

Will Bush go beyond lifting sanctions?

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, MAY 27. The United States Senate has confirmed the nomination of Ms. Christina Rocca as the new Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs. The approval of Ms. Rocca and seven others was by unanimous consent without debate or a recorded vote.

Her confirmation comes at a time when the Bush administration has clearly signalled a desire to place Indo-U.S. relations on a markedly different footing, emphasising, among other things, a desire to build on the momentum achieved during the Clinton administration's last years.

The administration now will be hoping to have its other key players in position at the earliest. But for some reason, the nomination of Mr. Robert Blackwill as American Ambassador to India has not reached the Senate. He is known to be close to the U.S. President, Mr. George Bush, having been part of his foreign policy team and his inner circle of advisers. Only last week, Mr. Bush announced his intention to nominate a veteran Foreign Service Officer, Ms. Wendy Chamberlain, as Ambassador to Pakistan.

A range of issues will merit Ms. Rocca's attention as she formally takes on her assignment. During her confirmation hearings, recently, she addressed the issue of sanctions,

stressing that the punitive measures had outlived their utility and therefore ought to go.

"My personal perception is that the sanctions have to go. They have outlived their usefulness and we need to move forward from here and find a new way of approaching our security concerns which remain real," Ms. Rocca told Senators. She argued that there were a number of ways in which the U.S. could work with India and Pakistan, but the first step was to lift the sanctions.

Ms. Rocca was with the Operations Directorate of the Central Intelligence Agency for 15 years and then worked for Republican Senator, Mr. Sam Brownback, as his senior legislative aide and foreign policy adviser. The Senator from Kansas was instrumental in the sanctions waiver legislation; and has long been making the point that the Clinton administration had not fully utilised the Congressional waiver on the punitive measures.

Even if the present focus is on the Glenn Amendment sanctions imposed on India and Pakistan in the aftermath of the 1998 nuclear tests, there is the feeling here and elsewhere that the Bush administration must go much beyond, especially as it pertains to India. The question is not merely lifting the remaining sanctions or in getting rid of the so-called Entities List, but in looking at all the restrictions that are in place in the realm of export control since the mid-1970s.

But sanctions will not be the only topic of discussion between the U.S. and India. "The past few years have seen the beginning of a transformation in our relationship with the world's largest democracy. Now is the time to complete that transformation," Ms. Rocca said during her hearings, going on to acknowledge India's new role beyond South Asia. "That can only be to the good and we welcome India's new global status," she added.

The U.S. may be looking at India in a different light in the last few years and the Bush administration may be intensifying the new-look approach, but that does mean that Pakistan is being written off. In fact, while some in India were simply thrilled that Ms. Rocca's testimony had references to India as a "global" player and Pakistan as a "regional" player, there were other pointed sentences that showed that Washington is not going to ignore Islamabad.

Apart from saying the friendship with Pakistan was long-standing and one that must be "sustained and enhanced," Ms. Rocca emphasised that the Bush administration was committed to working through difficult economic, political and social challenges facing Pakistan. And more significantly, Ms. Rocca said, "our relationship with the two anchors of South Asia, India and Pakistan, has tremendous potential. Too often that potential has gone unrealised."

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TWO interesting facets seem to emerge from the government's decision to react positively to the USA's decision to begin work on erecting a National Missile Defence shield, and the Opposition - notably the Congress's - reaction to it.

The Congress has termed the government's decision as "hasty" and "thoroughly premature and dangerously immature." Congress spokesman Mr Natwar Singh had said: "We want to emphasise and caution the country that the acceptance of the package constitutes a decisive paradigm shift in nuclear policy and breaks the international consensus."

It seems unlikely that the government did not take the Opposition, especially the Congress, into confidence before going ahead with such a crucial decision as the NMD.

Only time will tell whether the government's decision is "hasty", "premature" and/or "immature". However, if such statements are being issued even after the government has taken the Congress into confidence, then it bares the opportunistic streak in the Congress.

Note that there has been no sustained campaign against the government's forthcoming move by the Congress preceding the government's decision.

Neither were there demands for a national debate on the issue to apprise the nation about the details of NMD.

So, the Congress's statements appear hollow, especially, because the standard practice before adopting any major foreign policy initiative is for the government to take Opposition leaders into confidence. For instance, this was done when India took the decision to establish diplomatic relations with Israel in 1992, as also when an agreement on maintaining "peace and tranquillity on the Line of Actual Control" was signed with China in September 1993.

The loopholes

If details about the US National Missile Defence shield were available to the Indian government for a long time - details which, as the government claims, helped it come out with a quick response - then why didn't it let the nation know, asks ANINDYA RAI VERMAN. The government has allegedly been pushing through questionable policy decisions through the GoMs



US Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage who was in New Delhi on 11 May to discuss the NMD.

Defending the government's decision, a foreign ministry spokesman said the positive reaction was a "considered statement." "India and the USA have been talking about the NMD for one year, not one day", said a South Block official.

Ministry of external affairs officials believe that President George W Bush's plans for an NMD were more than well known to New Delhi.

Ever since India's national security adviser and Atal Behari Vajpayee's principal secretary, the controversial Brajesh Mishra met US Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld in Munich in March, the NMD has been on the agenda of every high-level meeting between Indian and American officials, they say.

However, there is another angle to it - considering the Opposition weak,

the government may have chosen to ride roughshod over it by not bothering to take it into confidence, in which case it must be said that the government has breached standard procedure.

If details about the NMD were available to the government for such a long time - details which, as the government claims, helped it come out with a quick response - then why didn't it let the nation know?

Perhaps, the government anticipated that the Opposition might create a hullabaloo about it and cause some inconvenience, however minor.

Such thoughts come to mind after some allegations levelled recently against the government. The government has allegedly been pushing through questionable policy decisions - and bypassing ministries

and those in the know - through what has now popularly come to be known as the Group of Ministers.

Till date, almost 35 GoMs have reportedly been created - a record of sorts. It has been alleged that, though technically set up by the Union Cabinet, on most occasions the GoM functions at the behest of the Prime Minister's Office and not the Cabinet.

Besides, the GoMs do not have adequate representation of National Democratic Alliance partners.

If the NDA allies can, thus, be conveniently bypassed by the PMO, it is perhaps logical to believe that the PMO will not bother much about taking the Opposition into confidence.

We might sight an instance, though not directly connected to the NMD, but definitely having to do with the nation's defence.

A GoM, led by Union Home Minister LK Advani and having in it Mr Brajesh Mishra, had earlier this year decided to create the post of Chief of Defence Staff or the CDS, which is meant to be a "one-point adviser to the government" and would head

the nuclear forces and strategic Intelligence machinery, despite opposition to the post's creation by the Air Force on several grounds.

The Air Force has been maintaining that the present system of a Chief of Staff Committee is okay, that the Air Force should be given charge of nuclear weapons since the other Services "lacked the delivery systems", and that if the CDS was from one of the Services, he would "push" his command.

In sum, it seems we have no other option but to witness the war of words between the Opposition and the government defending its stance, having already shown the green light.

(The author is on the staff of The Statesman, Kolkata.)

THE STATESMAN
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'Indo-US ties to counter China'

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IN A major geopolitical shift, the United States is looking to forge closer military ties with India as a counter to China and to help stabilise the world's most dangerous nuclear flashpoint, a senior US defence official said.

Next week, General Henry Shelton, chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, will make the highest level US military visit to India since the 1998 nuclear tests.

India signalled its readiness for a closer security relationship with Washington earlier this

month by responding positively to President George Bush's US missile defence initiative, the official said.

"It reflects kind of a diplomatic revolution," the official told AFP, speaking on condition of anonymity yesterday.

Never close, the two countries had testy relations during the cold war when non-aligned India looked to the Soviet Union for military supplies and Washington allied with Pakistan to thwart the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Now, prompted by US concerns about China and the

belief that sanctions have allowed nuclear instability to fester on the subcontinent, the administration wants to waive the sanctions and substantively upgrade its military relations with India, the official said.

Lifting sanctions would allow India to receive military aid and buy US-made weaponry and military equipment.

"People see us and them having a common concern in Chinese power in the far East," he said. Some in the administration see India as a strategic partner in the containment of China, he

said, while others regard it as a coming power that has interests in common with Washington.

The official said it would take at least several months to lift the sanctions but "there is a disposition to get beyond sanctions."

Deputy secretary of State Richard Armitage told members of Congress several days ago that the State department supported a presidential waiver to lift sanctions against India, and US defense secretary Donald Rumsfeld also supports a waiver, the official said.

AFP

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India can only benefit from President Bush's new missile defence programme

Out of the cold

BY MANVENDRA SINGH

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A REFERENCE to the archives is necessary if only to update one's memory as to how times are changing and where they are headed. For it is certain that most of what has been written about missile defences is based on memories rooted in the Cold War.

That period of history is over, but what is difficult to change is the mental make-up of those years. One of those born in that era, George Walker Bush Jr, believes that the future is not one where the security of the United States requires a "nuclear balance of terror". Last year's archives will reveal that he uttered these words as the Governor of Texas at the National Press Club in Washington.

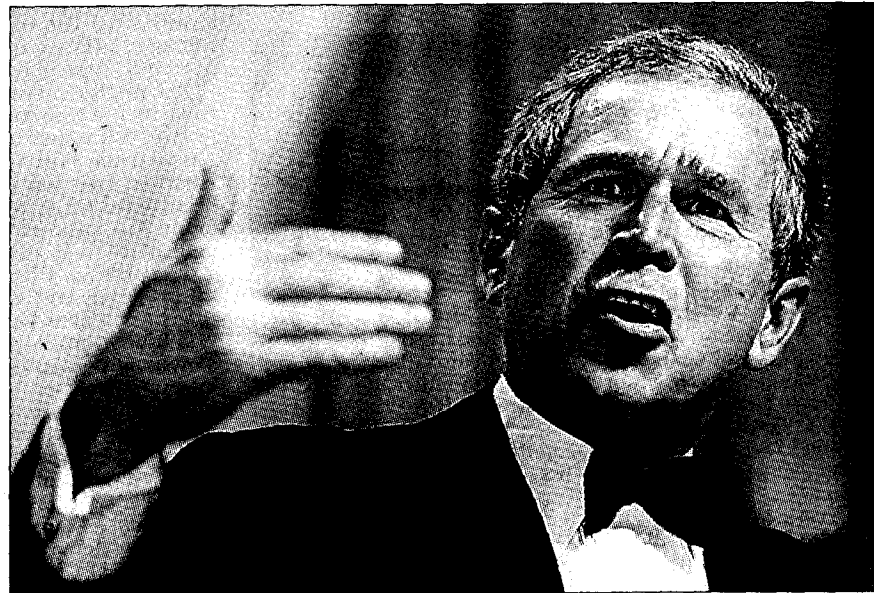
The memory lapse confronting most of those responsible for setting the 'strategic agenda' in the country can be overlooked, for they live in times that have gone by. And India's foremost strategic writer quite rightly declared that President Bush's May 1 speech on missile defences "ended the Cold War".

After all what President Bush said simply was that the US "can and will change the size, composition, the character of our nuclear forces in a way that reflects the reality that the Cold War is over". Can India justifiably be unhappy about this?

The traditional Indian position on nuclear weapons has been based on the exclusivity of the 'club of five' and the unwillingness of any to give a commitment on disarmament. For years, India kept on with its disarmament *mantra*, pulling in like-minded members to these quasi-socialistic functions and delivering sermons and action plans which no one listened to. It made not an iota of difference to the nuclear powers. China even took it to mean Indian pusillanimity and armed Pakistan just enough to keep India tied down regionally.

Over the years, New Delhi couldn't look beyond its immediate neighbourhood, even when its interests merited a far wider horizon. From that era of loneliness, to the US wanting to dialogue so as "to promote common interests in Asia and beyond" is a very long journey travelled. And India has only travelled that path because it decided to actualise its nuclear capabilities, while demonstrating its competence in handling that responsibility.

There are, of course, many Indians uncomfortable with entering this new era. Intellectually cocooned by the stability of the known and far more at ease while pretending celibacy, they prefer the



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sterility of the established rather than recreate a new global system. And that is precisely what is sought out of these dramatic zero-radiation implosions on the nuclear field.

"If the Republicans come in, things aren't going back to the old way. We're going to get into the 21st century whether they like it or not." That 'if' became a reality, and the author of this line, Richard Armitage, was in New Delhi this month bringing his President's de-nuclearisation message to India. The 'they' Armitage referred to was the Pentagon's civilian and military bureaucracy, as formidable as anywhere else.

The message simply was an appreciation of India's position on the missile defences proposal put forward at National Defence University by President Bush. India's position was, ironically enough, better understood in Moscow and Washington than it was amongst the native strategists.

"We must seek security based on more than the grim premise that we can destroy those who destroy us... Deterrence can no longer be based solely on the threat of nuclear retaliation... This treaty does not recognise the present or point us to the future. It enshrines the past... This is an important opportunity for the world to rethink the unthinkable and find new

ways to keep the peace. Today's world requires a new policy, a broad strategy of active non-proliferation, counter-proliferation and defences," said President Bush at the historic speech.

The broad design given thus far is that the US could order unilateral deep-cuts in its nuclear arsenal, de-alert its intercontinental ballistic missiles and sit with the like-minded to reconfigure the new global security concepts. An India long accustomed to isolation on the global nuclear stage is part of this team of architects who could remake the world's security.

There are many who continue to want to dwell in splendid seclusion. Not for them the challenges of the new world. For that indeed is what the whole architecture of missile defences is about — remaking a global security arrangement based on mutual interests rather than the "threat of nuclear retaliation".

Until precise figures are disclosed, it is not possible to determine exactly how many nuclear weapons will remain after this exercise is over. From what is known, of its 7,519 nuclear weapons in 2000, the Bush team is talking in terms of going below even the best possible scenario as debated in 1997 through Start III. The figures would then read somewhere in the region between 2,000 and 2,500. And this is when the Start II agreements are

not yet fully implemented.

That is a fairly dramatic cut in every sense of the word, and in no way can it harm Indian interests. And coupled with de-alerting its missiles, it is difficult to visualise a greater easing of tensions in the past few decades. Indians cannot be displeased with the proposals. To put it another way, what is being made out is that the US could be prepared to cut its nuclear forces to below the number of targets that it has currently identified around the world.

The US nuclear forces are believed to have around 2,200 targets worldwide. These are spread out in Russia, China, and possibly what it frequently refers to as 'rogue States'.

This last issue is the pointer toward the global structure of this emerging security architecture. The correct terminology is in fact ballistic missile defences, rather than the national missile defences that had been the Clinton administration's vision. The threat to global security is more from the proliferation of ballistic missiles with the messianic or the Marxist regimes in Asia. It is a threat that the 1972 ABM Treaty just could not visualise. And as President Bush said: "Today's most urgent threat emanates from States for whom terror and blackmail are a way of life."

His envoy to India, Armitage, went a step further to name the rogue States as Libya, Iraq, Iran, North Korea and other countries "in your neighbourhood". He added: "We have questions about Pakistan which are well-known and of which you are equally aware."

The departure from the past is evident in these words and the conduct of the US administration since the dramatic announcement of President Bush. The new Republican administration is aiming at a new global structure based on consulting rather than confronting as in the past. And the consultations are going on between those who are like-minded about the threats posed to global security by those States ungoverned by the rules of restraint.

States that use nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles as tools of terror and blackmail have been earmarked for technological isolation through the BMD initiative. To its east and west, India has neighbours with just such a proclivity. Having suffered on account of neglecting its security interests for decades, India's initiative is as welcome as is the new era.

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A new mood in the U.S.-India dialogue

10-10 MS By P.S. Suryanarayana

THE DIPLOMACY of building a mutually beneficial strategic bond does not rank equally high on the agendas of India and the U.S. at this stage. By invoking the sole superpower's 'prerogative' of ensuring its absolute security, the U.S. has now indicated its desire to explore how far it could count on India as also other 'friends and allies' for support. But New Delhi may be misreading the signal by scrambling to tune to the U.S.' strategic wavelengths without appearing to probe its gameplan.

The U.S. President, Mr. George W. Bush, is eager to design and deploy a 'sci-fi' defence shield that could protect his country from possible missile attacks by new and potential enemies among the existing 'rogue' states as also non-state purveyors of terror. There is nothing sinister about this sensible adventure. Yet, while the know-how for such a system is far from proven, Mr. Bush's intentions are also not definitive. It is not clear whether he will accommodate all the "friends and allies" of the U.S. in a space-age Noah's Ark. The challenge before India is whether it will have to readjust its foreign policy, or indeed subordinate that to the U.S.' interests, to remain within the line of Mr. Bush's emerging strategic 'vision'. There is nothing substantive at this juncture to suggest that he wants India to play a surrogate strategic role. In the short run, the strategic discourse between the two countries will be determined by Washington's belief that it is not unveiling a policy of unilateral imposition of its will and by the Deputy Secretary of State, Mr. Richard Armitage's "consultations" with New Delhi on its evolving strategic doctrine. After initially backing Mr. Bush, New Delhi has now placed itself between two choices: a pro-U.S. tilt and an ambiguous wish to join Russia to try and fashion a multipolar world.

Caring diplomacy was, of course, the transparent substance of Mr. Bush's recent friendly gesture towards India. Yet, the evolving sentiment behind the scenes will now be determined by the uncertainties of the new global order that Mr. Bush's ideas might produce. His recent unscheduled engagement at the Oval Of-

fice with the Minister for External Affairs and Defence, Mr. Jaywant Singh, is still the prime ingredient of an emerging folklore about the new feel-good diplomacy on the bilateral scene. So, the strategic awakening by both sides over new possibilities in their dialogue can be sustained only by a genuine congruence of interests and not an artificial coordination of policies.

Mr. Bush's diplomacy of the personal touch towards India has acquired unusual resonance only on account of his concerns regarding China in the context of

impulses as today's sole superpower or Mr. Bush's presumptive preference for straight choices. The temptation will be strong indeed for New Delhi to ponder whether Mr. Bush may have now decided to explore the scope for a strategic link or an ideological friendship with India in this post-Soviet era to test China's political will (if not also, to confound it). An enchanting diplomatic task will be to compare and contrast the ostensible value of today's India to the U.S., on one side, with America's old strategic neglect of New Delhi, on the other side. However,

more explicitly in a Cold War II mode and whether India can and should be expected to play a U.S.-friendly role in this situation. The realities are much more complicated for India, which openly or discreetly makes common cause with China on notions of safeguarding sovereign rights over human rights issues. The strategic dimension of the U.S.-India dialogue can encompass a number of other issues, too, such as the fight against international terrorism. However, the bilateral mood is largely shaped by a sense of new economic opportunities and a shared ideological vision.

Instructive will be a look at a truly unusual comment which the former U.S. Ambassador to India, Mr. Richard Celeste, has made. As a diplomat who helped Mr. Clinton take the U.S.-India relationship from a phase of estrangement to one of active engagement, Mr. Celeste said the U.S. had in recent times become the recipient of "development assistance" from India in the form of "brain power". This, he noted, could be seen positively against the original context of the "development assistance" to India from the U.S. in the form of the PL 480 funds. Closely linked to these perceptions is the U.S.' notion, in particular, of India as a liberalising economy and a huge marketplace for goods and ideas.

A prime American argument today is founded on an economic rationale for the U.S.-India nexus. The underlying idea is that the two should look beyond the sanctions which the U.S. is now reviewing after having imposed them on India following its nuclear arms testing in 1998. Another implied objective is to traverse beyond the strategic domain, which already extends to the idea of bilateral military cooperation with at least a minimalist parameter as first outlined by Gen. Kicklighter a few years ago. These aspects, advocated by the Indian-American community and other U.S. interest groups, are reinforced by a growing wave of pro-India sentiments on the Capitol. The Congressional leaders increasingly tend to see an ideological affinity with the recognisably democratic India. Yet, the reality test for the U.S.-India ties has only just begun.

Given the historical realities, New Delhi must guard against crafting simplistic assumptions about Washington's impulses.

the recent American spy plane episode. It was remarkable that he not only found the time to interact with Mr. Singh beyond the scope of his original tour agenda but also chose to discuss with him an array of global issues. China's ongoing tussle with Washington figured.

It was in the early 1970s that the U.S., more precisely the 'Nix-inger' team, harboured no qualms about antagonising a democratic India, or at the least slighting it. Washington was eager then to extend a strategic handshake to communist Chinese. The deal itself was facilitated by a China-friendly Pakistan, whose equation with India was particularly skewed then. However, on that occasion, the American perception about the now-defunct Soviet Union's influential relationship with India was the most powerful factor in Washington's reasoning. The old Kremlin's antipathy towards the U.S. was at its zenith during that period, while China and the Soviet Union were also distrustful of each other. Neither New Delhi nor Washington had, therefore, made a non-ideological evaluation of the amazing historical trend of a general drift that characterised their equation since India's independence.

Given these historical realities, New Delhi must now guard against crafting simplistic assumptions about the U.S.'

such romanticised notions of a possible new American calculation in 2001 deserve to be carefully evaluated by New Delhi. Above all, neither Mr. Bush's conversation with Mr. Singh nor, indeed, New Delhi's new romanticised vision of a strategic tryst with the U.S. has offered a conclusive preview of India's future equation with Washington.

Until recently, two ideas relevant to the Beijing-New Delhi connection have dominated the perspectives of the Asia-Pacific strategic community, especially so in the context of Samuel Huntington's thesis of China leading an East Asian civilisational resurgence in a way that could rake up the cross-currents of global politics. One image was that China might be a principal threat for India but the reverse was not necessarily true. This had much to do with a general perception of New Delhi's strength and strategic goals and not China's purported faith in Sun Tzu's classical prescription of attaining foreign policy goals without actually having to use military force. The other notion, expounded by J.N. Mak and others, was that Beijing saw the previous U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton's policy of engagement with China, not endorsed by Mr. Bush at present, as "neo-containment in disguise".

For Mr. Bush, the question now is whether China needs to be contained

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India and the US are on a winding road

An elusive defence

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MOST US experts, divided as they are on the missile defence issue, were expecting that China, Russia and India (in that order) would be the primary opponents of the US missile defence policy. In reality, India has been at the forefront in welcoming US President Bush's decision to proceed with its National Missile Defence (NMD) programme while most allies have been circumspect.

Missile defences have been part of US strategic thinking for over four decades now, starting with the Sentinel/Safeguard system of the 1960s, the Strategic Defence Initiative of the 1980s, the Global Protection Against Limited Strikes/Global Protection System of the early 1990s and the National Missile Defence/Theatre Missile Defence of the late 1990s. Missile defence is far more a political than a strategic issue, even after it is fully proven and deployed. We need to remain conscious of this fact and the implications of increasing polarisation between the US, on the one hand, and China and Russia, on the other, as a consequence of ballistic missile defences.

There are at least three clear, though interlinked, elements in President Bush's policy statement on the NMD. First, he has announced his intention to implement unilateral deep reductions in nuclear weapons (from the existing 8,500 plus to possibly 1,500). This is not situated in the nuclear disarmament context but is nonetheless something to be welcomed. Interestingly, President Bush has used the terminology of maintaining "credible deterrent at the lowest-possible number", a concept that is similar to the Indian doctrine of a credible minimum deterrent which used to offend and confuse many Americans.

Secondly, the declaration of new concepts of nuclear "deterrence that rely on both offensive and defensive forces" has far-reaching consequences doctrinally, strategically and politically. Conventional mili-

tary power is based on deterrence that combines defensive and offensive forces. Historically, defensive and offensive capabilities have vied with each other for superiority and the mutual equation has fluctuated through history with either defence or offence gaining the upper hand. An assumption of a favourable asymmetry has often been at the root of war initiation and aggression, as much as unfavourable asymmetry has been a factor in pre-emptive wars. But in the world of conventional forces any asymmetry in offensive-defensive equation could at worst lead to victory or defeat.

