the elite and the ordinary people of Pakistan in

the attitude toward America. At the beginning of 1957, a report pointed out that the disagreement between the elite and the ordinary people of Pakistan in the attitude toward the Western alliance grew greater day by day. Since last one and a half years, the Western alliance made the ordinary Pakistani increasingly disillusioned. The ordinary Pakistani increasingly demanded that the Pakistan government pursues a more independent foreign policy. More serious was, the gap between the position of the Pakistan government and most of the Pakistani political awareness was widening day by day (McMahon, 1994, p.243).

The weak civilian foundation of U.S.-Pak relation also derived from the economic cooperation between the two countries was not very deep and close. Although U.S. had provided Pakistan a large number of economic aid and loans, but the volume of trade between the two countries was very small. Because the personnel exchanges between the two countries brought by trade were not so much. Pakistani Influence on America economy was very small. So, U.S. was very difficult to emerge a powerful interest group canvass for the U.S.-Pak relation. It is difficult for the economic cooperation to provide a solid foundation for the U.S.-Pak relation.

3. THE ASYMMETRY OF POWER AND INFLUENCE

U.S.-Pak relation had an asymmetry of power and influence. In other words, the influences gap of U.S. and Pakistan to each other was far behind the power gap of the two countries. American influence on Pakistan was not as great as its comprehensive national strength. And Pakistani influence on U.S. was not as small as its comprehensive national strength.

Although America had provided a large number of long term assistance to Pakistan, and as a superpower with very strong comprehensive national strength, but its influence on Pakistan was very limited. In many critical moments, America could not efficiently transform its superior military, political and economic capability into the influence on Pakistani policy.

In 1963, after the Sino-Indo border conflict, Pakistan accelerated its speed of improving relations with the Soviet Union and China. President Kennedy and President Johnson were very angry about this, and strived to put pressure on Pakistan for its foreign policy, trying to make Pakistan abandon its foreign relation improvement efforts with the Soviet Union and China. But Pakistan did not succumb to the pressure of America, did not give up foreign policy adjustment.

In 1965, the second Indo-Pak war broke out. America found that because the long-term hostility between Pakistan and India, despite American had provided a large number of assistance to Pakistan and India, but

did not obtain the corresponding influence in these two countries. Finally, America could only admit, its influence on Pakistan and India was extremely limited. Secretary of State Rusk had made such comments on the second Indo-Pak War: India and Pakistan both did not accept American advices (Kux, 2001, p.239).

In 1976, secretary of State Henry Kissinger visited Pakistan, tried to persuade Premier Ali Bhutto to abandon nuclear development. But Kissinger's efforts were invalid. Although President Nixon tilt toward Pakistan in the third Indo-Pak war, and President Ford was very friendly to Pakistan, but American influence on Pakistan was still very limited (Kux, 2001, pp.223-224). After the Premier Ali Bhutto was deposed by a military coup, America still failed to exert much influence on Pakistan. Under the great American pressure, Pakistan continued to promote the nuclear development, and ultimately produced nuclear weapons.

The reasons why America lacked influence on Pakistan was mainly due to U.S. and Pakistan had different ideas on the following issue, what policy would be the best one for Pakistan and its national security. U.S. and Pakistan had the greatest difference on the opinion about India. In 1963, secretary of state Rusk said: "Pakistani fear, suspicion and hate to India mean, we could not expect that Pakistan would act rationally according to our plan and the most advantageous way to their national interests." (Smith, 1996, pp.575-577) Even in today, Rusk's this idea still was correct. When Pakistan was in trouble, it would act in their own way, rather than America approach to pursuit of their national interests, even if it means losing a large number of American military and economic aid (Kux, 2001, p.363).

Although Pakistan was a poor country in the marginal areas, but its influence on America was more significant than its national strength. When Pakistan was American ally, Pakistan could have a certain degree influence on America, and thus gain more national interests.

At the end of 1950s', Pakistan launched a continuous game with America on whether to provide Pakistan with F-104 fighters. Finally America promised Pakistan to provide F-104 fighters. After 3 years intense game between Pakistan and America, the need for Pakistan was met by America. Pakistan, an underdeveloped country in the third world had been equipped with F-104, a kind of advanced fighter which even American NATO allies had not equipped at that time.

On July 9, 1963, Pakistan Ambassador to U.S. Aziz Ahmed frankly exchanged with President Kennedy. Aziz Ahmed criticized America for its providing India with military assistance, and pointed out that it would endanger the national security of Pakistan. President Kennedy told Aziz Ahmed, it is difficult to accept the ambassador's criticism, and pointed out that: "U.S. had fully considered the national interests of Pakistan. In

fact, the amount of aid I provide to India compare to the amount I want to provide had been reduced a lot!” (Smith, 1996, pp.617-619)

CONCLUSION

Today, although U.S. and Pakistan had become quasi ally again, but U.S.-Pak relation still had very dramatic changes. The U.S.- Pak relation improved slightly in the early years of the Clinton presidency. In 1998, Pakistan had followed the footsteps of India, carried through Pakistani nuclear tests. This led American sanctions on Pakistan. In 1999, Kargil clashes and military coup launched by General Musharraf, led U.S.-Pak relation hit bottom. In 2001, 9/11 events brought tremendous impetus to the improvement of U.S.-Pak relation. Pakistan had cooperated with America on the anti terror war. America and Pakistan once again became quasi military ally. In recent years, U.S. had doubted about the role and effect of Pakistan in the war on terror, and had adjusted its strategy of the war on terror. So, U.S.-Pak relation once again came into the subtle transition period. Regardless of the fact that the stability of U.S.-Pak relation had improved slightly, but it still had very dramatic changes. In the foreseeable future, structural factors which caused U.S.-Pak relation full of changes would not alter. The U.S.-Pak relation would still be in a dynamic state for a very long time.

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