Nuclear deterrence has so far relied only on offensive action that exploits the universal vulnerabil-

ity because there is no credible defence against missiles carrying nuclear weapons. Missile defences seek to change that. But a mismatch in offensive-defensive capabilities could encourage pre-emption, miscalculation and escalation. China, as the weaker power, may be tempted to use force for re-unification before missile defences start becoming operational and neutralise its small nuclear arsenal. Any trial of offensive-defensive equation would lead to a holocaust rather than mere victory/defeat as in the case of conventional forces.

A US missile shield or assistance to build our own has grave implications. Those who propagate our own independent missile defences should remember the costs involved

At the minimum, an offence-defence based nuclear deterrence would be detrimental to strategic as well as crisis stability except where perfect balance of capabilities between adversaries exists. To that extent, it is difficult to agree with the view that there is a strategic

and technological "inevitability" in stepping away from the doctrine of nuclear deterrence based on offensive capability to a defensive transition. It is important to remember that our own thinking of no first use relies totally on the promise of an assured retaliation leading to "unacceptable" punishment. There is no defensive force component here although it is based on defensive philosophy, is less aggressive than the strategy of many nuclear weapons states, and will maintain a recessed posture of de-alerted forces.

Thirdly, President Bush has declared that the new policy would rest on a "broad strategy of active non-proliferation, counter proliferation and defences". India

will require to build nuclear power substantively in the coming years and access to technology today stands denied even for peaceful developmental purposes. This would need to be rectified at an early date.

The announcement that the US would consult its friends and allies in the evolution of its missile defence policies has been followed up with US Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage's visit. Taken in the context of the other trends and developments we obviously have reached an important turning point in Indo-US relations.

But it is a turning point on a winding mountain road! On the other hand, China sees itself as the primary target of US missile defence programme and would be even more disturbed by Indian welcome of US policy. President Bush has signalled moving away from the restrictions of the 1972 ABM Treaty. China has repeatedly warned against any change or withdrawal from the US-Soviet 1972 ABM Treaty. Chinese commitments to arms control agreements have been few and fragile. Its disengagement from those would have further negative impact on global and regional security. China is expected to modernise and expand its nuclear arsenal with greater justification and vigour now that the US is going ahead with missile defences. It is working on its own missile defence programme which would have far-reaching consequences for our nuclear security and strategy.

A US missile shield or US assistance to build our own has serious implications. Those who propagate our own independent missile defences would do well to remember the political, technological and financial costs involved. Pursuit of global missile disarmament (starting with the elimination of intermediate range ballistic missiles) as a security imperative is a far better alternative than searching for a costly elusive defence.



JASJIT SINGH

has been a target of US non-proliferation policies for decades. Punitive sanctions are in place in a wide area affecting not only legitimate defence needs but also technology for peaceful uses. The new assertion on active non-proliferation and counter proliferation, therefore, must be taken into account in formulating our policies.

At the same time, there are numerous indications that US sanctions might be lifted in due course. India's continued support to US on missile defence could be justifiable if the US were to start treating India as a normal country, rather than a country of concern, just because we pursue policies similar to those that the US considers important for itself. This would require not only lifting the sanctions but a partnership in India's techno-economic and human development. For example we

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Security, economy future of Indo-US ties

BY ASHISH KUMAR SEN

San Francisco, May 19: Future Indo-US relations will envelope issues ranging from non-proliferation, counter-terrorism efforts and security concerns, to economic cooperation and the problem of AIDS.

But the degree to which both sides actually cooperate on these issues will depend largely on what extent "India baiters" in Washington and "US haters" in New Delhi can be constrained.

It depends upon the ability of powerful elected authorities to be able to change the mindset both in Washington and New Delhi, rather than rehashing who did what to whom during the Cold War, said Prof. Sumit Ganguly, a professor of Asian studies and government at the University of Texas, Austin. "As long as the shadow of the past hangs over this relationship, progress is bound to be hampered," he added.

A Capitol Hill analyst, who closely follows the Indian subcontinent, pointed out that "most analysis, especially in the elite media of India, tends to obsessively focus on what Washington must or must not do towards India" when dealing with Indo-US relations.

Speaking on condition of anonymity, he added: "The

reverse question, i.e. what must India be doing or not doing, is seldom intelligently discussed... And even when raised, it is invariably discussed in accusatory tones of 'India selling out' to Washington."

"This is childish, if not ridiculous... that if New Delhi does anything positive towards the US it's a sellout and it must be only Washington, which should be in the give, give, give mode," the analyst said, adding: "The future contours of Indo-US relations hinge as much on New Delhi as on Washington. India must

approach this whole issue with confidence, dignity and a streak of bold vision and vigor."

"We in the United States, Republicans and Democrats alike, will respond wholeheartedly and in a surprisingly warm manner," he said.

Besides brushing away Cold War cobwebs, South Asia analysts, policy experts and academics who have focused their careers on studying the Indian subcontinent say India also has a lot of work to do before it can become a useful partner of the United States of America.

Prof. Rafiq Dossani, a consulting

professor and senior research scholar at the Asia-Pacific Research Centre at Stanford University, said for now, India as a country didn't represent anything of a large enough value for the US.

"The question is what does India want out of this relationship? In the event of any face off on our borders we don't want the US to take the other person's side. But that returns the question to an India vs. China one, on which India is on weaker ground. Relatively speaking India is an economic minnow compared to

China," explained Prof. Dossani, who is also the executive director of the Stanford University South Asia Initiative.

There were others who agreed with Prof. Dossani's perception.

Prof. Francine R. Frankel, director of the Centre for the Advanced Study of India, University of Pennsylvania, went so far as to describe the atmosphere in India as being "rather inhospitable" to foreign investment.

"When you look at what is actually happening there don't seem to be very tangible gains from the good atmosphere that has been created. Specific issues will have

to be resolved," Prof. Frankel said. For now, analysts predict the relationship has the potential to develop on two planes — strategic and economic.

Prof. Ashutosh Varshney, associate professor of government at the University of Notre Dame, Indiana, suggested that the strategic relationship would develop faster. This, he reasoned, was because in spite of 10 years of reform, for American businesses India still remains a place riddled with extensive government regulation. "India is an incomprehensible place for Americans to do

business."

On the strategic plane, Prof. Ashley Tellis, a senior policy analyst at the Virginia-based Rand Corporation said a "greater sensitivity of each other's strategic concerns" was essential.

On the economic front, he suggested "greater economic intercourse" brought about in part by a steady withdrawal of sanctions, and "strategic coordination" on matters of high politics.

There are, however, already plenty of initiatives in place between both countries that need to be built on further.

The counter-terrorism task force

in particular needs to be strengthened.

Dr Marshall Bouton, executive vice-president of the Asia Society, said the US had concerns about nuclear instability in the Indian subcontinent and would be looking for ways in which to learn more from India about its nuclear doctrine.

He said the challenge that both nations faced was "finding the right context for and terms on which that discussion could be held so that there is information and understanding passing between the two governments without India feeling its sovereign position is being impinged."

It was on the economic front on which analysts said greater cooperation was required.

Full of praise for the recent Indian Budget, Dr Michael Clark, executive director of the US-India Business Council said while at times projects may not go forward, "there has been a shift in emphasis that there may be a much deeper commercial relationship between the US and India as a growing number of companies come to rely on services provided by the Indian companies."

"We need a lot more work on some challenges both governments are struggling with," Dr Clark said.

■ Concluded

ROAD TO WASHINGTON PART-4

Chokila Iyer holds talks with U.S. official

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, MAY 17. Foreign Office consultations between India and the United States got under way at the State Department this morning with the Foreign Secretary, Ms. Chokila Iyer, meeting the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, Mr. Marc Grossman. The Indian delegation includes Mr. Jayant Prasad, Joint Secretary for the Americas and Mr. Vivek Katju, who oversees Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Officials are expected to go through the entire gamut of bilateral relations with the dis-

10-13 discussions a part of the overall dialogue architecture. The Bush administration has made it known that it is for furthering what has been established with India during the Clinton administration; and Washington has been pursuing the Indian aspect of its foreign policy quite seriously.

The U.S. President, Mr. George W Bush, met the Indian External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, recently with the discussions going beyond introductory remarks and exchange of pleasantries. Last week, the Bush administration sent a special envoy, Mr. Richard Armitage, the Deputy Secretary of State

1875 to New Delhi to explain and consult with Indian officials and leaders the President's National Missile Defence System (NMD) and related issues. And New Delhi's welcoming the NMD and reductions in nuclear arsenals has gone over well in official circles here.

Today and tomorrow Ms. Iyer is scheduled to meet a few Republican and Democratic law makers.

Ms. Iyer is having talks at the State Department on the day the nominee for the next Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia, Ms. Christina Rocca, appears before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

THE HINDU

18 MAY 2001

India, US unable to define 'natural alliance' terms

BY ASHISH KUMAR SEN

San Francisco, May 16: While stepped up interaction between New Delhi and Washington, most recently witnessed in US deputy secretary of state Richard Armitage's visit to India and foreign secretary Chokila Iyer's arrival in the US on Wednesday, has created the feeling of a "new spring" in bilateral ties, experts and analysts point out that real content cannot be added to the relationship unless the severe restraints placed by the sanctions regime — both economic as well as dual use technology — are removed.

Though New Delhi's stand on the fate of the remaining US sanctions has been one of public indifference, South Asia policy experts say this "sanctimonious coyness" does not wash well with India's friends in Washington. While it may appear that the bilateral relationship is hunky dory at the executive level, in reality, this is not the case.

Director of the Centre for the Advanced Study of India at the University of Pennsylvania, Prof. Francine R. Frankel pointed out that the political side of the relationship is constrained by "the inability of both countries to spell out what they mean by a 'natural alliance'."

"If you can't resolve the basic

problems that surround the nuclear issue, if you can't resolve the problem of technology denial, there will be a natural limit to what can be achieved through cooperation," she said.

Admitting India has an interest in trying to persuade Washington to lift sanctions, Dr George Perkovich, director of the Secure World Programme at the W. Alton Jones Foundation in Charlottesville, Virginia, suggested New Delhi may be "calculating kind words" about US missile defence plans in the hope that these would "help persuade" Washington to make concessions to India.

Meanwhile, academics like Prof. Sumit Ganguly described Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee's decision to endorse Mr Bush's security plan as "a very pragmatic decision."

"In the immediate term, there is no direct affect on India. It does not materially affect India's interests. However, if the Chinese react adversely then it would be a cause of some concern, but by then New Delhi would have probably developed relations with Beijing," Prof. Ganguly, a professor of Asian studies and government at the University of Texas, Austin, explained.

In interviews to *The Asian Age*, policy analysts and academics dealing with South Asia concurred that President Bush's policy on

South Asia had not been spelt out as yet and in spite of frequent references to India in the President and senior administration officials' remarks, these were nothing more than "tantalising glimpses" of a possible policy.

Behind this mirage of bonhomie the reality remains the stark fact that the India Caucus has, over the recent past, suffered two humiliating defeats on Capitol Hill — one at the budget resolution level where Congressman Jim McDermott's legislation on quake aid for Gujarat was clobbered, and the other at the state department authorisation level, where a similar aid proposal from New Jersey Democ-

rat Bob Menendez was also rejected. Pointing out that the image of invincibility of the caucus had suffered a decisive setback since these consecutive defeats, sources said the blame for this lay with Indian officials who on one hand refuse to publicly ask Washington for quake aid, and on the other, work through the offices of Congressmen to push for the very same aid.

"The duplicity and hypocrisy of the Indian bureaucracy is so transparent," said one diplomatic source frustrated with New Delhi's stubbornness not to ask for financial assistance from Washington to help in its efforts to rebuild

Gujarat. "Our embassy friends and their lobbyists apparently forgot that this is a Republican town these days," a congressional source said, adding: "It's really pathetic to see our friends complain after the defeats... Why didn't they work with the right folks in the first place?"

Saying Indo-US relations were slowly unfolding, Prof. Francine R. Frankel added that it was uncertain how far this present warmth would carry the relationship. On the economic front, she suggested, a lot would depend on how the Indian government fares in its attempts to create a favourable atmosphere for foreign investment.

ROAD TO WASHINGTON-1

"The Enron situation is being watched very closely and can send a very strong negative signal to potential US investors," Prof. Frankel warned, adding that the best that could be done under the present situation was for the US to encourage the World Bank to resume full scale support for Indian infrastructure projects. "But, India will need substantial amounts of foreign investment to meet its second stage of economic reform," she said.

Agreeing with Prof. Frankel that it wasn't clear where all this bilateral warmth was headed, Mr Michael Clark, executive director

of the Washington-based US India Business Council, said potentially it could signal "quite a bit of cooperation on everything from rebuilding the global consensus on nuclear weapons containment and stability, to relaunching another round of WTO."

Pointing out the possibility of an Indo-US combine emerging over the next few years, Mr Clark said, "I think what we are seeing today in terms of consultations is just the tip of the iceberg. I think the US and India fall into the friends rather than the allies category and probably will remain such for some time." Much of the onus for developing these bilateral ties falls on Prime Minister Vajpayee and will depend on the extent to which his administration succeeds in putting in place policies that would facilitate foreign investment and sustained foreign interest.

Prof. Robert Scalapino, Robson research professor of government emeritus who is widely acknowledged as the "dean of Asian studies" in the US, said if "Indian nationalism" was kept within reasonable bounds, and Hindu proclivities were balanced so that others were given reasonable freedom, India's image in the US would greatly improve.

"India's rights record is not a major matter of concern," Prof. Scalapino said, but added in the same breath, "The important thing

for India is to keep this rights record reasonably good, and it has been."

Saying the recent activity that has marked Indo-US ties had a meaning that goes far beyond normal relations, Prof. Scalapino explained, "Washington has become cognisant of the fact that India has a much more open attitude towards economic intercourse. It realises that India has been able to preserve democracy and is also en route to becoming a more powerful nation in both strategic and economic terms."

Director of Asia-Pacific Energy at Cambridge Energy Research Associates, a leading strategic advisory firm, and research professor of Southeast Asian Studies at Georgetown University, Prof. James Clad said as the Bush administration's policies take on sharper coherence, the Indo-US relationship stood at a "net-neutral" position — "poised either to develop and deepen further or lapse into secondary importance."

"Which way it goes rests largely on American decisions," ventured Prof. Clad, adding, "India under Mr Vajpayee has largely decided what it wants from the United States. It is now for us to decide what we want from India."

■ **TOMORROW: Anti-US Indian bureaucracy, Cold War fogies at US state department have held back relations**

THE ASIAN AGE

18 MAY 2001

A show of mutual warmth does not mean India and the US are natural allies

Tread softly round the NMD

DIPLOMACY

K.P. NAYAR

December 1998. The Bharatiya Janata Party headquarters on New Delhi's Ashoka Road was still reeling from the results of assembly elections in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Delhi in the previous month, which saw the dominant party in the ruling coalition at the Centre lose power in its two strongholds and the Congress regain yet another five year-term in power in Bhopal. Gone was the euphoria of the nuclear tests six months earlier and the tenuous alliance which was ruling from Raisina Hill was threatening to come apart. The Congress under Sonia Gandhi, it seemed, was only steps away from regaining power after just two and half years in the opposition.

George Fernandes, the defence minister, approached the BJP's leadership in the government and proposed that India should call off the security and non-proliferation talks with the United States, which had been set in motion after the Pokhran tests.

It was vintage Fernandes, the veteran of many radical socialist battles in Mumbai in the Seventies, who still knew the potential of anti-Americanism in the third world in a streetwise struggle for political power. The BJP leaders whom Fernandes talked to conceded that a gesture of grand defiance against Washington could be translated into a political asset at a time when the ruling alliance which it led needed every straw to clutch at to prevent being swept away from power. Nepal, Bangladesh and Islamic fundamentalists at home had not yet reduced the BJP to a ghost of its former self.

But after considerable soul-searching, the dominant ruling party decided to put national interests above political expediency. The talks between Jaswant Singh, who had just become external affairs minister, and Strobe Talbott, then deputy secretary of state in the Clinton administration, would go on notwithstanding any political mileage which may accrue for the Atal Bihari Vajpayee government by accepting the Fernandes proposal.

In retrospect, it was one of the wisest and most statesman-like decisions on external affairs taken by any government in New Delhi since independence. The 10 rounds of Singh-Talbott talks laid the foundations of a vision in Indo-US relations which Vajpayee and the then American president, Bill Clinton, articulated in New Delhi last year, a vision to which President George Bush is committed, never mind the Bush family's desire to break with virtually everything Clinton did in the last eight years.

Two and half years after making that decision, the Vajpayee government once again stands at a crossroads in its dealings with Washington after the telephone conversation of the US national security adviser, Condoleezza Rice, with Singh on May 1. Common sense dictates that there is much in the Bush defence plan, unveiled in the president's speech in Washington on May 1, that suits India. By initiating a policy which will unravel arms control treaties negotiated between the US and the former Soviet Union, the new Repub-

lican president is laying the ground for the elimination of a non-proliferation regime, which India has been opposed to because it discriminates between the monopoly of five nuclear powers and the majority of nuclear have-nots.

Second, few other countries have been direct victims of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in its neighbourhood as India because of the clandestine acquisition of nuclear and missile technology by Pakistan. China's violation of global arms control and

semblance of enthusiasm for anything that Bush said on May 1. American commentators have stopped short of calling Tony Blair "*et tu Brute*" for his failure to endorse the Bush missile plan *in toto* the way British governments have always commended anything that comes out of the White House.

South Korea — yes, South Korea — doggedly refused to say that it had shown any understanding of what Bush was up to even after the White House agreed to eat its own words on North Korea, signifying a paradigm shift in at-



Armitage alone, among all of Bush's envoys who travelled round the world last week, received a warm welcome

itude which has called the Bush administration's commitment to stated policies into question. Yet, it would be incorrect to suggest — as the media and opposition parties have done — that India has welcomed the Bush plans for National Missile Defence. To be fair to the Vajpayee government, it has not said a word in support of NMD, not now, not at any time since the new "Star Wars" project has been under discussion.

What it has done is to balance India's national interest against anything the Americans may do in terms of its defence policies in the new millennium. It is a cliché to say that such seemingly difficult diplomatic exercises are easier said than done. But in the case of the Vaj-

payee government's interface with Washington on NMD, it is the other way round: it is easier done than said.

Because, quite frankly, it really does not matter in Washington what India thinks about NMD in the long run. In any case, New Delhi is in no position to do anything at all about NMD should it decide to come out openly against the weaponization of space by Bush. So the bonhomie which the deputy secretary of state, Richard Armitage, and the Indian leadership displayed in Hyderabad House last week suited each other. Armitage alone, among the Bush envoys who travelled around the world last week, received a warm welcome. India, on the other hand, acquired valuable IOUs by seeming to support NMD without actually giving away anything.

For the Vajpayee government, the next stage of this balancing act is going to be more difficult. Should the Bush White House recklessly pursue the 21st century version of Star Wars, it will have to face considerable opposition not only from Russia and China, but also from its own allies in Europe and Asia.

India cannot support such an American policy without alienating some of its friends in Europe who have stood by the Vajpayee government during the trying months which followed Pokhran II and lasted through the Kargil invasion.

Much was made of the fact that Armitage was in New Delhi on the anniversary of the Pokhran tests in 1998. Few Indians remember now that the only foreign delegation which was in the capital on the day of the Pokhran tests was a French team led by the head of that country's foreign office. While several Western countries recalled their ambassadors in India for "consultations" after the nuclear tests, the French delegation stayed on and talked to their counterparts. And in the months that followed, it was the French and Russians — both nuclear powers and permanent members of the United Nations security council — who helped break the P-5 unity in the UN in favour of India.

Had France and Russia not created discord among the P-5 and threatened the very legitimacy of their nuclear hegemony in 1998, the course of the Singh-Talbott dialogue may have been altogether different. Talbott came for the first meeting with Singh with a demand that India should stop, roll back and eliminate its nuclear programme. The cosy private dinners between Singh and Talbott came many, many meetings later and were a concession to the *fait accompli* of India's nuclear status, a factor recognized by many countries well before the Americans.

There is a strong case in this experience not to blindly support anything that the US does. This experience is a reminder that the Americans are anything but India's "natural allies", Vajpayee-Clinton niceties of year 2000 notwithstanding. So far India has managed to deal with the Bush administration deftly. But it is a diplomatic game which calls for extreme caution and deep deliberation: the opportunity cost of one mistake can be debilitating for India's external affairs.

U.S. sees role in solving Kashmir row

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, MAY 15. The Secretary of State, Gen. Colin Powell, has said the progress in the last several years in the relations between the United States and India has given a new opportunity to encourage India and Pakistan "to find a peaceful and just solution to the problem of Kashmir".

Gen. Powell was before the Sub Committee of the Senate Appropriations Committee on the Fiscal 2002 Foreign Operations Budget when he was asked by Democratic Senator Tim Johnson of South Dakota of the role the United States could play to resolve the continuing conflicts between India and Pakistan, especially with regard to Kashmir and what more could be done.

"I think there is a role we can play. And I think the progress that we have seen over the last several years in relations between the United States and India, especially, give us a new entree, a new opportunity to encourage the sides to find a peaceful and just solution to the problem of Kashmir", Gen. Powell responded.

"But as you know Senator, it's a very difficult issue. We plan to build on the relationship. The In-

dian Foreign Minister has been to see me and I have assured him that we will build on what was achieved in the previous administration, looking forward to visiting India at some point and looking forward to exchanges at all levels — economic, trade and other levels", Gen. Powell noted.

The Secretary of State argued that for the most of his military career, especially in his senior years as the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, India was just 'over there', 'sort of' connected with the then Soviet Union and that the United States did not pay a lot of attention to India and that then the focus was really on Pakistan.

"Well, now our focus is on both of them and I think we can be helpful to both of them. And we really have to make sure that this nuclear genie doesn't get any further out of the bottle than it already is out of the bottle. And on a regular basis we consult them, we make sure they understand the seriousness with which we view the potential for something getting out of control in the region. And I think we do have a helpful role to play, because of the new relationship we have with India", he said.

THE HINDU

16 MAY 2002

AN OVER-HASTY ENDORSEMENT?

THE VAJPAYEE ADMINISTRATION has engaged Mr. Richard Armitage, a special envoy of the U.S. President, in an unnecessarily gratuitous manner indicative of New Delhi's crass and impetuous move to craft an ill-defined strategic shift in its ties with Washington. Coinciding with the new U.S.-India consultations in New Delhi last week, the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, publicly welcomed the relatively less controversial aspects of Washington's latest initiative about a new missile defence system. In the process, Mr. Vajpayee desperately sought to contain the damage caused by the External Affairs Ministry's unthinking ebullience in hailing and endorsing the new American strategic 'vision'. If the only merit of that earlier statement was its implied calculus, a reaffirmation by Mr. Vajpayee about the security imperative of a credible minimum nuclear deterrent was a belated signal now regarding India's inevitable strategic priorities in the changing global context. The extraordinary nature of Mr. Armitage's diplomatic brief encouraged his Indian interlocutors to raise the discussions to a new pitch over a wider gamut of bilateral ties as well. Of particular salience is the top American official's studied move to herald the present moment as a beginning towards a "new relationship". However, a bilateral initiative to map the contours of such a bond runs the risk of collapsing in its 'boost phase' itself if the Vajpayee administration cannot change course decisively and hold out credible assurances of safeguarding India's strategic independence.

The real significance of Mr. Armitage's mission can of course be traced entirely to the conscious effort by the U.S. President, Mr. George Bush, to create a new environment of international strategic consensus. Mr. Bush's transparent gameplan is to persuade the "friends and allies" of the U.S. to acquiesce in his unilateral decision to build a missile defence shield. The

system, whose technological parameters will be upgraded, is meant to insulate the U.S. from weapons of mass destruction, including chemical and biological armaments, which might be hurled at it by those not willing to reckon with the logic and power of America's gigantic nuclear deterrence. While there is no doubt that the U.S. has identified India as a "friend" for this purpose, the question of an equal sense of security for America's "friends and allies" and others remains unanswered still. New Delhi does not appear to have posed this question in all its starkness.

The Vajpayee administration should curb its cavalier tendency of this kind to make a false start and later seek to correct it if forced to do so by public opinion. New Delhi's new and implied call for balancing the interests of the U.S. with those of the others is also a sequel to the diplomatic intervention by Russia, which remains unconvinced by Mr. Bush's current charm offensive. For India, regional stability is closely linked to the possible responses of China to Mr. Bush's plans and Beijing's assessment of Pakistan's existential dilemmas. Pakistan has now made common cause with China in opposing Mr. Bush. Mr. Armitage has certainly packaged Mr. Bush's immediate plans as a limited missile defence scheme to meet the dangers posed by those outside the pale of international law as seen from Washington. Yet, there is nothing definitive that the U.S. will characterise Pakistan as a 'rogue state' and view India's strategic compulsions in that light. New Delhi should in any case eschew unworkable zero-sum calculations of a cold war-style sub-text in South Asia in this post-Cold War period. More importantly, New Delhi will do well to mull over the global and regional consequences of a U.S. missile defence system — in particular, China acquiring "asymmetric warfare" capabilities.

THE HINDU

15 MAY 2001

DIA was taken aback when the new White House classified it as a "rogue nuclear state", soon after the US administration changed hands. Despite Pokhran II, we had enjoyed diplomatic sinecure on the contentious nuclear issue, thanks to the previous administration.

Hence, US Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld's pillorying of India did come as an unpleasant surprise. Fortunately for us, a "flight of fancy" – literally – changed it all. The US Navy's spy plane incident with China brought the George W Bush set-up's gratuitous epithets aimed at Asian nations to a sudden freeze when Washington found that Beijing was not going to take any nonsense from them.

Coincidentally, India's foreign minister Jaswant Singh was on a formal visit to the USA during the spy plane contretemps. Washington found Mr Singh's presence at this juncture fortuitous. Having been stung by China, the USA realised that Mr Singh presented a golden opportunity for expanding on the perception that India could make a good counterweight to China if handled properly.

India had to be wooed accordingly. Washington, therefore, laid it on thick by providing Mr Singh with an honour guard and by arranging an unscheduled meeting with President Bush. Announcements of Official trips by senior American dignitaries like General Henry Shulton of the department of defence and James Armitage, Deputy Secretary of State, to India further inflated the goodwill balloon.

The resultant euphoria in our foreign ministry was just what Washington had hoped for. We also did a volte-face on our earlier criticism of America's projected National Missile Defence system. Changing tack, India expressed sanguineness in the NMD, saying the system might not be such a bad thing after all! New Delhi's corridors rebounded with jubilation at the turn of events since Mr Rumsfeld's remarks.

India must, however, be careful not to get entrapped in a handy, American diplomatic "spatula", a political instrument that Washington can use for countering Beijing. The USA's intentions towards stability in Asia seems circumspect, witness resumption of surveillance flights in the vicinity of China's coastline. India has to be chary of the USA's Asia card.

While deliberating on America's scheme of things, a practical

Indo-US ties on a rollercoaster

US intentions towards stability in Asia seems circumspect, witness resumption of surveillance flights near China's coastline. India must be chary of the USA's Asia card, at the same time, exercise diplomatic gumption and capitalise on the windfall of a missile shield that has scope of coming India's way, writes J K DUTT



Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee greets US Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage on Friday at Hyderabad House in New Delhi. Mr Armitage is in New Delhi to discuss a new world security framework and the proposed missile defence system. Indian leaders have welcomed Washington's plans. — AP/PTI

assessment needs to be carried out in respect of President Bush's rationale, duly echoed by India, to the effect that creating an NMD would pave the way for reducing America's nuclear stockpile, and this should be acknowledged by all with grace. The vision of non-proliferation glowed on the horizon. Yet, an incisive peep into the mechanics of the NMD makes thought-provoking comprehension.

Working on a hypothetical scenario by taking a leaf out of Paul Erdman's nuclear thriller of yesteryear *The Crash Of 79*, let us assume that the West Asian rogue nations in consort with their global sympathisers decide to strike at the USA.

For such a strike to be effective, a large quantum of multiple, independently targeted re-entry

vehicles (MIRV) would have to be launched. If each MIRV holds, say, five salvo dischargers with each discharger releasing 10 missiles, one MIRV will fire 50 nuclear missiles at a mix of military and collateral targets. The barest minimum anti-missile response that the NMD will have to come up with vis-a-vis every MIRV will equally have to be 50 as par for the course.

Expecting a one-to-one assured hit, even at the boost phase of an aggressor missile under highly intense battle conditions invoking electronic warfare at its most acute spread, would be unrealistic. Ergo, the NMD will have to respond with at least a ration of two to one numerical superiority per MIRV missile for guaranteed interception.

Then again, a number of MIRVs will be decoys but these too will have to be engaged by the NMD as these cannot be differentiated from the genuine ones.

Now, if the grand total holdings of NMD defensive missiles is calculated on an across-the-American-mainland basis, it would add up to an enormous sum which would be much more than the total of the nuclear missiles that President Bush would want to reduce from his current stockpile.

Hence, this rationale portrayed by him amounts to *a priori* in an inverted form, to be served up to the world as political garnish for facilitating acceptance.

This gameplan surely is subterfuge at its best!

The NMD's deployment pattern in Asia makes for some

interesting speculation. South Korea, Japan, Taiwan and Australia are on the cards under the category of American allies. What of India? New Delhi should assert itself and exploit an incoming opportunity.

We have to exercise our diplomatic gumption and capitalise on the windfall of a missile shield that has scope of coming our way. India has set itself the objective of graduating to Blue Water status from its present Brown Water grade in the context of its maritime prowess in the new millennium. In fact, this should be one of the principal tasks of our nascent Chief of Defence Staff.

A convenient method of killing the proverbial two birds with one stone would be for India to institute a Joint Indian Ocean Strike Command with the US Pacific Fleet, as a derivative from a strategic alliance. The aspect of air defence at sea for this Command should be assigned to the American content of this organisation.

In the process, we will be able to shy off from being saddled with the derelict *Admiral Gorshkov* aircraft carrier ex Russia at a mind boggling cost. The sensitive American Diego Garcia naval base should also be incorporated in this Strike Command's operational radius.

We will then have a valid reason to requisition for NMD coverage, at least at sea. When juxtaposed with US Secretary of State Colin Powell's opening gambit on India about our capability of ensuring peace in the Indian Ocean, our demand for NMD becomes justifiable.

There has been substantial upswing in Indo-American connectivity over the past three years or so.

The emphasis of this equation has been more on trade, education, science and technology, industry and the like.

The one important missing link is security, interaction on matters military has been perfunctory.

This requires strengthening. We should discard our age-old misconceptions and dogmas, and wholeheartedly invest in a politico-military axis with the USA, hinged on a nuclear bastion.

The advantages are manifold. One word of caution though: we do not want any repetition as exemplified by a former Indian defence minister who blurted out that Asia's biggest power is our biggest enemy!

(The author is a retired Lieutenant-Colonel, Indian Army.)

14/5 Disarming Armitage 96-8

India must nuance its response to American overtures

IF some entrepreneurial soul had in January 2000 decided to extract one dollar for each time a new beginning in Indo-US relations was announced, he would have built up a sizeable war chest in the 16 months ahead. Call it a diplomatic drill or a requisite reality check, US Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage too added a melodramatic touch to his whirlwind 24-hour touchdown in New Delhi by declaring, "It's the beginning of a new relationship with India." As proof he kept digging into his magic hat and offering conciliatory gestures to keep a range of constituencies happy. For those perturbed that a new, Republican incumbent in the White House may not soldier forth on the path outlined by Bill Clinton in the dying days of his presidency, Armitage carried with him US President George W. Bush's positive RSVP to Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's invitation to visit India. And for those still smarting from Washington's recent failure to ban certain Pakistan-based terrorist groups operating in Jammu and Kashmir, Armitage compensated by lumping Pakistan with rogue states like North Korea and Libya without actually naming it.

Armitage would, of course, cite these statements to prove his much emphasised point that his visit was not limited to garnering support for Washington's Missile Defence among its "friends and allies". But given the fact that he was one of the envoys despatched upon George W. Bush's articulation of a new global nuclear order, it is certainly from that

perspective that Friday's deliberations and utterances must be examined. The Bush administration has been at pains to convince all and sundry that its intent is not to trigger a fresh arms race, only to attempt a different route to the much desired goal of nuclear non-proliferation — in addition to addressing the obsolescence of the theory of mutual assured destruction vis-a-vis rogue states armed with weapons of mass destruction. New Delhi has done well to temper its overall endorsement for this vision with a reiteration of its critical requirement for a minimum nuclear deterrent and with a few long-held suggestions. Namely, that efforts should be doubled to foster no-first-use pacts and de-alert and to build a consensus against use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapons states.

So far so good. As India found three years ago, virtually to the day, proclamation of nuclear nationhood did not automatically procure the country membership of the elite nuclear club. Indeed, in the years since post-Pokharan chill, as New Delhi has engaged leading post-Cold War players, it has found it practically impossible to iron out differences on its nuclear status. Therefore, ruing the dismantling of the old nuclear regime and adopting a confrontationalist posture would have amounted to an act of daftness. But huge challenges lie ahead. As a new global security framework takes shape, New Delhi will have to exhibit a capacity to nuance its responses and manoeuvre towards a more active role.

INDIAN EXPRESS

14 MAY 2001

14 MAY 2001

Bush's feel-good envoy puts India on radar

FROM K.P. NAVAR

Washington, May 12: The Bush administration is delighted that deputy secretary of state Richard Armitage completed a difficult mission in New Delhi with finesse and sensitivity.

As Armitage travels back to Washington, the assessment here is that he virtually achieved the impossible by enhancing America's stock of goodwill in India during a brief stop of 24 hours.

"He (Armitage) has been very active in India," US state department spokesman Richard Boucher told reporters as the deputy secretary wound up his discussions with Indian leaders.

"The Indian government told us they appreciated Armitage's presentation and they looked forward to further exchanges," the

spokesman added.

The state department added its bit to the euphoria created in India by the deputy secretary's remarks on Pakistan when it denied yesterday that a mission similar to the one by Armitage was being mounted to Islamabad.

Boucher was pointedly asked if such a mission was on the cards since Pakistan too was a nuclear power. He replied that he had not even heard of any such discussion.

The controversial National Missile Defence (NMD) plans were at the centre of Armitage's talks with Indian leaders, but it was his carefully measured references to Pakistan which caught public attention.

Contrary to the widespread interpretation of Armitage's remarks in New Delhi, he did not, in

fact, stop short of naming Pakistan as a rogue state.

He dutifully stuck to the letter and spirit of his department's latest report on the patterns of global terrorism which describes Pakistan as a mixed bag. In briefings here on the annual report, US officials have extolled Islamabad's cooperation with Washington in fighting terrorism and at the same time expressed concern about support to the Taliban.

The report also said for the second year running that the "focal point for terrorism" had shifted from the West Asia to South Asia. Armitage said as much in different words.

During a week when the Bush administration invited Pakistan's foreign minister to visit Washington, it would be an insult to Armitage's intelligence to even sug-

gest that he would say anything that seriously upsets Pakistani sensibilities, that too from Indian soil.

But by reiterating the Bush administration's carefully constructed formulations on Pakistan and terrorism to the uninitiated in India, the deputy secretary scored major brownie points for America without actually giving away anything. Indeed, he doused the embers of resentment against the Bush missile proposals by pandering to the wishful thinking among the Indian public on Pakistan.

A day earlier, Armitage had done the same thing in Seoul. He countered opposition in South Korea to NMD by indicating that Washington may resume support for Seoul's "sunshine" diplomacy of engaging North Korea.

Bush had earlier expressed himself against it by even publicly disowning his secretary of state Colin Powell.

It is clear from the Boucher's briefing and public statements in New Delhi by the ministry of external affairs as well American officials that India did not give away anything at the talks yesterday.

Indeed, public criticism of the new US defence and non-proliferation proposals last week tempered the government's attitude and concretised a stand which was in conformity with New Delhi's decades-old national consensus on disarmament.

At the end of a week of hectic speculation, India and the US are, therefore, back to square one, except, of course, that India is now on the radar screen of US foreign policy.



Richard Armitage. (AFP)

Delhi appreciates Armitage mission

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, MAY 12. The Bush administration says that the Deputy Secretary of State, Mr. Richard Armitage, has been "very active" in India, having a wide range of discussions with officials and leaders in New Delhi. *Mr. 1995*

The State Department spokesman, Mr. Richard Boucher, listed the several meetings of Mr. Armitage in Delhi and said: "So he (Mr. Armitage) has been very active in India, having a broad set of discussions on U.S. global strategic concerns and missile defence, and again solicited their views."

"The Indian Government told us they appreciated Mr. Armitage's presentation and they looked forward to further exchanges," the spokesman said.

Thus far, no major U.S. ally has rushed to embrace the NMD; and there is real concerns of Washington unilaterally abrogating the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

30 MAY 2001

U.S. CONCERNS OVER PAKISTAN REMAIN

Bush proposals aimed at 'rogue states': Armitage

By C. Raja Mohan

NEW DELHI, MAY 11. The U.S. today insisted that its proposals for missile defence were not directed at either Russia or China but "rogue states" which were acquiring weapons of mass destruction to terrorise and blackmail other nations.

Addressing the press here after a day of consultations with the Indian leadership, the visiting U.S. special envoy, Mr. Richard Armitage, said the missile defence programme was aimed at complicating the political calculus of the so-called rogue states.

While referring to the trends of proliferation in India's neighbourhood and reiterating concerns about Islamabad's programmes to acquire and deploy weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems, Mr. Armitage stopped short of directly naming Pakistan as a rogue state.

Asked to name the rogue states, he referred to Libya, Iraq, Iran, North Korea and other countries "in your neighbourhood". Pressed to elaborate, he said "we have questions about Pakistan which are well known and of which you are equally aware".

Although the speech on missile defences by the U.S. President, Mr. George Bush, last week made extensive references to nuclear threats from deviant states, Mr. Armitage's readiness to point a



The Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, with the U.S. Deputy Secretary of State, Mr. Richard Armitage, at his residence in New Delhi on Friday. — Photo: Shanker Chakravarty

finger at Pakistan as "a potential rogue state" comes as a major surprise.

The political direction in which Pakistan is headed and its implications for the control of nuclear weapons programme there figured prominently in the Indo-U.S. talks today, but the discussion apparently remained inconclusive.

'New relationship'

Mr. Armitage, who is here to seek support from the Indian Government to the Bush adminis-

tration's ideas on a 'strategic framework' for global security, declared the "beginning of a new relationship between India and the United States". He called on the Prime Minister, Mr. A.B. Vajpayee, and handed over a letter from Mr. George Bush accepting the invitation to visit India in the near future. Mr. Bush conveyed his intention "of working closely" with Mr. Vajpayee "to promote common interests in Asia and beyond".

India is among the few countries which have enthusiastically welcomed Mr. Bush's proposals for moving away from the political premises of the Cold War and building a new global security order. Despite the intense domestic criticism of its effusive support to Mr. Bush, the Government stood its ground and welcomed the American proposals "as a departure from the norms of the Cold War" and "based upon consultation and cooperation rather than confrontation".

The unexpected political convergence between the Government and the Bush

Administration on a new security framework is being seen as the precursor to a more productive political partnership between New Delhi and Washington.

Sanctions' review

Asked about the lifting of nuclear sanctions imposed by the previous administration, Mr. Armitage referred to the current review process in Washington and declared that "we are on the verge of moving forward in our relationship".

A Foreign Office spokesman here insisted that it was not India's policy to seek the lifting of sanctions, but pointed to the "mismatch between sanctions and the new direction of Indo-U.S. relations".

Mr. Armitage arrived here last night as part of the U.S. effort to consult "friends and allies" in Asia on its plans to build missile defences. He had substantive consultations with the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh. Mr. Armitage told his Indian interlocutors that Mr. Bush's plan to build a missile defence system is "only one element of the new strategic framework" that included non-proliferation, counter-proliferation and deep reductions of nuclear arsenals.

Mr. Singh, who had strongly welcomed the proposed reductions in nuclear weapons, today reiterated India's hope that the U.S. would pursue its plans "in a manner that enhances regional and international stability and security". India also reaffirmed its expectation, expressed during the visit of Russian Foreign Minister, Mr. Igor Ivanov, last week, that the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty between Washington and Moscow would not be abrogated unilaterally by the U.S.

Mr. Armitage also met the Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister, Mr. Brajesh Mishra, and the adviser in the Ministries of External Affairs and Defence, Mr. Arun Singh and Ms. Sonia Gandhi.

PM welcomes U.S. initiative

NEW DELHI, MAY 11. The Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, today welcomed the U.S. President, Mr. George Bush's initiative for steep reduction in nuclear arsenal but said India needed a credible minimum nuclear deterrent.

In his first comments on Mr. Bush's offer last week, Mr. Vajpayee said India welcomed his suggestions to move away from further development of offensive nuclear technologies and his offer of consultations in the context of New Delhi's desire to move towards lightening the shadow of nuclear terror under which the world lived today. His remarks came at a function here to give awards to defence scientists on the third anniversary of 1998 Pokhran nuclear blasts today being observed as "national technology day". — PTI

THE HINDU

12 MAY 2001

US team to meet APHC leaders

A MEETING between top leaders of the All Party Hurriyat Conference (APHC) and a US Congress delegation has been scheduled in New Delhi on May 23. APHC leader Mirwaiz Omar Farooq, who heads its "diplomatic" wing, said tonight that the invitation from the US Embassy regarding the talks was received last week.

A US Embassy spokesman, when contacted, could not immediately confirm the development. However, Mirwaiz Farooq said a 16-member Congress team would be in the capital for the talks. The APHC would be firming up its own delegation for the talks in a few days, he added.

Sources said the US delegation would have a first-hand account of the APHC's version of events in Jammu and Kashmir over the past five months of "ceasefire".

HTC, New Delhi

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

12 MAY 2001

India must balance US, Russia and China

By ASHISH KUMAR SEN

San Francisco, May 11: While the increased warmth between New Delhi and Washington could end up being a cause of concern for Beijing, South Asia analysts and policy experts say India, instead of aligning itself with just one country, should develop ties with the Americans, the Russians and the Chinese. Admitting China would be "somewhat apprehensive" about the growing proximity between New Delhi and Washington, Prof. Robert Scalapino, Robinson research professor of government emeritus, pointed out that it was not only the US, but Russia as well which had sought to improve ties with India.

"In the end, it may not be just New Delhi's ties with Washington, but New Delhi's ties with Moscow which will concern the Chinese," Prof. Scalapino said.

Many Russians, including former Premier Yevgeny Primakov, had mooted the idea of a "triangular alliance," involving Russia, India and China. The Chinese had shunned this suggestion preferring instead to maintain independent bilateral relations with both New Delhi and Moscow.

A triilateral alliance is a "bad idea," according to Prof. Anand Mohan, a professor of politics and philosophy at Queens College of

the City University of New York. He suggested a better alliance would be one between India, Russia and the European Union. "This would send a strong signal to the US. In so far as US foreign policy is concerned the emergence of the European Union is a welcome development," Prof. Mohan said.

Agreeing that a greater proximity between India and the US would bother the Chinese, Prof. Ashley Tellis, a senior policy analyst at the Virginia-based RAND Corporation, said, "But that's something for China to worry about. We ought not to let our relationship with India become hostage to real or imagined fears on the part of China." There were some like Prof. Francine R. Frankel

who felt the improving relations between Washington and New Delhi would not unduly concern China. "Beijing is more concerned about US' China policy, and the feeling that the US has adopted a policy that assumes China will be its eventual adversary," said Prof. Frankel, director of the Centre for the Advanced Study of India, at the University of Pennsylvania. She added China would itself try to minimise tensions with India.

Dr Marshall Bouton, executive vice-president of the Asia Society, agreed. "I don't think China sees its relation with India as a zero-sum game. And there is no reason that it

should, or needs to," Dr Bouton said. He added, "I do think China will be more concerned about the state of its own bilateral relationship with the US."

In the same vein, Prof. Ashutosh Vartstney, associate professor of government at the University of Notre Dame, Indiana, said he didn't see why a shift towards New Delhi in Washington would seriously endanger India's relations with China. "Sino-India relations were basically minimal relations," he said, adding that both India and China would "calculate wisely."

Chairman of the Central Asia Cau-

phers, said in some ways he was "glad" that relations between Washington and New Delhi were on the upswing. "The Chinese better watch out. They know that if push comes to shove, the US will not side with them," he said.

Director (India) at Standard and Poor's sovereign credit rating department, Mr Joydeep Mukherji said China's main concern was its bilateral relationship with the US and not what India does with the US. China's relationship has also drastically improved with India, he pointed out, adding, "The Chinese realise that the Indians want good

INDO-US RELATIONS PART-3

ties with China and Russia as well." In the face of this realisation, India has the delicate task of balancing its relations with Russia, the US and China without irking any of the three nations.

Director of the Secure World Programme at the W. Alton Jones Foundation in Charlottesville, Virginia, Dr George Perkovich, warned that China would be very concerned if India and the US consciously drew closer together at its expense.

"That is a mistake India can make. However, it seems to me India's greatest interest is having relations with the US, China and

Russia. If India maintains good ties with all three it has its greatest autonomy. But if it gets drawn into a US confrontation with China, it will suffer," he warned.

Mr Phillips Talbot, president emeritus of the Asia Society, said China's concerns would stem from the kind of bilateral relationship it has with India. "There has been some progress on question of borders and if this continues, the US posture towards India would not affect the Chinese," he said. Saying the Bush administration had yet to work out its long-term strategy in Asia, Mr Talbot added, "I think the big difference is that India is now considered on its own merits in American policy and not related with other countries." A consulting professor and senior research scholar at the Asia-Pacific Research Centre at Stanford University, Prof. Rafiq Dossani maintained that the Chinese would be more concerned if they had military competition with India, rather than economic competition. "The latter is a win-win situation. Regardless of what we might say about China being a Communist nation, its development has been good for the world," Prof. Dossani said.

Executive director of the US India Business Council, Mr Michael Clark, said he didn't think

Indo-US warmth came at the expense of the Chinese. "There is certainly nothing in it that fundamentally changes or affects Chinese security," he said.

But, Mr Clark suggested, the one thing that "will almost certainly catch the attention of the Chinese is "if and as the Indian economy begins to take off and achieve steady growth rates 8 maybe 9 per cent, it will have a long-term impact on the economic balance in Asia. But that could be stabilising and the Chinese may learn to welcome that."

Mr William C. Triplett II, who has authored Red Dragon Rising: Threat to America and has been a chief Republican counsel to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said while the Chinese Communist Party would be very unhappy with the new state of Indo-US relations, the Chinese people "might actually like it."

While South Asia analysts and policy experts agreed to disagree on China's reaction to warming ties between New Delhi and Washington, Prof. Frankel maintained China's reaction would become clearer after President Bush's visit to Beijing to attend the Apec summit in October. "Only after that will China, perhaps, be concerned about US-India ties," she said.

■ CONCLUDED

THE ASIAN

THE ASIAN

2 MAY 2001

New Delhi plays ball, praises select elements^{of} of U.S. policy^{12/5}

The Times of India News Service

NEW DELHI: The Vajpayee government reaffirmed its broad endorsement of U.S. plans for a 'new strategic framework'—including its controversial missile defence programme (NMD)—following talks with U.S. deputy secretary of state Richard Armitage, shying away from some of the tough questions that this has thrown up.

Although domestic criticism has forced the government to temper its initial effusive support, it chose yet again to lavish praise on selective elements of the new strategy while steering clear of taking a position on the NMD on the ground that it was only one element of an entire concept.

In its statement following the talks, the government said Mr Armitage had defined the four elements of the new strategic framework as non-proliferation, counter-proliferation, missile defence and a reduction in the U.S. strategic nuclear arsenal while emphasising that missile defence was only one element of the proposed framework.

There was, however, no clarification forthcoming on India's understanding of the concept of counter-proliferation, with the external affairs spokesman maintaining that this was not a subject

that had been addressed in any substantive manner.

While the government reiterated its welcome of reduction and de-alert of nuclear weapons, the missile defence system was described by the spokesman



Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee greets U.S. deputy secretary of state Richard Armitage prior to talks in New Delhi on Friday.

as "something that is going to come in the future".

The statement also made clear India's acceptance of the new paradigm, saying "managing the transition from the pres-

ent regime of 'launch on warning' and 'hair trigger alerts' to a cooperative 'new strategic framework' would challenge the will and commitment of the international community".

The formulations, however, also showed evidence of the domestic pressure on the government. India's expectations that the "U.S. would pursue its plans in a manner that enhances regional and international stability and security" had been conveyed to Mr Armitage by the external affairs minister. India also made it clear that the ABM treaty and other similar commitments should not be abrogated unilaterally.

While officials did not divulge whether India's concerns about Pakistan and China had come up for discussion, Mr Armitage told reporters that China had embarked on a missile programme long before any discussions by the U.S. on its missile defence. "I don't think this is going to interfere in any way with the direction in which China is going," Mr Armitage said.

In a brief interaction after emerging from his call on the Prime Minister, Mr Armitage also said the U.S. had questions about Pakistan that were well-known. This was said in the context of a question on India's neighbourhood.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

12 MAY 2001

Beijing will take note of Armitage India visit

BY ASHISH KUMAR SEN

San Francisco, May 10: President George W. Bush's decision to send deputy secretary of state Richard Armitage to New Delhi to discuss "a new framework for security and stability that reflects the world of today" is seen as just one of the signs of the stepped up camaraderie between India and the US.

Acknowledging that there was a "major shift" in US foreign policy, Mr William C. Triplett II, an astute China watcher in Washington who has, of late, been paying keen attention to India, added that this shift was not necessarily clean but was going on nonetheless.

Mr Triplett, who has authored *Red Dragon Rising: Communist China's Military Threat to America* and has been a chief Republican counsel to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, pointed out the significance of Mr Armitage's visit to New Delhi, Seoul and Tokyo, and not Beijing, would not be lost on the Chinese.

"Mr Armitage is the Number 2 man at the state department. He is widely known as a key policy maker. On the other hand, a level four official at the state department, not known as a policy maker, is being sent to Beijing. The Chinese will notice the difference," Mr Triplett said, adding, the

new administration was "quite rightly" reorienting US foreign policy to favour democratic countries.

While most of those interviewed by *The Asian Age* generally tended to agree with Mr Triplett's analysis, US state department spokesperson, Philip T. Reeker, insisted nothing should be read into this decision.

Another visit to New Delhi, this time by the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Henry H. Shelton, scheduled for later this month, is also likely to signal the beginning of military cooperation between India and the US after a break of almost three years.

Prof. Ashley Tellis, a senior policy analyst at the Virginia-based Rand Corporation, which is often commissioned to projects by the Pentagon, said the increased bilateral interaction was an "implicit, but fundamental, reaffirmation on the part of the United States that India is a friendly, emerging, power worthy of Washington's attention, respect, and cooperation."

In Washington, Bush administration officials appear to realise and appreciate the fact that it would serve "no purpose" to craft a security alliance directed against China. Associate professor of government at the University of Notre

Dame, Indiana, Prof. Ashutosh Varshney, however, suggested that some kind of "realignment in Asia is in the offing."

"The basic motivation for all these activities is to contain China," Prof. Varshney explained, adding the message was becoming loud and clear: "US-China relations will not be as smooth as they have been in the last few years, and India will become the main peg for Washington's policy in Asia."

Mr Triplett, however, said he didn't think India was keen to become a "military ally" of the US. "But

attention to India's strategic problems, understand that New Delhi doesn't seek a US-India axis to counter China.

Although extremist legislators, both from the Left and Right, would like India to be an overt partner with the US in containing China, the moderates, who are a majority, would prefer that Washington and New Delhi evolve a close strategic partnership for its own intrinsic value. And this is the trend that deserves to be backed by India's friends in the US," the analyst said, speaking on condition of

INDO-US RELATIONS-2

there are all sorts of relationships which are reasonable relationships," he said, adding, "If the denominator is the same i.e. democratic, then you will have a natural relationship."

On Capitol Hill, the warming up in Indo-US relations was not necessarily viewed with the sole aim of balancing the emerging Chinese hegemony in the Asian theater, according to a Congressional analyst who follows the Indian sub-continent closely.

"Many members of the 'India Caucus' are aware of New Delhi's sensitivities and the leading lights of the Caucus, who have paid keen

anonymity. Meanwhile, some experts suggested the itinerary of President Bush's first visit to Asia must include New Delhi and Tokyo above Beijing.

"Mr Bush must do this, however, he doesn't necessarily have to follow the same plan every time he travels to the region," said Prof. James Clad, director of Asia-Pacific Energy at Cambridge Energy Research Associates, a leading strategic advisory firm and a research professor of Southeast Asian Studies at Georgetown University. Incidentally, Mr Bush is scheduled to attend the APEC summit in Beijing in October.

Others were hopeful that the ongoing engagement would lead to a "more mature" perception by both sides.

Mr Joydeep Mukherji, director (India) at Standard and Poor's sovereign credit rating department, who avidly studied China and India, said Washington was beginning to think "more long term" about its interests and was trying to fit India into its Asia policy.

"From the Indian side you are beginning to see India's foreign policy reflect national self-interest rather than a moralising tone more appropriate for the 1950s," Mr Mukherji said.

Prof. Rafiq Dossani, a consulting professor and senior research scholar at the Asia-Pacific Research Centre at Stanford University, and the executive director of the Stanford University South Asia Initiative, agreed that developments in Indo-US relations were very interesting, especially in context with the recent Hainan spy plane crisis.

"The first effort by India should be to tell the US: 'Don't define our relationship like you have with China. We are independently useful.' But the question is whether US foreign policy people see it that way," Prof. Dossani said.

"Historically India has not figured on the US radar," he reminded

adding that lots of bilateral visits would not be enough to support the relationship.

"They (the visits) are necessary but not sufficient. India has to make itself an economic asset in the world," he said.

Saying much was "in the making", Prof. Varshney added that it would be a few months before the new outlines become clearer. "These are all informed speculations at this point, consistent with what political scientists have been saying about Indo-US rapprochement. It is certainly in the cards."

He said the biggest indicator of a strategic shift in Washington's priorities would be if President Bush visits India before China.

"Mr Armitage's scheduled visit to India and not China is significant and adding up to a story which suggests an emerging change... a certain lack of belief in the Clintonian argument that the more business we do with China the more likely it would become a country in sync with democratic nations of the world," Prof. Varshney said, adding, "There is no indication that Washington believes in that argument. Instead, it views China as an adversary."

■ **TOMORROW: How will Beijing react to the growing proximity between New Delhi and Washington?**

THE ASIAN AGE

1 MAY 2001

Bush emissary set for Delhi defence talks

FROM K.P. NAYAR

Washington, May 10: The second-most important man in the Bush state department arrives in New Delhi in the early hours of Friday for unprecedented defence-related consultations in the backdrop of equally unprecedented setbacks to Washington in UN elections in the past week.

Deputy secretary Richard Armitage will have just enough time during the whistle-stop tour to brush his suit of the rotten eggs thrown at him in Seoul before he is driven in to charm Indian ministers on President George W. Bush's proposals for defending the US — and the rest of the world as an afterthought — against nuclear missiles.

Armitage will not have to worry about being egg-pelted as he walks into Hyderabad House or South Block. The South Koreans greeted him, as he left the Grand Hyatt hotel in Seoul after breakfast in the coffee shop yesterday, with rotten eggs. He was on his way to meet President Kim Dae-jung.

India-watchers in the Bush administration see that as the biggest change in Delhi, far more significant than the carefully-worded statement issued by South Block on May 2 welcoming the new Republican President's latest arms control — or arms proliferation, depending on how one sees it — initiative.

Till a few years ago, no US presidential emissary would have been able to safely enter Delhi on a mission similar to Armitage's without Delhi police securing safe passage for the visitor and erect-

ing barricades all over the city against anti-US protests.

President Bill Clinton has seen to it that the sting has been taken out of anti-Americanism in India. Without that, the ministry of external affairs would not have found it politically viable or expedient to extend even a guarded welcome to the Bush initiative.

Armitage's mission to India comes almost 10 years after two similar diplomatic forays by two veteran US diplomats, which marked the beginning of the strategic and diplomatic cooperation between India and the US, two countries which had turned their backs on each other for half a century because of the Cold War.

Ten years ago, the US' arms control czar Reginald Bartholomew arrived in Delhi on a mission which led to a *modus vivendi* between the two countries on non-proliferation and it lasted until India tested its nuclear weapons exactly three years ago, on this day: that Washington will not pressure India on the nuclear non-proliferation treaty (NPT) as long as the objectives of the treaty are achieved even without New Delhi signing it.

Former Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao honoured that understanding by not testing nuclear weapons. His successors, H.D. Deve Gowda and I.K. Gujral, were at a loss on how to deal with it.

Shortly after Bartholomew's visit, came Thomas Pickering, the then US ambassador to the UN. He met Rao with a proposal that India should support a vote for the repeal of a UN resolution equating Zionism with racism.

India was then a member of

the UN Security Council.

The vote went through in the General Assembly, marking the start of Delhi's relations with Tel Aviv. The relations with Israel are now a crucial element in India's defence preparedness.

The missions by Bartholomew and Pickering were both conducted in secret. Their visits were known, but not even was there a hint to the public on the content of their talks with India.

Rao did not even take the Cabinet Committee on Political Affairs into confidence before voting with Israel in the UN for the first time.

Had times not changed so dramatically, Armitage's talks in Delhi on Friday would have been described by the ministry on external affairs as "consultations on issues of mutual interest" or some such euphemism. Indeed, he would not have come to India at all. Indications here are that India is expected no more than to listen to what Armitage will say. If he receives "understanding" from his interlocutors in South Block, that is more than what the US' own allies have been able to offer.

Earlier this week, when Armitage was in Tokyo, the Japanese issued the following statement: "Japan and the US share the view that ballistic missile proliferation is a serious threat to world security".

It is neither here nor there. India can be expected to say as much after talking to the US envoy. After all, there is national consensus in India that Pakistan's Ghauri missiles are a threat to security in South Asia while India's Agni missiles are not.

THE TELEGRAPH

11 MAY 2001

State Dept. split over sanctions

By Sridhar Krishnaswami 10-13

OTTAWA, MAY 10. The Bush administration is carrying on a review with respect to the sanctions policy, but the State Department is split on the issue of lifting the punitive measures against India, says *The Washington Times* in a report.

The split is between those who favour lifting the punitive measures to clear the way for a "strategic alliance" and those who believe it will send the wrong signal to potential nuclear weapons states, the newspaper says.

A powerful faction in the State Department was hoping to build an alliance with India as a counterweight to China but the Non-Proliferation Bureau was strongly opposed to lifting the measures for fear of undermining American efforts at preventing other states from going the nuclear route, the paper said quoting unnamed officials.

In New Delhi, the Deputy Secretary of State, Mr. Richard Armitage, will be seeking a sort of a pledge from the Prime Minister on limiting nuclear weapons development and deployment which will please the non-proliferation advocates, sources told the paper.

Despite the existing sanctions and the ban on military relations, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Henry Shelton, will visit India later this month to discuss military-to-military relations. However, ending sanctions against India and Pakistan would depend on the ongoing review by the National Security Council, an official said.

The pro-India lobby in Congress, "bolstered by contributions from Indian-American high-tech millionaires", is pushing to lifting sanctions against India. "I have been making the case for the last two years that it is time to lift sanctions against India and I am optimistic this administration will finally do so," Mr. Sam

Brownback, Chairman of the Foreign Relations Sub Committee on Near East and South Asia, told the paper.

The non-proliferationists feel lifting sanctions against India can send the wrong signal to the Ukraine, South Africa and others who have given up their nuclear weapons programme. Those opposed to this view say the sanctions have not resulted in a change of behaviour and relations had to be upgraded. Some American officials see India as a "foil" to Chinese power in Asia, says the paper.

Prof. James Clad of Georgetown University said Washington should lift the sanctions against India only after consulting allies such as Japan which are hostile to nuclear proliferation. The U.S. must find a way to improve relations and lift sanctions against India in a way that does not alienate Pakistan and does not endorse New Delhi's traditional domination of its smaller neighbours.

THE HINDU

11 MAY 2001

Armitage may talk about more than just NMD

By Chidanand Rajghatta
The Times of India News Service

WASHINGTON: The Bush administration's first senior official to visit New Delhi is a big, beefy American who is so fond of weightlifting that the joke in the State Department is he uses ambassadors for bench pressing. But he is also a gentle giant who turns into marshmallow around children—he is the father of eight, including six adopted ones, some of them with physical disabilities.



Richard Armitage

U.S. deputy secretary of state Richard Armitage, Strobe Talbott's successor and George W. Bush's envoy, who arrived in India on Wednesday to brief New Delhi on the nuclear missile defence (NMD) issue, is a man of many parts—former soldier, spook, strategist and diplomat. But he is widely acknowledged to be one of the most brilliant thinkers in the current dispensation and an architect of the new

policy that recognises India as a rising power.

While much of New Delhi has been in thrall of the Bush team's other great strategist, deputy secretary of defence Paul Wolfowitz, the U.S. President has detailed Mr Armitage to brief U.S. allies and friends in Asia about his proposed missile defence plans. That India should figure among a small list that includes Japan and South Korea, the two who would qualify as allies, is seen by many as a sign of things to come.

U.S. CALLING

If Mr Armitage is going to India despite New Delhi's unqualified—and what some would see as premature—welcome, it suggests that there is more to the trip than mere discussions about the NMD, not in terms of dialogue but in terms of a message. It is hard for anyone not to notice that Washington's high-level confabulations on NMD include India, but not China.

According to one report, China is being briefed through its embassy in Washington. In the light of such a direct snub delivered to Beijing and the jousting that is still going on in

the spy plane matter, it is evident that President Bush shanghaied external affairs minister Jaswant Singh into the Oval Office for more than just pleasantries. There are plenty of messages being packed into form and protocol these days. Since it does not take an ace diplomat, much less a rocket scientist, to figure out that the NMD is aimed primarily at China and an assortment of rogue states, it is only natural that the Armitage mission to India presages what could turn out to be a full-scale engagement.

Already, the two countries have a vision statement which if followed in letter and spirit, would make the traffic between West Asia and Washington look static. The statement enjoins almost half a dozen cabinet-level officials, including those at the very top, to meet at least once a year. And now, with the militaries of the two countries joining in starting with the visit on May 31 of chief of defence staff Gen Henry Shelton, it promises to be an even more impressive parade.

- Among the first to accept change, Page 7
- Bushwhacked by the NMD, Page 11

THE TIMES OF INDIA

10 MAY 2001

Move along path of friendship with care: Experts

BY ASHISH KUMAR SEN

San Francisco, May 9: Even as a flurry of diplomatic activity has begun to mark relations between New Delhi and Washington, D.C., South Asia analysts and policy experts warn that India must not raise its expectations too high. In interviews with *The Asian Age*, these experts agreed that Washington's under President George W. Bush was sitting up and taking notice of India. And now it was up to New Delhi to evolve into a "viable friend, partner and ally" for the United States of America. These observations came on the eve of US deputy secretary of state Richard Armitage's visit to New Delhi. Mr Armitage is scheduled to arrive in India on Thursday to discuss President Bush's proposed missile shield and other bilateral concerns with foreign and defence minister Jaswant Singh, and other senior government officials. While Mr Singh visited Washington early in April, India's foreign secretary Chokila Iyer is expected to visit Washington soon.

Leading academic experts on India shared the view that it was hard to gauge the extent of this new warmth in Indo-US relations. Saying there had been a lot of

"vague talk" of being "natural allies", Prof. Francine R. Frankel, director of the Centre for the Advanced Study of India, University of Pennsylvania, added, "But there has been nothing specific that would amount to a strategy for mutual cooperation."

It is a process that is unfolding and we can't judge how far this warmth will carry the relationship," Prof. Frankel said. But, for she said it was necessary that there be "a formal end to sanctions."

"Beyond that is very important that the US begin to review its whole policy of technology denial to India. Until that happens there will be an outer limit to how far the relationship can extend."

Director of the Secure World Programme at the W. Alton Jones Foundation in Charlottesville, Virginia, Dr George Perkovich, who is also the author of *India's Nuclear Bomb*, a book documenting the history of India's nuclear weapons programme, warned that the challenge for New Delhi would be to ensure that Washington related to India for its "intrinsic value" and "not as an instrument to keep China off balance."

Acknowledging that there was an "excitement in India, and a cele-

bration over all the attention in Washington", Dr Perkovich, who is also a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and the International Institute for Strategic Studies, added that if this attention stemmed from a "genuine interest" in India "then that's very good."

But, he suffixed a note of caution: "There is, in Washington, a tendency to return to a Cold War mindset where India is once again a pawn, but this time on the US side and China is the contestant the US is playing against. So, it remains to be seen if this 'genuine' interest in India is lasting."

Dr Marshall M. Bouton, executive vice-president of the Asia Society, agreed that the US was headed towards a "closer engagement" with India on a variety of fronts.

"The Bush administration has made clear that it intends to give a higher priority to India in US foreign policy," Dr Bouton said. He pointed to Mr Jaswant Singh's early visit to Washington, his "not chance" meeting with President Bush and Mr Armitage's forthcoming visit to New Delhi, as all being "very strong indicators" that the Bush administration was fol-

lowing up its promise. Prof. Robert Scalapino, Robson research professor of government emeritus, a noted scholar considered to be the "dean of Asian studies" in the United States, was of the opinion that the US was increasingly committed to a "stronger, deeper relationship" with India.

"Firstly, Washington sees New Delhi's policies as more committed to a market economy and open to an interaction with foreign investment and trade. And second, it sees India as a rising force, not only in South Asia, but in the most powerful democracy, was adept at handling its relations with a variety of authoritarian regimes. Now we are watching with some glee and fascination the great drama of the world's two premier democracies getting to know each other in a real sense and become true partners."

The biggest mistake for the Indian strategic community would be to succumb to the false belief that the US has recognised India and, as a consequence, try and drive the relationship too fast, warned Professor James Clad.

Director of Asia-Pacific Energy at Cambridge Energy Research Associates, a leading strategic advisory firm, Prof. Clad concur-

bound Indian officials had their rigid positions laid out for them by their political masters and our American 'babus' theirs. Both sides were experts in the art of managing adversarial relations. Now they are not adversaries. They are friends. And managing friendship appears to be the new challenge to both sides," the analyst said, preferring anonymity.

The analyst added: "India, the world's largest democracy, was adept at handling its 'friendship' with the Soviet Union, a totalitarian state. And the US, the world's most powerful democracy, was adept at handling its relations with a variety of authoritarian regimes. Now we are watching with some glee and fascination the great drama of the world's two premier democracies getting to know each other in a real sense and become true partners."

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INDO-US RELATIONS-1

Recently holds the Henry R. Luce Foundation Research Professorship of Southeast Asian Studies at Georgetown University.

"Simplistic ideas about India's options also characterise Indian foreign policy community... elite media — as in expectation is that the United States in the present era 'needs India' too much to accord it anything but top place in global strategic councils. That day is still far off," said Prof. Clad who had chaired the Georgetown India Forum last year and will, later this week, present President Bush with a copy of his report: Summary Report for the New Administration on Future US-India Relations.

Prof. Ashutosh Varshney, associate professor of government at the University of Notre Dame, Indiana, echoed a similar sentiment. "India and the US will not be passionate lovers right away... New Delhi must not raise expectations to an unrealistic level," he said.

Agreeing that relations between New Delhi and Washington had begun exhibiting a "certain momentum", Prof. Varshney said, "One should move along this path of friendship with care."

■ TOMORROW: The Chinese will notice Mr Richard Armitage's absence in Beijing

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10 MAY 2001

The Armitage mission

By C. Raja Mohan

The challenge before Mr. Armitage is to seize the moment, build on the rare convergence on global security issues, and unveil the road map for a new destination in Indo-U.S. relations.

HD-12
10/5

HIGH LEVEL talks between India and the United States this week will show if they can move beyond rhetoric and initiate specific steps towards building a new security partnership between the two nations. In welcoming the controversial U.S. plans on national missile defences, India has indicated its readiness to break the mould on bilateral relations. But is the U.S. ready for a paradigm shift?

The answer should be forthcoming from the American envoy, Mr. Richard Armitage, who arrives here late tonight for a round of consultations with the Indian Government on NMD and broader aspects of bilateral relations. Mr. Armitage, who is also the U.S. Deputy Secretary of State, will be here for barely 24 hours. But his talks with the Indian establishment on Friday could send some clear signals on where the bilateral relationship is headed.

The Government has taken considerable political risk at home in unambiguously welcoming the core themes of the U.S. President, Mr. George W. Bush's proposals last week. It also stood out as one of the few countries in the world to support Mr. Bush at a time when many traditional U.S. allies were mired in doubt. The U.S. has been pleasantly surprised by the unexpected Indian backing on a key global security issue. The challenge before Mr. Armitage is to seize the moment, build on the rare convergence on global security issues, and unveil the road map for a new destination in Indo-U.S. relations.

Less than three years ago, when the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, talked about a "natural alliance" between New Delhi and Washington, there was considerable wariness in both India and the U.S. But today, many influential elements in both countries believe that an alliance between the world's two largest democracies may be an idea whose time has come.

The External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, has often talked about the "wasted decades" in Indo-U.S. relations in a reference to the inability of New Delhi and Washington to build a cooperative relationship in the last 50 years despite so many common interests. A moment may be at hand now to put behind the wasted

decades of the past and begin to put in place building blocks for an Indo-U.S. security partnership. But alliances cannot be built on rhetoric. The present moment is important in the sense that the NMD issue may have opened the prospect for an enduring convergence of Indian and American interests.

The definitiveness of the Indian reaction to the NMD suggests it could not have been based on any specific calculation of immediate benefit; and it was too direct and explicit to have been a bargaining chip. And from all accounts of the Indian response, there was no ex-

pectation of a *quid pro quo* from the U.S. side. The Indian response was not made in consultation with anyone else; for there was no time. The positive Indian reaction to the NMD was rooted in the instinctive recognition of the convergence between many of India's traditional arms control positions and the proposed radical departures from American policy being suggested by Mr. Bush.

The three core ideas — rejection of mutual assured destruction, substantive reduction of nuclear arsenals and new approaches to non-proliferation — that Mr. Bush came up with were fully in tune with India's long-held assumptions. India has always rejected mutual assured destruction as an unacceptable basis — either morally or politically — for maintaining peace in the world. Deep cuts and de-alerting of nuclear forces is again an Indian idea that the U.S. may now endorse. And finally the Bush speech concedes the long-held Indian argument that the non-proliferation regime has been ineffective.

No country has suffered more than India from the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Islamabad's acquisition of WMD has allowed it to neutralise New Delhi's conventional military superiority and pursue with impunity a proxy

war against India. India bleeds every day for this fundamental consequence of the spread of nuclear weapons and missiles in its neighbourhood. India has a clear interest in countering the proliferation of WMD into the hands of those specialising in terror and blackmail.

Mr. Armitage's mission here is part of the wider process of consultations the Bush Administration has embarked on to brief its allies and friends on its plans to build the NMD system. He is arriving here after talks in Tokyo and Seoul, two of America's traditional allies in Asia. Mr. Armitage's colleagues will also be covering other Asian nations including China.

Other U.S. envoys are in Europe talking to allies in the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation. And the crucial talks between U.S. and Russian officials on NMD are scheduled for Friday in Moscow. These talks are part of Mr. Bush's reassurance to the world that the U.S. will not act unilaterally in either building missile defences or in tearing up old arms control arrangements, such as the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty, which come in the way of missile defences.

New Delhi also has a strong interest in ensuring that the revolutionary nuclear transition envisaged by Mr. Bush occurs within a framework of cooperation rather than in an atmosphere of confrontation. After his discussion with the Russian Foreign Minister, Mr. Igor Ivanov, last weekend, Mr. Jaswant Singh welcomed the proposed talks between U.S. and Russia on NMD and emphasised the importance of an understanding between Moscow and Washington on moving towards a new nuclear order.

India will also be looking forward to hearing from Mr. Armitage the details on how and at what pace the Bush Administration wants to lead the world away from the old nuclear order to a new one. India would also want some elaboration of the

hints from Mr. Bush last week that the U.S. may be prepared to undertake deep cuts in its nuclear arsenals. New Delhi would like to understand Mr. Bush's proclaimed vision for a cooperative framework in developing defensive technologies as well as his new ideas on how best to cope with weapons of mass destruction.

But in the end the interaction with Mr. Armitage on NMD is indeed about the nature of the bilateral relations between India and the U.S. For there is no mistaking of the strength of the link between the nuclear question and Indo-U.S. relations. Indo-U.S. relations have indeed improved considerably during the waning years of the Clinton Administration. But the last word from the Administration was that the "full potential of Indo-U.S. relations cannot be realised until the nuclear differences were resolved" to the satisfaction of Washington.

After more than ten rounds of the security dialogue between India and the U.S. over the last two years, it is evident that there is no way the nuclear differences between the two can be resolved within the existing framework of global non-proliferation. The Clinton Administration was far too enamoured with the old order to bend rules to accommodate India. It is precisely in this context that Mr. Bush is suggesting a fundamental restructuring of the global nuclear order.

India has always found the current nuclear order based on the NPT to be discriminatory. It has also found the nuclear regime formed an insurmountable obstacle to the advancement of Indo-U.S. relations. It should be self-evident then that any revision of this order has the potential to offer India some space at the high table that the present nuclear structure by its very nature cannot offer. Is it any surprise that India has so heartily welcomed the U.S. initiative to rework the nuclear order?

The commitment of the Bush Administration to build NMD has opened the door for substantive cooperation between India and the U.S. to build a new global security order. And as they do so, they need to liberate their bilateral relationship from the limits imposed by the current non-proliferation regime.

THE HINDU

10 MAY 2001

US missile defences cannot harm India's security but they could yield strategic benefits

Forward defence

BY BRAHMA CHELLANEY

THE VAJPAYEE government continues to confound its supporters and critics. After the wretched manner it handled the Bangladeshi killings of BSF soldiers, it wasted no time in endorsing US President George W. Bush's plan to build strategic defences against nuclear missiles. Cynics may see this as a case of a government trying to shake off its impotence against neighbouring States by applauding the interceptor-rockets planned by the world's sole superpower.

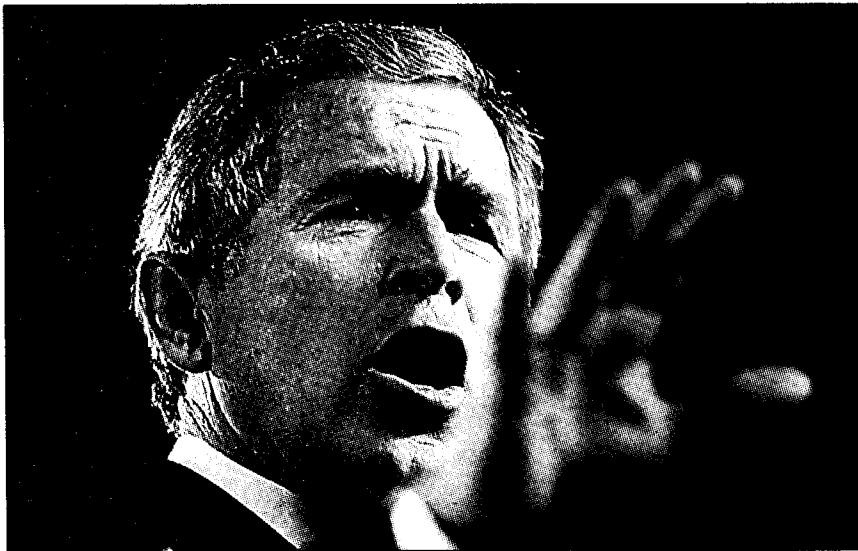
The positive response to Bush's national missile defence (NMD) plan, however, fits well with India's options and interests in an Asia marked by missile buildups and a growing power disequilibrium. American scientists have been working on strategic defence against missiles for at least two decades now. But it is only in recent years that this has turned into a major public issue because such defences cannot be deployed without dismantling the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty. The obstacle — and the target — is the treaty.

From repudiation of the Kyoto Protocol to the readiness to disband the ABM Treaty, the Bush White House is signalling America's intent to utilise its global pre-eminence to full advantage. Bush's ambitious NMD plan involving a triad of land, sea and air defences, however, is no surprise. Just the way the Vajpayee government conducted nuclear tests in keeping with the NDA's pre-election nuclearisation pledge, Bush has simply unveiled a plan he had promised during the presidential campaign. New Delhi is right to point to NMD's "strategic and technological inevitability".

The inexorable drive towards strategic defences actually began under Bill Clinton. But while Clinton was committed to a limited NMD through ABM Treaty's modification, Bush is singlemindedly devoted to broad defences whose construction demands the elimination of the legal obstacle. It is NMD's unavoidability that had already spurred Germany to give up its opposition and Russia to adopt greater flexibility in its approach.

So before Bush made his announcement, India had ample time to formulate its position on NMD. In fact, in recent months, New Delhi had scrupulously avoided making any critical reference to NMD, signalling a subtly evolving shift in favour of the Bush plan. Its positive reaction to Bush's announcement thus can hardly be described as impulsive or hasty, although it was naïve of it to parrot Washington's public-relations line that NMD will yield deep cuts in nuclear armaments.

NMD signifies a new arms race — a race for control of, and dominance over, outer space. As this race picks up momentum and delivers new weapon systems,



IN FAVOUR OF A NUCLEAR FAMILY: George W. Bush

America will no longer need to retain all its older armaments. Just like defence is the other side of offence, armament and disarmament are interlinked. Every major arms buildup leads to disarmament, a process in which only the surplus, obsolescent or vulnerable weapons are eliminated.

Over the past three centuries, the drive for supremacy through technology has advanced from sea power (which led to colonisation of today's Third World) to air power and to space power now. NMD is an acronym covering a host of futuristic space-related technologies whose development will change the face of the world — and the nature of war. America's heavy investment in NMD is a venture to secure its global dominance for decades to come.

However undesirable a new arms buildup may be, the logical progression of military technology is unstoppable in a world in which States compete fiercely and seek relative advantage. As a vulnerable State living in a dangerous neighbourhood, India has to look at NMD strictly from the prism of national interest. Having wasted half-century mouthing didactic, internationalist and self-righteous rhetoric, India has to get on with assertively advancing its interests.

One of its top priorities today should be to build a strategic partnership with the US on mutually beneficial and level terms. If New Delhi does not hit off with the Bush administration, it may be many years before a fresh opportunity presents itself. After all the talk and no substance under Clinton, the Indo-US relationship now demands concrete strategic engagement.

India's supportive stand on NMD pre-

sents a new opening for engagement with the Bush team, even though traditional friend Russia has been embarrassed. Russia, the world's richest country in natural resources, will always remain a natural ally of India, as both have a fundamental commonality of interests. But while India has to work hard to mend the decade-long decline in the relationship with Moscow, those ties cannot come in the way of building an Indo-US strategic partnership — a partnership critical both for Indian security and Asian stability.

With Bolshevism dead and democratic Russia no longer an adversary or even a competitor of the United States, it is conceivable that in the years ahead a Washington-Moscow-New Delhi strategic formation may emerge, with India as the go-between. Without a larger strategic blueprint, India will remain boxed in by the China-Pak-Burma axis. It is the strategic imperative to keep Russia firmly on India's side while wooing Washington that has prompted Jaswant Singh to ride two NMD horses simultaneously — support for the Bush plan, and support for Moscow's stand that the ABM Treaty should not be unilaterally abrogated.

The current international line-up on NMD may be the precursor of things to come — the US, its traditional allies and India on one side, China and its militaristic friends on the other side, and Russia somewhere in the middle. If Washington manages NMD issue well with Moscow, offering it defensive technology and agreeing to deep nuclear cuts, Russia could become part of the West.

US missile defences will not threaten India's security but could yield strategic benefits if New Delhi handles the issue deftly. Too often in the past India has

allowed expectations to substitute for hardheaded strategic calculations and bargaining. New Delhi has to exploit its NMD support to its advantage by pushing the Bush team to take a fresh look at the decades-old technology and military sanctions against India.

The impending visits of Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage and the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Henry H. Shelton, can help lay the groundwork for building strategic ties. If Washington were to interpret its export-control laws more broadly in relation to India, it would throw open for sale many high-tech commercial items. It also makes no strategic sense for Washington to continue to keep India out of its arms market. Further, there is no reason why Washington should still keep India as a key target of the punitive restrictions of the Nuclear Suppliers' Group.

India faces a difficult situation in Asia that demands strategic engagement with Washington. Its largest neighbour, China, will use NMD to justify its already-expanding nuclear and missile arsenals. With or without NMD, India's security will be adversely affected by the increasing trans-Himalayan missile threat and Beijing's continued nuclear and missile transfers to Pakistan. But with NMD, China is likely to more openly flout international norms and conventions and seek new ways to deliver lethal missile blows.

If India does not wish to abandon its plans for maintaining a nuclear-deterrent force at very modest levels, it will have to look at other options. It seems inevitable that it will develop an ICBM capability in order to provide adequate reach to its small nuclear arsenal. It will also have to arm its missiles with decoys and other penetration aids. But one can already foresee that it will be attracted to missile defences and potential collaboration with the US.

NMD is likely to strengthen and expand US-led security arrangements. If it is seen to work, the US could extend a 'missile umbrella' to its allies the way it presently holds out a nuclear umbrella. An India strategically aligned with the US could avail of such benefits in a manner to reduce its own security burden. In a world marked by rapid change, it is imaginable to think of a future India with its own nuclear force but deriving certain benefits from US missile defences.

As a concept, strategic defence can be expanded to involve technology and cooperation in fields beyond the missile domain. India can partner the US on strategic defence against theatre and long-range missiles and also against international terrorism and to safeguard borders and share intelligence.

The action-reaction cycle triggered by missile defences is bound to drive India closer to the US.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

8 MAY 2001

India in Bush's 100 days

By Amitabh Mattoo

119-12
575

NOT OFTEN in Indo-U.S. relations has there been a chance to pass judgment on the likely trajectory of bilateral relations after the first hundred days of a new administration in Washington. India has rarely been on the radar screen of American Presidents in the first months of their tenure, even of those Liberals with a robust international agenda. It is surprising, therefore, that much of the groundwork needed to firmly position bilateral relations has been almost completed within the first 14 weeks of probably the least foreign policy-oriented American President in recent history. If this early evidence is anything to go by, Indo-U.S. relations will certainly not suffer because of lack of attention from Washington during the tenure of Mr. George W. Bush. What is also becoming clear is that there is an obvious convergence of New Delhi's and Washington's interests on a variety of issues and this could, with imagination and initiative, position Indo-U.S. relations on firmer ground. However, there are a few remnants of the past that could still throw the relationship out of gear, especially if contrarians are allowed space.

Consider first the initial momentum given to bilateral ties. On at least four fronts, Mr. Bush has scored over his recent predecessors. First, he signalled through his unprecedented meeting in the Oval office on April 6 with the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, that he takes the relationship with India very seriously. This meeting, although ostensibly spontaneous, could not have taken place without careful thought, and without a considered evaluation by Washington of the signal that it would send to South Asia and beyond. Such gestures are usually reserved by U.S. Presidents for the closest of allies. No less significantly, as part of Mr. Bush's outreach to allies on the National Missile Defence, the Deputy Secretary of State, Mr. Richard Armitage, will soon lead a team to Asia, with only three stops: Tokyo, Seoul and New Delhi. Earlier, the National Security Adviser, Ms. Condoleezza Rice, had called Mr. Jaswant Singh, again, as part of the process of consultation on the issue.

Second, Mr. Bush has moved with remarkable alacrity in making key appointments that have a bearing on India. Both Mr. Robert Blackwill's appointment as U.S.

If early evidence is anything to go by, Indo-U.S. relations will certainly not suffer because of lack of attention from Washington.

Ambassador to India and Ms. Christina Rocca's as the Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia have been made within the first three months, and much before many of the traditionally influential positions have been filled. Available evidence suggests that Ms. Rocca and Mr. Blackwill share the optimism and the new vision about bilateral relations. Both, more significantly, are insiders who can do much to shape policy. While Mr. Blackwill shares a close relationship with the President, Ms. Rocca, with her experience as a CIA officer and a foreign policy adviser to the Senator, Mr. Sam Brownback, knows the legislative and executive sides of the policy establishment very well. And while she may have been instrumental, according to some, in putting Pakistan on the watch-list of states sponsoring terrorism in the early 1990s through her job in the CIA, she and Mr. Blackwill do not view Indo-U.S. relations through the jaded prism of India-Pakistan or U.S.-Pakistan ties. Similarly, it is clear that Mr. Richard Haass, as the new Director of Policy Planning, will play a keen role in the formulation of the administration's relationship with India. Over the last of couple of years, Mr. Haass, as the head of Foreign Policy Studies at the Brookings Institution, had visited India at least twice and is known to be supportive of a closer relationship and even to have expressed some interest in the idea of a U.S.-India free trade area arrangement.

Three, key members of the new administration have made it clear that the remaining sanctions against India, imposed after the nuclear tests of 1998, will shortly be removed. Gen. Colin Powell, Secretary of State, had made it clear during his testimony before Congress that he did not think sanctions were serving as a useful instrument of American policy. Mr. Donald Rumsfeld, Secretary of Defence, in his meeting with Mr. Jaswant Singh, had echoed this view. More recently, the Treasury Secretary, Mr. Paul O'Neill, too seemed supportive of an early lifting of sanctions and communicated this to the Finance Minister, Mr. Yaswant Sinha, in Washington.

Finally, although prepared mostly during the tenure of the previous administration, the release of the State Department's Patterns of Global Terrorism-2000, and especially Gen. Powell's introductory remarks, indicated that this was one specific area that had the greatest scope for continued cooperation. It is unfortunate that attention has focussed on the report's so-called soft attitude towards Pakistan. Indeed, on at least two grounds the report should have encouraged India.

One, it presents a strong indictment of Pakistan. It clearly states that the Government of Pakistan has increased its support to the Taliban and continued its support to militant groups active in Kashmir, such as the Harkat ul-Mujahidin (HUM), some of which engaged in terrorism. And it adds, Pakistan's military Government continued the previous regime's support of the Kashmir insurgency, and Kashmiri militant groups continued to operate in Pakistan, raising funds and recruiting new cadre. More significantly, in the report's section on the Chronology of Significant Terrorist Incidents, 2000, the massacre of Sikhs in Chattisingpura in March that year is presented unambiguously. According to the report: police officers arrested Muslim militants, who confessed to helping two groups suspected in the massacre — the Lashkar-e-Taiba and the Hizbul-Mujahideen. Two, the report, and especially Gen. Powell, clearly indicated that the U.S. is closely cooperating with India to fight terrorism whose focus had shifted to South Asia, through the U.S.-India Joint Counter Terrorism Working Group and other mechanisms.

Is there a key issue driving this new U.S. policy? Quite clearly, the momentum is provided by the overarching concern about stability in Asia, and the role that India can play in generating a balance in the continent. And the belief that it is in the mutual interest of Washington and New Delhi to construct a stable order in Asia. China is a major issue, but not the only concern. Among the Republicans, there has been, for some time, growing fear that China, which is slowly but surely

emerging as a military and economic power of some standing, despite many internal problems, could threaten American interests in Asia and beyond. China's plans of rapidly modernising its armed forces, its efforts at improving its nuclear arsenal, and its disregard of the nuclear non-proliferation regime, have all led to these apprehensions. In contrast to the Clinton administration, key members of the Bush team view China more as a strategic competitor rather than as a strategic partner. While China is a key element, it is not the only one. There is recognition in Washington that partnership with a democratic, secular, militarily strong and economically prosperous India could be a force of stability and moderation in West and Central Asia as well.

Proliferation absolutists and bleeding-heart liberals, both thankfully in short supply within the core of the Bush administration, but still present in the backrooms of the State Department, the Pentagon and at Langley, could still attempt to wreck the new initiatives. They could make a determined effort to ensure that the relationship is once again held hostage to the non-proliferation issue, and to persuade the Bush administration to position itself as a peacemaker in Kashmir. If this happens, Indo-U.S. relations could go back to the bitter old days. It is vital, therefore, for New Delhi not just to respond to Mr. Bush's new Indian policy with careful thought and prudence, but also to ensure that its record on and commitment to non-proliferation is communicated clearly to Washington as well as the need for greater bilateral cooperation against proliferation threats from countries of concern. And even while New Delhi persists with the internal peace process in Kashmir, it needs to be reiterated that the continued violence in Jammu and Kashmir is symptomatic of the problems of and within Pakistan. A joint U.S.-India strategy for managing Pakistan, and restoring a modicum of stability there, is, therefore, of vital and immediate importance to address threats ranging from proliferation and terrorism to fundamentalism. Quite clearly, it is essential that no Robin Raphel in a new avatar be allowed to disrupt or disturb the brave new world of cooperation that Indo-U.S. relations seem to be moving towards.

(The writer is Director, National Security Programme, JNU.)

THE HINDU

- 5 MAY 2001

HINDUSTAN TIMES

9.12.01
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Yes, Mr Bush

9/5

THE UNCRITICAL Indian response to George W. Bush's proposal on a missile shield has underlined the distance which New Delhi has travelled in the last few years. Let alone the bad old days of the Cold War, when India's position was towards the Left of non-alignment, even the challenge to the US-led nuclear order posed by Pokhran II — and touted as such — is now evidently very much a thing of the past. Undeniably, realpolitik has much to do with the enthusiastic endorsement of the controversial US move. Ever since the US lost its need for Pakistan after the Soviet Union's demise, the Indian perception has been that the long-delayed camaraderie of the world's two largest democracies will now be a matter of reality.

To an extent, the assessment has proved correct. Propelled by Pakistan's degeneration into a hotbed of terrorism, New Delhi and Washington are far closer today than they probably ever had been, except for a brief period during the Chinese invasion when Nehru looked for American help. It is **this** new-found proximity — which to many Indians is still not quite real — which seemingly explains the latest Indian stance. Clearly, New Delhi wants to tread carefully on an issue which is so close to the new

American President's heart. The caution is perhaps considered all the more necessary because the Republicans have generally been more hard-headed in their policies than the Democrats with their penchant for moral lectures. As such, India undoubtedly expects that in matters like the lifting of sanctions and the signing of CTBT, Washington's attitude will be much closer to what is preferred by India than even during Mr Clinton's time, although the latter evidently got to like India.

Even then, while formulating India's response to the missile shield, the decision makers might have kept in mind the fact that keeping the US in good humour cannot be the cornerstone of our foreign policy. A perusal of media comments in the countries which are a part of the western alliance would have shown the kind of unease that has long been felt over the American proposal. This has now been reflected in the responses of a majority of governments which are by no means unfriendly to the US. In the midst of the widespread misgivings that have been expressed, India's strangely submissive attitude stands out all the more prominently. It has to be realised that friendship does not preclude valid criticism. Besides, ties of that nature are always between equals who may agree to differ.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

5 MAY 2001

Bush administration won't insist on signing of CTBT USA, India to resume military cooperation

DESIKAN THIRUNARAYANAPURAM
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

WASHINGTON, May 3. - After a three-year break, the USA and India will resume their military cooperation, starting with a visit to New Delhi by the chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff later this month, *The Washington Times* reported today quoting Indian and US officials.

The Indian Ambassador, Mr Lalit Mansingh, said the decision followed a visit to Washington by the Foreign Minister, Mr Jaswant Singh, in early April, which came at a time of high tension between the USA and India's regional rival, China.

The Bush administration has begun a review of Washington's South Asia policy, the newspaper said, quoting officials. In a key shift from a Clinton administration position, the Bush government will not press India to sign the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, which the Republican adminis-

tration opposes, the *Times* front-page report said.

Gen. Henry H Shelton, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, will visit India to work on "a closer relationship" between the two nations' military forces, Mr. Mansingh told the *Times*.

The Deputy Secretary of State, Mr Richard Armitage, will visit India separately this month to consult on the Bush administration plan to build a missile defence system and possibly abandon the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty.

Military cooperation between India and the USA was completely cut off after sanctions imposed following India's nuclear tests in May 1998. Reports yesterday said the Bush administration also would lift those other sanctions.

The *Times* reported Mr Mansingh as saying that the lifting of sanctions was needed to clear the way for weapons purchases and cooperation on nuclear energy and space.

"The genie can't be put back in the bottle," Mr. Mansingh said. "We have to get beyond and look at common strategic interests."

According to Mr Mansingh, if sanctions end on military and some scientific cooperation, India hopes to work on nuclear power with US companies in an effort to provide energy to its rapidly growing economy without using polluting coal.

On the military side, he said, India was interested in developing service-to-service relations, cooperation on military doctrine and training, and the co-production and sale of weapons.

India had tried previously and been denied the right to purchase Harpoon anti-ship missiles and gun-locating radars, he said.

Referring to President Bush's surprise meeting with Mr Jaswant Singh last month, Mr Mansingh praised the US leader's grasp of Indian affairs. "We were pretty impressed," he said. "He spoke fluently and did not ask aides to help him out."

He described Mr Bush as "a person who consciously downplays himself."

The revival of military ties between the USA and India comes when Washington is experiencing tensions with China. Mr Mansingh refused to say, however, that the growing cooperation with the USA was aimed at deterring China.

The *Times* reported that a US official, who confirmed the US intention to draw closer to India and start military cooperation, also refused to say it was in any way related to US squabbles with China.

"It serves no purpose to craft a security alliance directed against China," the official said.

"If you go around Asia and try to drum up an alliance against China it would defeat our goals. We want China to integrate into the world economy and become a peaceful player."

■ India justifies stand on NMD, page 8

THE STATESMAN

MAY 2001

Bush Fire

Maybe there is something that the rest of the world doesn't know, perhaps an angle that was personally conveyed to external affairs minister Jaswant Singh by US national security adviser Condoleezza Rice when she called him from Washington. Only this could explain the irrational exuberance of New Delhi's response to US President Bush's declaration that the US needs 'new concepts of deterrence' and to create these it needs to 'move beyond the constraints of the 30-year old ABM (anti-ballistic missile) treaty,' and work towards deploying a ballistic missile defence system. South Block seems completely to have missed the wood for the trees. The statement overlooks all references to Washington's decision on ballistic missile defence and the call for trashing the Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty, and uncritically endorses the US claim that it will reduce its nuclear arsenal and move away from the "prevailing nuclear orthodoxies". It ignores the fact that this will happen only after Washington has thrown the ABM into the dustbin and introduced a dangerous dynamic into the stasis that the capability of mutually assured destruction (MAD) has imposed on the nuclear weapons world. It also reveals the dangerous casualness with which the present government changes national policy. At the time of Pokhran II, India had reiterated its commitment to ridding the world of nuclear weapons. By backing the US adventure on the ballistic missile defence system, New Delhi is ensuring the opposite, since the first reaction of China will be to expand its arsenal and its second will be to set up a system of its own.

There is no doubt that today there are technologies capable of destroying a missile in flight. Over time, a system can be devised to track hostile missiles early in their flight and destroy them. But the reason that there has been opposition to such systems is that they would be dangerously destabilising for global security. There is common acceptance across the world, even among those who possess nuclear weapons, that such weapons are a necessary evil. Conventional wisdom and the experience of the past 50 years suggests that nuclear peace rests on the fragile shoulders of deterrence: In other words, if you hit me, I have the ability to hit you back. By creating the national missile defence system, this premise is sought to be undermined: Now when I hit you, I will do so with the belief that you will not be able to hit back. It does not require an expert knowledge of nuclear strategy to realise that this is a profoundly flawed and dangerous doctrine. Washington's reasoning, apparently bought by South Block, is that such systems are designed to cater for accidents and will act as a deterrent for rogue states. Those who believe that will believe anything. The thrust for the NMD comes from elements in the US establishment which were thwarted in their effort to promote the Strategic Defence Initiative, or 'Star Wars', during the Reagan administration. This 'son of Star Wars' could mutate into a global Frankenstein's monster. In that classic horror story, the creature destroyed his creator. But it's unlikely that Dubya has read Mary Shelley's cautionary fable.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

4 MAY 2001

Bush envoy will visit India to argue case for anti-missile shield

By Chidanand Rajghatta
The Times of India News Service

WASHINGTON: U.S. President George W. Bush is sending a senior cabinet official to India, among other major countries of the world, to explain the rationale behind the nuclear missile defence system he has proposed and which holds the possibility of drastically redrawing the strategic imperatives of many nations.

U.S. deputy secretary of state Richard Armitage, who replaced Strobe Talbott of the Clinton administration, has been entrusted with explaining the case for the NMD system to India, Japan and South Korea. He will be in New Delhi next week for this purpose and is expected to meet external affairs and defence minister Jaswant Singh.

Three other senior officials—deputy secretary of defence Paul Wolfowitz, deputy national security adviser Stephen Hadley and under secretary of state for political affairs Marc Grossman—will go to Europe, Russia, China and to some other American allies, like Australia, to present the emerging American view.

While New Delhi is opposed in principle to the NMD, the immediate message it can infer from the mission is that the Bush administration is living up to its word to treat India as a key power, going far beyond the evenhanded approach (between India and Pakistan) that had characterised the working of several previous administrations. No visit is scheduled to Pakistan, which will be informed about the change in U.S. policy through its embassy in Washington, officials said.

"India...is ready to sup at the table of great nations," U.S. national security adviser Condoleezza Rice had said in recent meetings, and evidently the administration is keen to prove it.

Some indication of that was already available when President Bush drew Jaswant Singh into the Oval Office during his visit here last month. The new U.S. position on nuclear missile defence was one of the subjects about which Mr Bush had spoken to

Mr Singh. "Either its my way or the highway," the President is said to have joked, using a Texan colloquialism to express his determination to push through a new security agenda that is certain to roil the world's strategic community.

Mr Bush spelt out that agenda in a landmark 16-minute speech, his first Presidential address on global security, in which he proposed the controversial new anti-missile shield. He argued that the dangers of the superpower standoff had given way to threats from smaller nuclear armed nations for whom "blackmail and terror is a way of life".

"We must seek security based on more than the grim premise that we can destroy those who seek to destroy us," Mr Bush said. "Deterrence can no longer be based solely on the threat of nuclear retaliation."

In announcing this fundamental change in policy, Mr Bush virtually rejected the guiding principles that have governed the nuclear balance between the world's nuclear rivals centering around the 1972

Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty that foreswore such developments.

But while spelling out his new vision, Mr Bush sought to bring that rival—Russia—around by indicating that he would move quickly to reduce the size of the U.S. nuclear arsenal (which stands at 7,200) without putting a number on it. He also offered the Russians the distant possibility that the two

sides might one day jointly operate a missile defence system.

New Delhi now faces the tricky task of formulating a new policy that broadly adheres to its long-standing disarmament agenda while, at the same time, recognising the changing dynamics of the situation.

Although some of the aspects of the missile shield are still in the realm of science fiction, two of the most basic tests that have failed the fundamental American premise of attacks by rogue states are the same scenario that could confront India in the future, especially if Pakistan disintegrates into smaller units.

STAR WARS

Unlike Star Wars or the space-based anti-missile systems, Bush's proposal announced on Tuesday envisages the use of already-established technology which could be based on land (such as the Patriot), ship (Aegis) or aircraft (a Boeing-747 with anti-missile laser).

Bush's NMD is designed to fob off small-scale attacks/threats in a limited area. Critics call it "scarecrow defence", unlike the grandiose Star Wars programme which was planned as a shield against the Soviet Union.

Though Bush claims it is a deterrent against blackmail by rogue states, China and Russia fear that their deterrent capabilities will be devalued.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

THE TIMES OF INDIA

- 3 MAY 2001

THURSDAY, MAY 3, 2001

AN UPBEAT NOTE IN INDO-U.S. TIES

THE ENCOURAGING SIGNALS that the Finance Minister, Mr. Yashwant Sinha, seems to have received now from his U.S. interlocutors point to the possibility of an early move by the Bush administration to scrap the economic sanctions still in place against India. The confidence exuded by Mr. Sinha amplifies the extraordinary note of optimism that the External Affairs and Defence Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, had struck after his recent talks with the U.S. President, Mr. George W. Bush, and other top officials. Both Mr. Sinha and Mr. Singh did not take the initiative to discuss the sanctions issue with their respective American interlocutors and instead left it to them to do so from their perspective. Not surprisingly, Mr. Sinha has now made the point that the U.S.' initiative "is an indication of their keen desire to be able to do away with it (the sanctions regime) as quickly as possible". New Delhi has indeed taken a consistent line that these sanctions "hurt" the U.S.' interests more than those of India. The arguably punitive U.S.' economic measures at stake were first imposed in the specific context of India's nuclear arms tests of May 1998 under the Glenn Amendment on American arms export controls as also foreign assistance and banking laws. On a parallel plane, Washington subjected Pakistan as well to an economic embargo following its own nuclear detonations. So, the two South Asian neighbours are even now seen in conjunction in the U.S.' portals of power. However, this should not at all worry India, given the fact that Pakistan, which has had the experience of being evaluated by the U.S. under the Pressler Amendment over the nuclear issue as also a followup American law, is in a somewhat different category. In any case, the U.S. has increasingly sought to treat India and Pakistan on their own respective merit or value to the American national interest.

Mr. Sinha's latest impressions about some good tidings to come confirm an incremental

trend in Indo-U.S. ties. During Mr. Singh's earlier visit to Washington, he was informed by the U.S. Defence Secretary, Mr. Donald Rumsfeld, that the Pentagon would have no reservations over any move by the State Department to set in motion a process of lifting the India-related sanctions. Around the same time early last month, the India Caucus, too, had taken steps to introduce a bill in the U.S. House of Representatives. The move, calling for an end to the sanctions, was initiated on the ground that the Indo-U.S. nexus "has become one of the most significant emerging relationships in the world". In one sense, the relatively new feel-good mood in the ties between the Governments of the two large democracies is shared on the Capitol, too. Simply put, an economic embargo can only erode, if not also stifle, the spirit of an expanding U.S.-India engagement.

In a realpolitik sense, the resolution of the sanctions issue may not fully determine the tone of New Delhi's future interaction with the U.S. The same applies to Washington's expectations of India in respect of the larger strategic questions such as nuclear non-proliferation and missile defence as also the conventional political controversies. Yet, the current move in the U.S. to evaluate the disutility of the prevalent sanctions acquires some strategic meaning, too, in the context of a reported perception in the Bush administration that India has earned the right to sit at the table of global powers. In December 1999, the U.S. Commerce Department removed from the sanctions list as many as 51 Indian entities, out of a total of nearly 300 affected Indian and Pakistani entities. The stated reason was to "focus" or rather re-focus the sanctions only on "those Indian entities" perceived to be "most directly involved in proliferation activities of concern" to Washington. Now, the question of a total embargo removal requires a new political idiom.

THE HINDU
BANGALORE
- 3 MAY 2001

ARMITAGE COMING TO BRIEF NEW DELHI

India welcomes Bush plan for cuts in n-arsenal

26/5

Indo-4
HD-1

By C. Raja Mohan

NEW DELHI, MAY 2. In an unprecedented convergence of views with the United States, India today welcomed the plans for a unilateral reduction of American nuclear forces announced by the President, Mr. George Bush, last night.

The Indian Foreign Office, in a statement issued today, hailed Mr. Bush's proposals for deep cuts in nuclear arsenals as well as in building missile defences, as "a significant and far-reaching" effort to move away from the "adversarial legacy of the Cold War".

This is probably the first time in decades that India has extended such support to the U.S. on any global nuclear issue. While much of the world was cautious in its response to Mr. Bush's controversial proposals on building a system of national missile defences, India was effusive in its welcome.

The positive Indian response appears to have been clinched by the prospect of large nuclear reductions built into the Bush initiative. Equally important is the expectation of international cooperation in developing future defensive technologies.

India hopes the reduced reliance on offensive nuclear forces promised by Mr. Bush would eventually lead the world towards a "multilateral compact that results in an elimination of all nuclear weapons globally".

The Foreign Office also pointed to the "strategic and technological inevitability" of a shift from the present world of mutual as-

sured destruction to "a cooperative, defensive transition" underpinned by smaller nuclear arsenals maintained in a reduced state of readiness.

Rice calls up Jaswant

If India's enthusiastic support to the U.S. is very rare, so is the decision by the Bush administration to reach out to India and seek its support on NMD. As part of a conscious effort to consult "friends and allies" on the controversial project, the U.S. Na-

tional Security Adviser, Ms. Condoleezza Rice, called the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, on phone today.

Asserting that the U.S. looked upon India as a friend and partner, Ms. Rice informed Mr. Singh of Mr. Bush's decision to send a personal emissary to engage India on national missile defence.

The personal envoy will be Mr. Richard Armitage, U.S. Deputy Secretary of State, who will arrive here next week to brief the Government on the Bush proposals.

The U.S. objective is to consult and discuss with India "a new framework for security and stability that reflects the world of today", the Foreign Office said. Mr. Armitage is also travelling to other Asian nations, including Japan, South Korea and Australia.

While India and the U.S. draw closer on nuclear and missile defence, the Government will also be receiving the Russian Foreign Minister, Mr. Igor Ivanov, later this week. And NMD is expected to be high on Mr. Ivanov's agenda as well.

Russia has been among the foremost critics of Mr. Bush's plans to build missile defences. Moscow has castigated Washington's plans to junk past arms control treaties. At least until now.

Bid to dispel Russian fears

In his speech on Tuesday, Mr. Bush made a special effort to soften the Russians by dispelling the impression that the U.S. wanted to gain unilateral advantage through missile defences.

Before his speech, Mr. Bush spoke with the Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin. The U.S. also appears to have suggested a probable joint development of defensive technologies with Russia.

India is pleased that Russia and America might be moving away from a confrontation on missile defences towards a constructive dialogue. The Government today noted "with appreciation the U.S. resolve to seek dialogue, consultation and cooperation with the countries concerned".

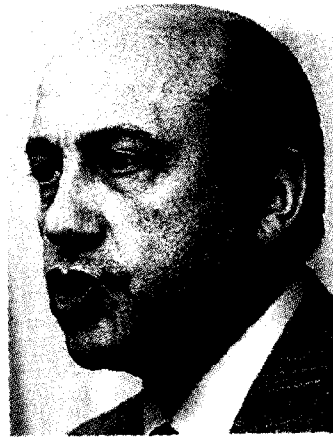
What Ivanov will seek from India

By Vladimir Radyuhin

MOSCOW, MAY 2. With Indo-Russian relations being described by both sides as "problem-free," the Russian Foreign Minister, Mr. Igor Ivanov, is likely to focus on international issues in his talks in Delhi on May 4 and 5.

The Russian foreign policy chief would certainly want to know how much the new warmth in India's relations with the U.S. may affect Delhi's ties with Moscow.

In an interview to *The Hindu* on the eve of Mr. Ivanov's visit, the chief spokesman for the Russian Foreign Ministry, Mr. Alexander Yakovenko, emphasised that for Russia, relations with India had "self-sufficient, intransigent value" and did not depend on Moscow's relations



The Russian Foreign Minister, Mr. Igor Ivanov. — AFP

with other countries. Mr. Ivanov would like a similar assurance from India.

Details on Page 13

THE HINDU

2000

US panel raps Parivar for minority violence

DESIKAN THIRUNARAYANAPURAM
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

WASHINGTON, May 1. - The increase in violence against religious minorities in India remains "alarming," and the BJP-led government is not doing enough to stem it, a US Congress-appointed commission has said.

In its second report released yesterday, the US Commission on International Religious Freedom devoted several pages to a study on India. "The violence is especially troubling because it has coincided with the increase in political influence at the national and, in some places, the state level of the Sangh Parivar," the report said.

Various human rights reports, including from the US State Department, "do not implicate the Indian government in organising or carrying out any of these violent attacks," the report says. But it adds: "However, in many of these cases, the government has failed to prosecute the individuals and organisations involved. Security forces have also failed to protect members of religious communities, even in cases where violence was likely."

■ BJP irked by US observations, page 8

The commission, which was set up by an Act of the Congress in May 1998, makes recommendations to the President, Secretary of State and the Congress. It has no authority to sanction any country for violations.

The report said the Commission held a public hearing on religious freedom in India, which included testimony from Indian nationals of various religious traditions as well as American and Indian US officials, academics, and a former senior US diplomat. The report said the Commission "made every effort to travel to India to examine the situation directly, but has not yet gained permission from the Indian government."

The panel recommended that the USA "should press India to pursue perpetrators of violent acts" and warned that "a continued decline in respect for religious freedom would present a serious obstacle in US-Indian relations."

The panel asked the US government to "press India to allow official visits from government agencies concerned with human rights, including religious freedom." It suggested that the USA allocate funds for the promotion of education on religious tolerance in India.

Sinha confident of end to US sanctions

S Rajagopalan
Washington, May 1

CANDID THAT the post-Pokhran II sanctions are hurting US interests more than India's, Finance Minister Yashwant Sinha is confident that Washington will lift the punitive measures soon.

Currently here for the IMF-World Bank spring meetings, Sinha said he had not raised the subject when he met US Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill. It was the latter who brought it up in what Sinha feels is "an indication of the US's keen desire to do away with sanctions as quickly as possible". Lifting the sanctions is the subject of an ongoing review by the State Department. Secretary of State Colin Powell instituted the review in February shortly after the Senate confirmed his appointment.

At a Press conference, Sinha was sanguine about the flow of foreign direct investment to India, despite the Enron episode, commonly perceived as a damper for prospective foreign investors.

Responding to a question, Sinha said he had informed O'Neill on his own about the moves initiated for renegotiation of the power pricing arrangement between Enron's Dabhol Power Corporation and the Maharashtra Government. "He appeared satisfied with this."

INDIA PUT ON US SUPER 301 WATCHLIST

THE US has placed India, European Union, Japan and 10 other countries on the "watchlist" of Super 301 and Special 301 provisions of its trade law for imposing "unfair" trade barriers on American products or for violation of intellectual property rights.

Detailed report on Page 13

"What India needs to do is to create conditions where fresh foreign investment will become attractive," Sinha said, adding that implementation of his Budget would give a push to investment, both domestic and foreign.

Asked about impact of slowdown in the US economy on India, he it was having "some impact" on the export front and the stock exchanges. India would be affected by any slowdown in the US and the European Union as these countries were its major export destinations.

The slowdown was having some adverse effect on the Indian bourses that moved in tandem with the Nasdaq, due to the great weightage given to tech stocks. Though the US had reported a 2 per cent growth in the first quarter, Sinha felt the outlook continued to be "disappointing".

Asked about India welcoming a new round of multilateral trade talks, Sinha said New Delhi had not been opposed to the idea. However, he made it clear that India had not diluted its stand vis-a-vis the agenda for a new round.

One of the issues affecting India's export efforts and those of other developing countries was the colossal order of agricultural subsidies in the European Union. One estimate put it at \$ 400 million. If the subsidies could be slashed under a new trade round, countries like India could benefit greatly on the farm export front.

In reply to another question, he said India would not encourage the World Bank and such other institutions to directly deal with State Governments for clearance of projects, bypassing the Centre. "Wherever we have noticed a departure from accepted practice, we have brought it to the notice of the institution concerned. I will be quite candid. We will not encourage this practice."

Sinha, who said on Sunday that the rupees' depreciation against the dollar was not a cause for concern, sought to debunk "Doomsday" pundits who have been predicting that the Indian currency will plummet to Rs 50 and below to the dollar. "I have heard this talk for three years, but nothing of the sort has happened."

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

2 MAY 2001

Sinha asks US to take on global recession

S Rajagopalan
Washington, April 29

FINANCE MINISTER Yashwant Sinha today took the battle against a possible global economic slowdown to the US doorstep, urging Washington to pursue a proactive policy that would support a transition to more sustainable growth rates.

"It's incumbent among policy-makers in the main currency areas to actively support an orderly resolution of global imbalances," he said in his address to the IMF-World Bank spring meeting, held against the backdrop of the looming slowdown. His message was also directed at the other big players: Japan and the EU.

He was critical of the denial of market access and non-trade barriers in developed countries and said their removal would help growth. Clearly enthused by the certificate from the IMF, which described India and China as "sources of stability" amid the current US-spawned slowdown, Sinha urged the G-3 countries (US, Japan and the EU) to coordinate their structural policies and correct global imbalances.

More for the road: Sinha has requested the World Bank to grant \$1-1.5 billion annually against the current \$500-600 million for the ambitious National Highway Project.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

30 APR 2001

INDIA'S GROWTH RATE STABLE: IMF CHIEF

HD-1
25/4

Sinha for better ties with U.S.

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, APRIL 28. The Union Finance Minister, Mr. Yashwant Sinha, here to attend the Spring meetings of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, met the U.S. Treasury Secretary, Mr. Paul O'Neill, on Friday. A range of issues, including the intensification of economic ties between the two countries, was discussed.

Ministers of the Group of 24 and the Group of Seven industrialised countries are to meet later today while on Sunday, the meeting of the Group of Ten, as well as the session of the IMF's International Monetary and Financial Committee, will be held. The World Bank development committee will meet on Monday.

Mr. Sinha, during the next few days, will make a statement to the International Financial and Monetary Committee and to the Development Committee of the World Bank besides participating in the meetings of the Group of 24 and the Group of 20. He is also expected to meet the World Bank president, Mr. James Wolfensohn, and the IMF managing director, Mr. Horst Kohler.

PTI, AP report:

Mr. Kohler said India's economic growth was "strong and stable" and this could go up to 8 per cent or more with more structural reforms. "I am indeed happy that growth is strong and stable in China and India," he said at a press conference.

"The issue of growth in India is, of course, an issue of implementing the structural reforms. I think the Indian Finance Minister, Mr. Yashwant Sinha, and the Government are absolutely on the right track to have defined structural reforms as the major vehicle to lift up this growth rate of 5 to 6 per cent to, maybe, 8 per cent or even more."

"More growth is needed to find a decisive breakthrough against poverty. So, I think the commitment to reforms should now be implemented into action on a broad scale and I am sure the authorities know

about that and are ambitious for that," Mr. Kohler said.

Curbs on protesters

Dozens of police patrolled around metal barricades and tactical units stood to ensure that there are no protesters when the world finance leaders meet. The barricades closed off a six-block area of downtown surrounding the separate World Bank and International Monetary Fund buildings, a minor inconvenience on blocks with no tourist attractions.

Opponents of the financial institutions obtained permits for a demonstration Sunday afternoon in two small parks across the street from the World Bank and IMF buildings. Organisers said they planned no civil disobedience that would get themselves arrested. Promising a noisy demonstration that will include puppets, music and street theater, the protesters are demanding cancellation of poor countries' debts to the institutions.

They seek an end to conditions the institutions impose along with their loans, and blame the institutions for replacing free health and education programmes with privately run operations that charge user fees to the poor. Some of the organisations have run a campaign, with some success, to convince unions, governments and private investors to boycott World Bank bonds.

At New York, activists said the debt owed by the world's poorest countries was a major barrier to fighting the AIDS pandemic and should be canceled immediately. The plea by such people as economist, Mr. Jeffrey Sachs, and rock star Bono, pointed out that the international lending organisations have a joint programme to reduce debt but have so far declined to wipe the slates clean. "It is morally reprehensible for the developed world to continue to demand repayment when we have a crisis on the continent of Africa," said Mr. Njongonkulu Ndungane, Archbishop of Cape Town, South Africa.

Package for Turkey likely: Page 8

Bush keen on India ties: Celeste

BY ASHISH KUMAR SEN

AA-3 214
San Francisco, April 26: The outgoing US ambassador to New Delhi, Mr Richard F. Celeste, is optimistic that ties between India and the United States of America will grow even closer under President George W. Bush's administration. "I think you will find the new President to be as enthusiastic about India as the President who appointed me to this job was (Mr Clinton)," said Mr Celeste, adding, "And certainly the government of India is eager to engage with him."

Ambassador Celeste made these comments before leaving India to return to his home in the midwestern state of Ohio. The Bush administration has already named his replacement, Mr Robert Blackwill, a retired career diplomat who is an expert on nuclear proliferation issues.

Saying President Bush shared former President Bill Clinton's interest and enthusiasm for India, Mr Celeste pointed out that the recent impromptu meeting between Mr Bush and external affairs and defence minister Jaswant Singh was an example of this enthusiasm.

In a review of the positive growth in US-India relations over the past few years, a *Voice of America* report noted that foreign policy analysts in both New Delhi and Washington D.C. agreed that the "quick selection" of an experienced and senior diplomat for New Delhi, at a time "when many other ambassadorial posts remain unfilled," was a sign that the Bush administration considered New Delhi to be a "foreign policy priority."

Mr Celeste was full of praise for the choice of his successor, saying, "I am sure it was their (the administration) intention, to send a positive signal in this direction... Not only the fact that they named Bob Blackwill early but that he comes from a small group of foreign policy insiders in this administration. I think that will serve not only the US interests, but also serve India well as a result."

Last month, announcing his decision to nominate Mr Blackwill to replace Mr Celeste, President Bush had said: "Bob Blackwill understands the important place India holds in my foreign policy agenda, and he will be an outstanding American ambassador to India. He will bring a wealth of expertise to the position."

THE ASIAN AGE

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A QUIETISH START

W A Indo-US relations under Bush *gfb*

TH**ERE** is now a strange quietness about Indo-US relations, especially after the noisy post-Pokhran quarrel and the equally boisterous visit by Bill Clinton, but some positive things are happening. The current disposition of foreign policy forces in Washington is different from the one that prevailed under Clinton. You have a vice-president and a defence secretary who are essentially products of the Cold War and may tend to think of India as a Russian ally, if only by reflex action. Indeed, Rumsfeld did make critical remarks about Russia supplying nuclear fuel to India, which obliged foreign minister Jaswant Singh to point out that they were covered by IAEA safeguards. There is a national security advisor who is hawkish on Russia and China, but is apparently well-disposed towards India. Secretary of State Colin Powell is perceived as being a moderate — he didn't want to go to war against Saddam Hussein — and what looks like a lack of enthusiasm may, in fact, be sobriety and impartiality, which could suit India well. The overall effect of their combined personalities on the American approach towards India may be less rhetoric, cool perusal and concrete steps. A good thing. The content of the relationship has also undergone a change. There are no insuperable obstacles in sight: the CTBT wasn't ratified by the US Congress, the document is dead, at least for the time being; sanctions, everyone agrees, will be lifted in the next six months.

Remains the question of where India stands in the new American foreign policy perspective. Jaswant Singh's visit coincided with the American spy plane incident and the necessary contrasts were immediately established by some commentators in Washington. It is, however, unlikely that the US will either effect a dramatic shift in its overall policy of engagement with China, there is too much money involved. Or that, Washington thinks India has the strength to counterbalance China from a security point of view. Besides which, the only subcontinental security issues that form a part of the US's geopolitical vision are a potential nuclear standoff between India and Pakistan, terrorism and Afghanistan. Which brings us to trade. There is the slowdown, software exports are rising, but also the US market has declined somewhat, Dabhol is going through another bitter experience due to what many American businessmen would consider renegade contractual behaviour on the part of the state government and the US trade representative has presented a rather unflattering report. These are problems that are not going to go away because of deep-rooted political and cultural reasons. India will have to wait before Americans start taking the kind of interest that the Chinese have earned for themselves in the last 20 years.

THE STATESMAN

21 APR 2001

India-US: Chaotic, can be comfortable

India-US relations have traversed more rough than smooth surfaces since the days of John Foster Dulles. Thus the recent conjunction of stars, with former US president Bill Clinton partaking of Indian hospitality while the Indian external affairs and defence minister, Mr Jaswant Singh, was being received at the White House by his successor, seemed as unlikely as it was unique.

Before the Indian establishment runs away with extravagant scenarios on the future relationship, it would be well to examine the contradictions and the new convergence. Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee has described India and the United States as "natural allies".

Yet the great goodwill Indians had for the United States, in particular for President Franklin D. Roosevelt's intercession with Britain's wartime leader Winston Churchill on India's behalf was soon to be frittered away. The great flowering of friendship Indians had hoped between President John F. Kennedy and Jawaharlal Nehru never took shape. First-hand American accounts of that era suggest that Nehru was in the waning years of his power and could not establish a rapport with the president during his visit to Washington.

India's independence almost coincided with the beginning of the Cold War and America's

grand anti-Communist crusade. Estrangement between the two countries was inevitable because Dulles insisted on India taking sides while Nehru was equally determined to retain as much autonomy as possible for a militarily weak developing country. The concept of non-alignment, construed as evil by Dulles, suited India's purposes. Besides, the Soviet Union's willingness to let India play an autonomous regional role led to a close relationship between New Delhi and Moscow.

With the fall of the Berlin Wall, the Soviet Union's disintegration and the Cold War, it was assumed that the estranged democracies, as they have been described by an American scholar, would rediscover themselves. But the US had other preoccupations in Europe and the Far East and in China, and India hardly figured on the American radar screen.

The series of nuclear tests in May 1998 and India's declaration that it was a nuclear weapon power caught American and world attention. Despite widespread condemnation around the world, President Clinton acknowledged that India had perhaps been "under-appreciated". New attempts at befriending India came towards the end of his second term culminating in a presidential visit, the first such visit in more than two decades.

The symbolism of the Clinton visit was important as also his



S. NIHAAL SINGH

India has a niche for the Republican Right in a strategic partnership with India, particularly in view of its suspicions of China, now strengthened by the crisis over the American spy plane. The substance and contours of a more substantial relationship with India, however, remain to be determined

effusiveness, but the more significant development was the series of marathon discussions between Jaswant Singh and Strobe Talbot, the No 2 man in the State Department. For the first time, the US was engaging India in a broader dialogue on security and strategic affairs.

Despite some aberrations, the new Bush administration has given a number of indications to suggest its interest in building a closer relationship. India has a niche for the Republican Right in a strategic partnership with India, particularly in view of its suspicions of China, now strengthened by the crisis over the American spy plane. The substance and contours of a more substantial relationship with India, however, remain to be determined.

US sanctions on India following

efforts to obtain foreign investment as is the stalemate over the privatisation of the Balesor unit. If India's efforts to put in place new economic reforms are delayed or subverted, an important pillar of the two countries' relationship would be damaged. One look at Sino-US trade of around \$100 billion a year and US investment of more than \$25 billion last year gives an indication of how far India has to travel.

On the positive side, the Indo-US relationship has been invigorated by the influential Indian American community, now more than a million strong, increasingly participating in the American system. Lobbying in the US is a legitimate activity and does not have the derogatory ring it does in India. Given the prosperity and pioneering work of Indian Americans, their contribution will enhance relations between the two countries.

Chaotic as India often is, Americans are generally more comfortable with the Indian, as opposed to the Chinese, political system. China wins in the trade and investment fields because its leadership is largely untrammelled by the pulls and pressures India's decision-makers are subject to. The growing raucousness of the political scene in India and the approaching election season will keep the pot simmering.

Thanks to the Jaswant Singh-Talbot dialogue, among other

factors, Americans have a better appreciation of India's security concerns and its role as a factor of regional stability. Coordination between the two countries on fighting terrorism, a common interest, provides a new platform. New Delhi believes that Washington also has a better understanding of the Kashmir problem. It was appreciative of Indian restraint during the Kargil crisis.

However, differences of approach are inevitable between the world's sole surviving superpower and a populous democracy seeking a place in the sun. India is a status quo power in one sense but wishes to change the rules of the game in the wider world — in relation to the expansion of the UN Security Council, in seeking multilateral solutions to major world problems and in giving primacy to the United Nations.

Besides, India has to place its relations with the US in the context of the changing post-Cold War world. Many nations are probing friends and foes alike for new arrangements, if not alignments. If the Bush administration is more ideological than its predecessor was, the name of the game in the world today is pragmatism. America can have no real grievance over India cultivating relations with other countries in the new circumstances.

Jaswant Singh's visit to Washington has special significance

Singing in the bush

7-12
1994

DIPLOMACY

K.P. NAYAR

Two things stand out about Jaswant Singh's visit to Washington this month, the first structured meeting between India and the new Republican administration in the United States. First, the minister completed his talks in Washington and went, not back to India but to Teheran, the one capital which still sends a shiver down the spine of every American official who is called upon to deal with it.

Many Americans would like to see Iran wiped off the face of the earth for what the Iranians have done to the US and for the way the Persians have steadfastly stood up to Uncle Sam for 22 years. At any rate, anyone who is in charge in Washington, never mind which party he or she belongs to, wants to at least see the ocean of *chadors* rolled back from Teheran's streets and the clerical robes taken off the corridors of power in the Iranian capital.

At a time when even some of the world's bigger powers are bending over backwards to curry favour with the new crop of men and women who have assumed the levers of power in Washington, not many foreign ministers would dare to go directly to Teheran after meeting those who rule the US. It does not matter whether Singh's decision to fly to Teheran from the US capital was an accident of timing — the prime minister was visiting Iran immediately thereafter — or whether his flight plans were proposed by some innocent airline booking clerk in Balmer Lawrie — the company which handles most of South Block's ticketing — who coordinated the same with his contact in the external affairs minister's office. The result was unexpected. It did not go unnoticed in Washington that the second most influential member of the Indian council of ministers after L.K. Advani had travelled from the seat of the "Great Satan" — as the Iranians still describe the US — to a "rogue state" — the US description of Iran — which is uncompromisingly inimical to the US.

The decision made those in Washington whose job it is to notice such nuances — even when they are unintended — conclude that whatever the US may expect from India, timidity cannot be on that list of expectations. There are few relationships for India in which perceptions are as important as substance, if not more. Indo-US relations count among those. In the last one year, the perception has grown among India's friends and foes alike — not to speak of an ever increasing number of Indians — that relations between the world's only superpower and New Delhi under a Bharatiya Janata Party dispensation has become unequal after the glorious defiance of US opinion by India in exploding nuclear bombs in 1998.

South Block's mealy-mouthed reaction to events in Kosovo, the articulation of its stand on National Missile Defence and the slow, but unmistakable, effort at the United Nations not to offend US sensibilities all contributed to this perception. But nothing strengthened this view

more than Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's decision last year not to go to Havana for the Group of 77 summit. The summit, which was impressive, belying the US's expectations, took place soon after Bill Clinton's presidential foray into India.

Even if the truth may well have been different, it was widely believed in India and abroad that Vajpayee had decided to

absence was that he lost a valuable opportunity to interact with a whole new generation of third world leaders in Havana, men who had come to power in various countries during the years when India was hobbling from one United Front government to another, men who had few contacts with India as heads of state or government.

By travelling to Iran from the US this



avoid Havana lest a trip there to be hugged by Fidel Castro soon after the Clinton bonhomie be misunderstood in Washington. As if to add insult to injury, Vajpayee's diplomat-in-chief, Jaswant Singh, too chose to skip Havana even though only days before the summit, Singh was in nearby Cartagena. Castro had to be satisfied with the presence of the human resources development minister, Murli Manohar Joshi, who valiantly articulated the Indian stand as best as he could in Cold War rhetoric designed to please the G-77 and Cuba's ageing communist patriarch.

It was a mistake on the part of Vajpayee not to have travelled to Havana last year. The participation of General Pervez Musharraf in the Havana summit did more to legitimize his dictatorship than all the efforts by Islamabad till then to win *de facto* recognition for the military *putsch* against Nawaz Sharif. This, at a time when India was still referring to Sharif as the "prime minister of Pakistan".

Musharraf made deep inroads into some of India's traditional constituencies at the Havana summit. But what was more regrettable about Vajpayee's

By travelling to Iran from the US, Singh dispelled the notion that New Delhi's other friendships were hostage to India's ties with Washington

month, the external affairs minister dispelled the strong and widely prevalent notion that Indo-US ties had made many of New Delhi's other friendships hostage to the bonhomie with Washington. If there is less skepticism, doubt or suspicion about South Block's initiatives involving the US in the coming months, it will be, in a large measure, because of the assuaging images of Jaswant Singh landing in Teheran straight after his talks in Washington.

It is true that many of those in India who shout "Yankee, go home" may add in a subdued tone, "But please take me with you". That does not, however, diminish the political power of that slogan and its appeal, just below the surface.

The second element which stands out about Singh's visit to Washington is the wholesome praise he sought to heap on president George W. Bush. "I was impressed by the grasp which president Bush had of the totality of Indo-US relations", Singh said at a press conference at the end of his meetings in Washington.

Least readers in India should miss the significance of this statement, it is necessary to explain what it implies in the context of today's Washington. Here is a Republican president in the White House with a short political career, very little experience of foreign policy, hardly any foreign travel to his credit, and to top it all, very poor English. Nothing upsets the Bush White House staff as the media's constant jibes about the president's poor grammar and articulation and insinuations about his inability to be on top of any situation. It does not help either that the president frankly admits that he was exercising in the gym, but his vice president, Dick Cheney, was working when there was a shooting incident in the White House the other day shortly before noon. Or that it has become public knowledge that on the president's first visit abroad — to Mexico — he went to see the mother of the Mexican president, Vicente Fox, because she stayed on a ranch and Bush could not resist staying away from a ranch, his favourite location in Texas, which he misses in Washington.

Later, Singh went further in interviews he gave in Washington: "I think a great many things that are being said about President Bush are completely untrue. He is a marvellous person". That was more than what Tony Blair, prime minister of Britain, with whom the US has a special relationship, was willing to say in defence of the president. In fact, on Blair's trip to the White House — the first full-fledged foreign visit after the Republican takeover — the British prime minister was ill at ease in public with the new US president and made it clear, perhaps unintentionally, that he neither understood nor shared Bush's jokes at their joint appearances in Washington.

Singh did not just praise president Bush. He paid a tribute to the US's ruling dynasty when he told the president that it was under the presidency of Bush Senior, between 1988 and '92, that Indo-US ties actually got off the ground. And he touched a chord in the president's heart when he said: "Now you have the opportunity to transform the relationship forever". When Singh spoke those words, Bush invited the Indian minister into the Oval office surprising his own senior staff who had kept a chair for him in the Roosevelt Room, where he was to have had a brief chat with the visitor from New Delhi.

Singh has set the stage for a season of good relations with the new administration in Washington. The rest now depends on what follow ups the people down the line on both sides can arrange to turn Singh's vision into reality.

Shadows on Indo-US ties

The outlook for Indo-US relations has turned markedly sour in the last few months, argues **Swaminathan S Anklesaria Aiyar**

EXTERNAL affairs minister Jaswant Singh has visited the United States of America, held an unscheduled meeting with President George W Bush, and returned home exuding confidence about the future of Indo-US relations. In fact, the outlook for Indo-US ties has turned markedly sour in the last few months. The reasons have nothing to do with diplomacy and everything to do with economics.

First, demand for Indian software professionals in the US has suddenly collapsed. Second, the Enron fiasco will discourage future US investment in Indian infrastructure. Third, the growing chance of a global recession may induce foreign portfolio investors to pull out of all emerging markets, including India.

The new Indian ambassador in Washington, Lalit Mansingh, said on taking charge that Indo-US ties were stronger than ever today. True, but this improvement has been based mainly on closer business relations, and above all on the prospect of India becoming a major technology partner of US. Alas, this is now in jeopardy.

At the political level, India and Pakistan hardly matter to US policymakers, whose knowledge of the region is skin-deep. Gary Ackerman of the India Caucus once joked that most members of Congress believed that Indiapakistan was a single word. Jesse Helms, head of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, once repeatedly referred to Benazir Bhutto as prime minister of India.

The nuclear explosions of 1998 brought India onto the US political radar screen. After initial US outrage and imposition of sanctions, the two countries have more or less restored normal relations. Some minor sanctions remain, and non-proliferation remains a US concern. But the Strobe Talbot-Jaswant Singh talks have repaired the diplomatic rupture, as proved by the visits of President Clinton to India and Prime Minister Vajpayee to the US.

However, the virtual end of sanctions does not mean the creation of important common ground at the political level. With the nuclear issue receding to the background, the US is once again losing political inter-

est in India. There remains significant interest in India as an economic partner, but that is precisely where recent news has been very bad.

Till recently, the US had an insatiable appetite for Indian software professionals. It expanded H1-B visas for visiting professionals from 65,000 per year to 100,000 per year and then to 195,000 per year for three years starting 2001. Indian professionals seemed set to storm many US citadels of brainpower.

But the whole technology sector in the US has collapsed in the last few months. Stock market prices have crashed, and orders for both

and renegotiation shows clearly that Indian politicians do not believe in the sanctity of contract. Some years ago, when a Chinese mayor cancelled a licence for McDonalds, there was much talk of how India had an advantage over China in the rule of law. Dabhol shows that India is as bad as China.

Bankrupt governments have reneged on power deals in countries like Indonesia and Pakistan. This is one reason why Dabhol is viewed by most foreign investors as an exception. However, changing rules midstream is equally evident in telecom. Cellular operators are

up in arms against the government's proposal to allow basic telephone companies to provide limited mobile services too. AT&T, which runs a cellular company in collaboration with the Birla and Tata groups, is likely to pull out of India altogether if limited mobility becomes official policy. Here again, the damage to India's image may be limited. Cellular companies were saved from bankruptcy when

the rules were changed to let them migrate from licence fees to revenue sharing. So they cannot expect too much sympathy when hit by a second set of changes that are disadvantageous. Still, India's attraction for FDI, never strong, will become even weaker.

US companies which once dreamed of selling goods to an Indian middle class of 250 million have burned their fingers. Investors in infrastructure have burned their fingers too. Finally, foreign portfolio investors have mostly suffered losses since entering after 1993. The Bombay Sensex today is two-thirds of its peak-1992 level. Indian software once seemed a fabulous prospect for FIIs, but stock market prices have crashed by up to 95 per cent. FIIs have been net investors despite the crash. But if a global recession now occurs, they could start pulling out.

So, the prospects for Indo-US relations have dimmed. And, unlike the nuclear stand-off, this time diplomacy cannot repair the damage.



BONNY THOMAS

hardware and software have suddenly dried up. So, far from needing fresh Indian professionals, existing Indian visa-holders are being fired in Silicon valley and returning home. Long-term software prospects are still good, though last year's euphoria will not return.

US foreign direct investment (FDI) has also suffered a blow with the Maharashtra government reneging on its deal with the Dabhol Power Corporation. This is by far the biggest foreign investment in India, worth \$2.8 billion. Maharashtra complains that the power supplied by Dabhol is much too expensive to be affordable. But foreign investors expect any country respecting the rule of law to honour contracts, taking the rough with the smooth. After all, India does not bail out foreign investors who have lost piles of money, so those who strike gold expect to keep their windfall.

The Dabhol deal has already been renegotiated once. Asking for a sec-

The Economic Times

18 APR 2001

U.S. official arrives

By C. Raja Mohan

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NEW DELHI, APRIL 17. The U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia, Mr. Alan Eastham, arrived here this evening from Pakistan for consultations with the Government.

He is expected to call on the Foreign Secretary, Ms. Chokila Iyer, tomorrow and interact with other officials in the Ministry of External Affairs. This round of Indo-U.S. talks at the functional level tomorrow follows the successful visit to the United States by the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, earlier this month.

Mr. Singh had interacted with the new administration at the highest political level. He had an unscheduled session with the U.S. President, Mr. George W. Bush, and a substantive engagement with the top guns of his national security team.

Mr. Eastham's visit would facilitate a discussion of specific milestones on the road map for a more intensive bilateral relationship that was agreed during Mr. Singh's visit. The Indo-U.S. engagement at all levels is expected to sustain the current momentum in the relationship.

Mr. Eastham is also expected to use his visit, first by an American official to the region since the Bush administration took charge in January, for an internal review of the situation in the subcontinent with the U.S. embassies in Pakistan and India.

A career diplomat and one of the leading South Asia hands at the State Department, Mr. Eastham was the political counsellor at the Embassy here in the mid-1990s and moved on to Islamabad as the Deputy Chief of the U.S. mission there. He returned to Washington as the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State in the South Asia Bureau.

THE HINDU

18 APR 2001

The Indo-U.S. engagement

By K. K. Katyal

HD-12
16/9

WASHINGTON COULD not have been unaware of the problem created for the coalition Government in New Delhi by the Tehelka expose, but did not let it cast a shadow over the first formal contacts between it and the new administration. The discussions of the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, earlier this month — in particular, the gesture of the U.S. President, Mr. George W. Bush, in providing a chance opportunity for informal talks — spoke of the importance attached to India and its role. Mr. Jaswant Singh's interaction with the U.S. Secretary of State, Gen. Colin Powell, covered a wide range of issues, but economic matters figured at greater length. It was pragmatism all the way — a significant pointer to how the Bush Administration intended to deal with India.

It becomes necessary for New Delhi, in its own interest, to reciprocate in kind. That seemed to have been India's approach in the first few days after the change of guard in Washington. India played it cool in the face of off-the-cuff statements from Washington virtually clubbing it with those regarded by the U.S. as rogue states, and objecting to Russia's cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. As regards the American air attacks on Iraq, India did express its disapproval but was far from strident. In the past, during the Clinton era, New Delhi did not evince any special interest in the talk of a strategic triangle, with Russia and China, loosely mooted from time to time. In any case, none of these countries officially blessed the idea. New Delhi made conscious efforts not to convey the impression of a gang-up.

Mr. Jaswant Singh's visit coincided with a chilly spell in U.S.-China ties. This led to speculation, seeking to invest the Washington parleys with a new significance. Even otherwise, in the past, efforts to expand India-U.S. ties were linked with the China factor, with Washington seen as seeking to build India as a counterbalance. Beijing seemed to give credence to this talk, as was evident from the fanciful stories emanating from there. Both India and the U.S. felt compelled to take note of this. Gen. Powell pointedly addressed this point — he was emphatic that the U.S. bid to strengthen relationship with India was important on its own and was not to be seen

On balance, one could take an optimistic view but Indian diplomacy will need to play a creative, imaginative role in this exciting phase.

as a reaction to Washington's dealings with any other country. (But despite the disclaimer, did the U.S. want to convey a message to China?). The Indian side, too, was keen to dispel that notion and, as such, was happy at the American clarification. As Mr. Jaswant Singh put it, India-U.S. ties were not hyphenated with relations with China or Pakistan.

The purpose of his American mission was limited — to establish contacts with key persons of the new administration at a time when its world view was evolving and to dispel possible misgivings about India which, if not corrected, could serve as a negative input. Viewed in this context, the External Affairs Minister was entitled to claim success. But it was not intended to be an occasion for in-depth, substantive discussions on any issue, be it security, non-proliferation, trade and economic relations, political matters. The reports giving details of the two sides having succeeded in reconciling their positions are, therefore, to be discounted.

The new administration reaffirmed the schedule of the institutional dialogue, worked out in the past. As a matter of fact, the meetings of the working groups — on counter-terrorism, U.N. peace-keeping operations — are due to be held in the next two months, as per the earlier time-table. The foreign office consultations, too, are to be conducted as scheduled. As was intended, this process will cover a dialogue on Asian security.

Nuclear non-proliferation (and security) figured only briefly in the Washington conversations. This is not to be taken as a sign of dilution of the U.S. commitment on this issue. The new administration may have no use for the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), but it remains firm in its resolve to check the spread of weapons of mass destruction, and specific exhortations from it may not be ruled out. The two Governments will continue their substantive dialogue on these subjects with higher-level participation from the U.S. side. Mr. Jaswant Singh, who had been talking to the Deputy Secretary of State, Mr. Strobe Talbott, in the past, will now be en-

gaged with Gen. Powell. The two of them, in any case, are to conduct structured discussions on foreign policy as envisaged in the architecture of dialogue.

When after Pokhran-II he began his talks with Mr. Talbott, Mr. Jaswant Singh was Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission. After becoming External Affairs Minister, he offered to keep up the arrangement. This concern for continuity rather than obsession with protocol went well with the U.S. State Department bureaucracy then. In the new context, Gen. Powell readily agreed to the change in the modality. While not going into details, Mr. Jaswant Singh explained the rationale of the nuclear policy — that it was anchored in India's security concerns and was not to be seen as a case of proliferation. He used the opportunity to reiterate the commitment to the moratorium on nuclear tests undertaken unilaterally.

The CTBT was one of the four issues of the inconclusive Singh-Talbott dialogue. Whether the Bush administration treats the moratorium as a *de facto* CTBT (it, in any case, takes a dim view of the treaty) and refrains from its *de jure* acceptance is to be seen. The other three issues are: India's defence posture or its plan for a minimum credible deterrent, control over export of sensitive items and stoppage of the production of fissile material.

The issue of sanctions, too, was taken up briefly at the instance of the U.S. side. To quote the State Department spokesman, "at Secretary Powell's invitation — because the Indian Foreign Minister said he does not normally raise this as one of his topics — they talked a bit about the sanctions and the effects." Mr. Jaswant Singh explained that the sanctions had not affected the economy, with the growth rate at 6 per cent and exports registering an increase.

The U.S., it was clear, intended to undertake a review of the sanctions soon and, till then, it would remain a subject of speculation. At present, the embargoes are in place in three main areas — one, high-level defence contacts, two, lendings by multilateral financial institutions such as

the IMF, and three, dealings with listed Indian entities. In the first case, a significant relaxation was evident on the occasion of Mr. Jaswant Singh's visit to the Pentagon and his talks with the Defence Secretary, Mr. Donald Rumsfeld — a guard of honour was planned though it did not materialise because of rain — and their discussions covered ways to enhance defence cooperation and interaction at various levels. The embargo on "high-level defence contacts" was far from their mind.

In the other two cases, however, any optimism will be premature. The official U.S. position is that "we have our laws and we intend to follow our laws." The domestic legislation provides both for embargo and waiver and the administration can choose. On the IMF lending to India, the U.S. had relaxed its tough line only in a few cases involving humanitarian projects. And the list of the Indian entities on which there was ban on dealings with the U.S. continued to be large.

There was a closer focus on the economic relationship in Mr. Jaswant Singh's talks with Gen. Powell. According to the U.S. State Department version, they discussed a "number of trade and investment situations," "the very positive areas where things have grown" as also "some of the investment climate issues in India that might be impediments" and "some of the specific cases of company problems, disputes that had arisen and seemed to hold back other investors." An obvious reference to bureaucratic delays and problems of the type posed by Enron. The effect of the sanctions on the trade between the two countries was considered too. The U.S. side could not but have found weight in the Indian view that the sanctions had affected the trade interests of American firms.

What is particularly significant is that the new administration affirmed the U.S. interest in India. As the National Security Adviser, Ms. Condoleezza Rice, noted, India was a factor in Asian peace and security. Also, the U.S. seemed to recognise New Delhi's role in security of the Indian ocean. As against that there are quite a few conflicts of interest, disagreements on issues regarded fundamental by the two sides. On balance, one could take an optimistic view but Indian diplomacy will need to play a creative, imaginative role in this exciting phase.

India, the U.S. and China's long shadow

Crafting an alliance

IT IS difficult for the BJP-led Government in New Delhi to see how it could have it better in the realm of India's evolving foreign policy with the United States, and that too with a new Republican administration. Washington in the last two months may have said all that New Delhi wanted to hear, and perhaps even more.

If officials in New Delhi and Indian diplomats in Washington are in the clouds, there are reasons for it. The External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, did not just walk into the White House for a meeting with the National Security Adviser, Dr. Condoleezza Rice. That meeting was happily "interrupted" by the President, Mr. George W. Bush, who then escorted Mr. Singh to the Oval Office for a 40-minute meeting on subjects ranging from the bilateral to the regional to the Kyoto Treaty. All in all, it was a 50-minute White House event, passed off in some quarters as unexpected and in others as carefully planned. Mr. Singh came away "very impressed" by the grasp Mr. Bush had of the totality of India-U.S. relations and of India's regional role.

It certainly was something more than what the White House spokesman had to say — he saw it as nothing more than an exchange of pleasantries with the main meeting of Mr. Singh being with Dr. Rice. The local media top had very little to say, either about the significance of Mr. Singh's trip or the substance of his talks with the President downwards.

The giddiness of the Indian officials stems from the thinking that the Singh-Bush meeting has been so substantive that it actually sets the parameters for future and certainly enhanced cooperation between India and the U.S. In taking Mr. Singh to the Oval Office, the President has not set a precedent for future trips of functionaries from India. Rather, there are messages in Mr. Bush's gesture, and not just to India.

Indian officials and diplomats brush aside the notion of linkages or "hype-nations" with respect to India and others in the Asia Pacific. But the fact remains that American foreign policy does not operate in a vacuum, neither is it devoid of linkages. And Republican administrations are known to run coherent foreign policy only when accompanied by ideology and a strong identification of interests. Further in this town there is nothing called a "free lunch".

It is very tempting for some to look at Mr. Singh's visit to Washington — primarily a get-acquainted session with the top batters of the Bush foreign policy team — in isolation from what has been going on in the

U.S. itself since the new Republican Administration positioned itself. And, in the realm of foreign policy, the domestic compulsion is to turn the screws on Russia and China, among others. The message being conveyed not only directly, but in indirect terms as well.

When the White House announced the intention to nominate Mr. Robert Blackwill as Ambassador to India, there was euphoria in India in the sense that the academic at Harvard University was seen as very close to the President and his National Security Adviser. More than this, it was the timing — the Bush White House had identified a top envoy for India very soon even as other top Ambassadors were yet to be named.

In all the noise over Mr. Blackwill's nomination, there are two things, generally glossed over, that need to be kept in mind: the announcement came when China's Vice-Premier, Mr. Qian Qichen, was on a visit to the U.S., and, Mr. Blackwill is more of a China-hand with little specialisation in

For all the arguments by Indian officials on the need to see Mr. Jaswant Singh's Washington visit on its own merits, there is no getting away from the Beijing angle, says Sridhar Krishnaswami.

India or South Asia. That Mr. Blackwill is a "quick reader" with a fine mind and would therefore catch on to India fast is besides the point.

The nomination of Mr. Blackwill as Ambassador to India had a message as much for New Delhi as for Beijing. And never mind the fact that the right wing Republicans see in Mr. Blackwill a "softy" on China who had tried to whittle down the party platform on the East Asian country at the time of the GOP convention in Philadelphia last year.

The same "connection" could be made for Mr. Singh's Oval Office meeting with Mr. Bush. The President, by design, would have dropped by at the meeting between Dr. Rice and Mr. Singh; but a legitimate question can be raised as to whether the President would have had such a lengthy meeting with the Indian Minister in the absence of a crisis over spy planes with China. Here again, a message to both New Delhi and Beijing.

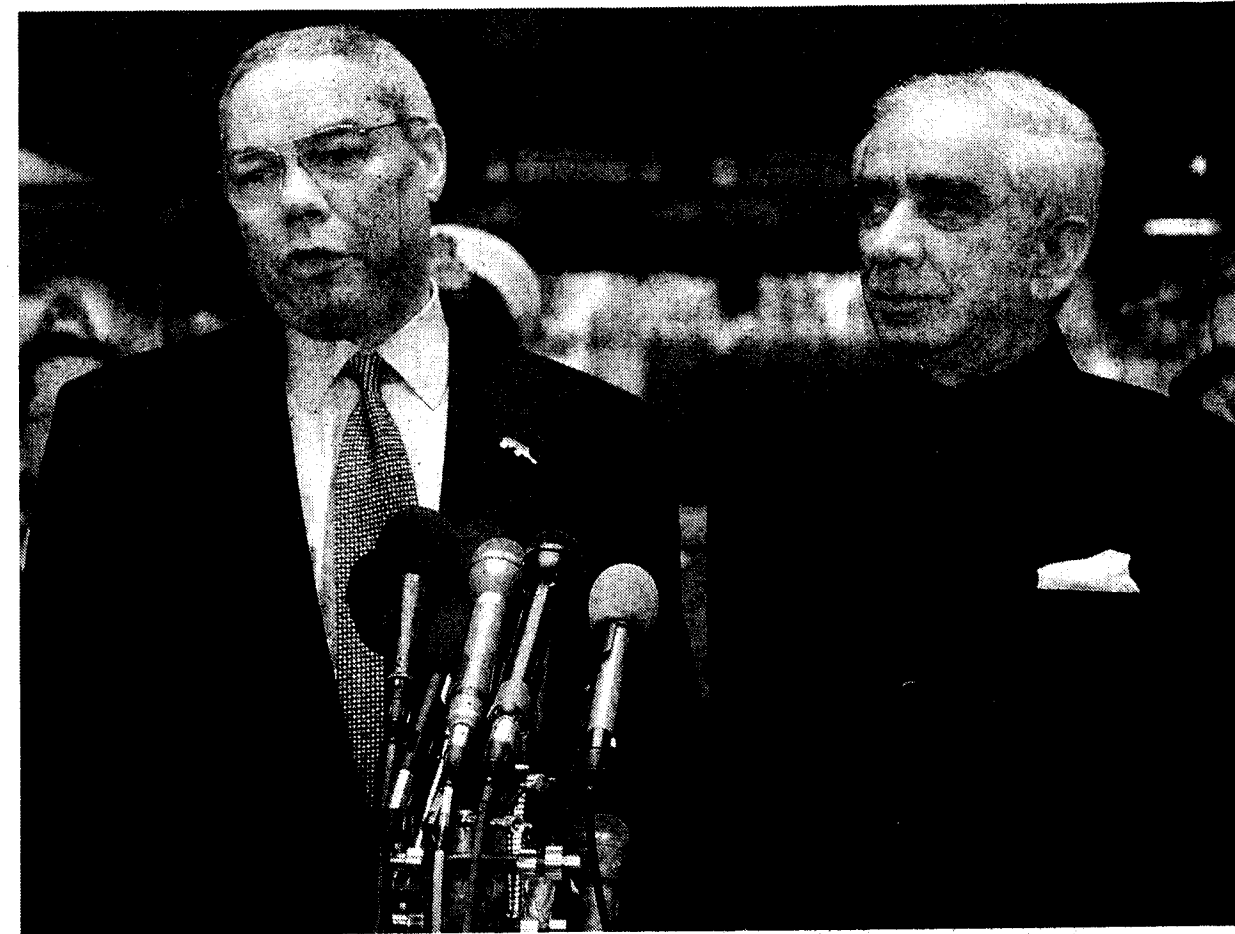
In fact, at the National Security Council level, the Bush administration had delinked South Asia from the

Near East; and has now one senior official dealing with the Asia Pacific that includes China and India. This undoubtedly has raised the profile of India, although there have been apprehensions expressed whether the State Department too is thinking along such lines.

When a Member of Congress recently expressed reservations against

Washington is going to pursue ties with India. As a matter of fact, if there was a time New Delhi was adamant that the U.S. should get away from a India-Pakistan routine, now the plea will be to stay away from the India-China aspect of America's policy with respect to India.

For all the arguments by Indian officials on the need to see Mr.



Gen. Colin Powell and Mr. Jaswant Singh... looking to firm up bilateral ties.

doing away with the South Asia bureau and merging it elsewhere — say, in the East Asia/Pacific or Central Asia — the Secretary of State, Gen. Colin Powell, clearly said that while he was not doing it in the present instance, he had not said the last word on the subject. Obviously there are many who feel that their so-called influence and importance is at stake if the South Asia Bureau in the State Department is folded up or merged.

The argument has been made by Indian diplomats that senior members of the Bush administration have pointedly said that the relationship with India stands by itself, and that there are no hyphens in the way.

Jaswant Singh's visit to the U.S. on its own merits, there is no getting away from the Beijing angle. It is not that the Bush administration is raking up old memories of the "containment" strategy and is now thinking of using India to achieve its larger strategic regional goals.

Rather it is in a deliberate strategy of somehow trying to convince Beijing that there is something "extra" in Washington's relationship with New Delhi that in the process is meant to keep China uncomfortable. It is a game but one that needs a level of sophistication on the part of India if its own larger regional and global objectives are to be served.

IN HIS brief but intense one day visit to the United States last week, the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, has set the stage for the next act in the unfolding saga of Indo-U.S. relations. He has won an agreement for a positive story line from the new cast of characters on the American side.

The big new idea is about crafting an alliance between New Delhi and Washington. However, the skeletal idea of strategic cooperation between the two nations would require a great deal of fleshing out. At the moment

signals from the new American leadership are positive. The most important signal from Washington was that it might be ready to work on one huge missing link in the expanding Indo-U.S. relations — military cooperation. Is an alliance, then, between India and the U.S. on the cards?

Two and a half years ago, following the nuclear tests of May 1998, the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, surprised his audiences in the U.S. by declaring just that. When Mr. Vajpayee went to the U.S. again, American scepticism about the idea of an alliance with India, was yielding place to a mild interest.

Unlike the Clinton Administration which focussed on global multilateralism to promote American interests, the Bush Administration is oriented toward the realpolitik of alliances. The indications during Mr. Jaswant Singh's visit are that the Bush Administration might be willing to run with the idea of a natural alliance between India and the U.S.

As Mr. Bush's National Security Adviser, Ms. Condoleezza Rice, told Mr. Singh, India has now earned its place at the table of global powers. This is a big shift from the Clinton

A lot of diplomatic work lies ahead before the idea of strategic cooperation between India and the U.S. is translated into reality, writes C. Raja Mohan.

Administration's view that perceived India in the narrow of prism of the Subcontinent.

The past policy focus in Washington was limited to issues arising out of the tensions between India and Pakistan. The U.S. may now be ready to engage India within the larger framework of a global balance of power.

An alliance implies a set of political interests between two powers. It is not difficult to define that set. Among the converging interests between India and the U.S. are: the maintenance of peace in the Indian Ocean, ensuring the free flow of oil from the Persian Gulf at reasonable prices, the safeguarding of sealanes in the region, prevention of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the preservation of a stable balance of power in Asia.

Military cooperation to pursue common interests is the other defining element of any alliance between two or more great powers. But there is hardly any between India and the U.S. Repeated attempts in the 1990s at building military

interaction after the Cold War spluttered. And after May 1998, the U.S. imposed sanctions against defence ties with India, including on high-level contacts between the two military establishments.

But in receiving Mr. Singh, who is also the Defence Minister, with full protocol at the Pentagon, the U.S. Defence Secretary, Mr. Donald Rumsfeld, was signalling that Washington will not let the sanctions come in the way of a more intensive military engagement with New Delhi.

India wants more than an interaction between the two services that has been announced; it will be looking for more strategic discussions between the two security establishments at the civilian level as well as the renewal of transfer of defence technologies from the U.S.

Meanwhile, the Indian Cabinet is likely to clear the long-delayed General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA) with the U.S. Will a prospective Indo-U.S. alliance be targeted against China? The answer is no. Mr. Singh has clarified that India wants its relationship with the U.S. to stand on its own merit. Just as New Delhi has objected to being treated as a Siamese twin of Pakistan all these years, it will not want its American connection to be predicated on the ups and downs of Sino-U.S. relations.

At any rate, despite the latest tensions, relations between Washington and Beijing are deeper and wider than either Indo-U.S. ties or the Sino-Indian equation. India is determined to improve its relations with both the U.S. and China.

Even as it seeks to expand military cooperation with the U.S., it will remain focussed on solving its many bilateral problems with China.

Neither India nor the U.S. would want to build an exclusive military alliance targeted against a third country. The new military cooperation between New Delhi and Washington will be part of a multiple engagement among all the major powers in Asia-Pacific region. In East and South East Asia it will be integral to promoting a credible balance of power within the region. In the Persian Gulf, the military interaction would be about building a coalition of regional actors and great powers to promote energy security.

Those in India looking for an Indo-U.S. alliance targeted at third countries such as China might be disappointed. Besides it is important to remember that the military engagement between the two countries is starting from a very low base. It will be a while before the two military establishments develop institutional familiarity and a strategic culture of effectively working together to achieve common objectives.

India, US draw up packed diplomatic itinerary

Saurabh Shukla *KS-9*

THE SOUTH Block and the White House are exchanging green signals about a new strategic relationship between the US and India. A packed bilateral diplomatic itinerary has been drawn up. Especially since the US ambassador, Richard Celeste, has indicated that sanctions will be tossed aside in the next three to six months.

The coming flurry of visits will firm up New Delhi's engagement with the Bush administration. While in Washington, Foreign Minister Jaswant Singh invited not only President George W. Bush to India, but also Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, Secretary of State Colin Powell and National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice. All of them accepted the invitation, though no dates have been fixed. However, a series of back and forth visits lower down the official hierarchy are expected to take the agenda forward.

From Washington, acting US Asst Secy of State for S. Asia Allan

Eastham will be in New Delhi for bilateral consultations on April 17. There will be further parleys when Foreign Secretary Chokila Iyer is in Washington in May. Iyer is expected to have detailed talks on the broader question of Asian security with her US interlocutors.

India and Washington share a common view that India's Nicobar islands are an important strategic chokepoint for Southeast Asia. The sentiment in South Block is that India needs to take a more active role in Southeast Asia. US has specifically been concerned at developments in Indonesia, especially the province of Aceh, which borders the Bay of Bengal. The US believes it can work with India in ensuring stability in the region.

In June, there will be a meeting of the Joint Working Group on Counter Terrorism. The two sides will review developments in Afghanistan following the Bamiyan incidents and formalise intelligence gathering and sharing at an advanced level. This will be followed by a bilateral meeting to discuss UN peacekeeping and UN

reforms in New York City.

Another development is the laying of the groundwork for Indo-US defence cooperation, held in abeyance following the Pokhran nuclear tests.

This is expected to make a headstart with a meeting between the US Defence Secretary and the Indian Defence Minister, an event scheduled to become an annual affair. Sources say Rumsfeld may visit India at the end of this year to start the formal defence dialogue.

It was agreed during Jaswant Singh's visit to the Pentagon that the two sides would forge an active defence relationship, built on shared security concerns. As starters, there will be a trip by the chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff to India.

The only obstacle: India's Defence Ministry has yet to officially announce the name of the Indian Chief of Defence Staff. The Ministry has already started the groundwork for visits by services chiefs for interactions with their US counterparts.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

11-10 Singhing Bush's Praise

WASHINGTON: Jaswant Singh holds the unique distinction of being the first person in 54 years to hold both the external affairs and defence portfolios in the Indian cabinet, prime ministers excluded. His recent visit to Washington was watched keenly: What kind of reception would he get from the Bush dispensation after the warm relationship India had in the final year of the Clinton presidency? Singh spoke to *Washington correspondent Chidanand Rajghatta* in his Watergate Suite overlooking the Potomac River:

Tell us first about your meeting with President Bush.

I was sitting with national security advisor Condoleezza Rice in the Roosevelt room when he looked in and said, "hello". We exchanged greetings and I gave him a letter from the prime minister. He said, "Why sit here, let's go into the Oval Office".

That wasn't part of the script, was it? What exactly did you both talk about?

Obviously, I cannot reveal privileged conversation. He walked me out to the verandah. We talked some business there. And then he said let's go in (to the Oval Office) and sit down.

What did you think of him?

He is a marvellous person. I think great many things that are being said about President Bush are completely untrue. It was a very rewarding meeting that set the tone for the rest of the events of the day. There was so many things going on in Washington that day — the vote going on in the Senate on the Tax Cut Bill, the China situation...but he still found time to talk to us.

Do you see a smooth transition from the Clinton administration to the Bush regime in Indo-US relations?

I don't just see a smooth transition, it's much more. There is clear determination on the part of President Bush and his administration to go faster and very much further forward in terms of Indo-US relations. *Now, how much is China a factor in Indo-US relations? Did you discuss that? Everyone is talking about the timing of your visit.*

The timing is purely fortuitous. As for China, it has been my constant endeavour that we in India must not allow Indo-US ties to be a hyphenated relationship. It should not be a reflection or reaction to other relationships. It should stand on its own.

What exactly is happening with Indo-US ties? How and why is it hanging so rapidly?

If you reflect on the reality of

today, with the end of Cold War, there absolutely has to be a re-evaluation of all the fixed points of assessment. The challenges to US security in today and tomorrow's world are no longer coming from the Cold War. If it is no longer the Cold War, then what are we talking about? The US has an institutionalised way of looking into these things and they are coming to the same conclusion as we have.

Which you are saying is fundamentalist extremism and terrorism.

There is now a very interesting coincidence of India's national interest and the security of the US. Therefore, the essence of statecraft, of management of relationship, is to find that confluence of national interests. The prime minister used the phrase, natural allies. How to convert this reality of interests into an alliance of interests is the task before us.

But there are many who feel Indo-US ties are still bedevilled by differences.

Of course, there are and there will be differences. But the challenge is not to let the relations

It was an honour for India.

If there is, indeed, a much better understanding and appreciation of India in the US now, what has brought this about?

We have had a lot of thoughtful discussions. For a long time, India has not been seen in its true dimensions. How many people know that Indonesia is only 65 miles from the southernmost Indian island? Or that but for PoK, Tajikistan is just 27 miles from India. That we had a border with Iran in 1947? Or that the legal tender of Kuwait till 1938 was the rupee? So when we talk about Indonesia or central Asia or the Gulf, it is because of our interest and our sphere of influence.

And you think the Americans are beginning to accept this?

These are not lessons in geopolitics. These are facts.

Is there an understanding of the Kashmir issue in the same context?

I believe there is much greater comprehension of what Kashmir is all about. It is not a territorial dispute. It is a conflict between denominational nationalism and civic nationalism. Many American

leaders now understand it. Many people ask me what have we achieved in our 8-10 rounds of talks with the US. I think we have made many of these things understood.

To come back to the president, was he clued in all these issues? What did he talk about?

It is a completely mistaken notion that he does not have a handle on things. He went straight into the core of the issue. He started by saying he has not been briefed on these issues, but he had a good grasp of the situation.

What did he start with?

Why India and the US must work together. He also spoke about the immense talent of Indians and the immense wealth he said we have given them.

Do you see a qualitative difference between the Clinton administration and the Bush presidency?

I am astonished that the president of the US chose to come in an arm-to-arm fashion to talk to India as if there wasn't another worry in the world on such a tense day with the China incident and the Senate vote.

There has been so much celebration about the previous presidency that it would seem inconceivable it could be bettered.

I have no intention of comparing the two. But I have no doubt in my mind that what happened yesterday (his meeting with Bush and three cabinet officials) is the start of a new era.



Uday Shankar

“He is a marvellous person. I think great many things that are being said about President Bush are completely untrue... There is clear determination on the part of President Bush to further Indo-US relations.”

be defined by the differences that exist.

So where do you see India in the 21st century?

We are a vast, populous, vibrant, and exuberant democracy that should play a pre-eminent part in the affairs of the world. India is India. We should present it without hesitation, but without exaggeration. Not with arrogance, but not with timidity either.

What about sanctions? What did your coming here as defence minister accomplish?

(Smiles) We are supposed to be under sanctions. There isn't supposed to be military-to-military contact. Yet India's defence minister was received by a guard of honour at the Pentagon and by the defence secretary of the United States.

But there was a lot of apprehension about your meeting with defence secretary Rumsfeld because of his reputation as a cold warrior.

Secretary Rumsfeld was not what he was. In fact the guard of honour was not a conferment of any personal distinction on me.

India, U.S. define new security agenda

By Atul Aneja

NEW DELHI, APRIL 10. In its first-ever high-level engagement with the Bush administration, India has defined a substantive agenda for strategic cooperation.

According to highly-placed sources in the Government, the recent talks between Mr. Jaswant Singh, who doubled as the External Affairs and Defence Minister, and top Bush administration officials, were premised on four key principles.

First, India saw itself as a key player which had a rightful place in influencing the global system.

Second, while it was keen on developing a positive and equal relationship with the United States, India was unwilling to compromise on its sovereignty. In other words, New Delhi was not looking for a strategic "alliance" with the U.S. Rather, it wanted to establish a durable "partnership", in which security cooperation figured prominently.

Third, India wanted the U.S. to

recognise that its strategic interests were not just focussed on the existing definition of South Asia. Washington must recognise the spread of New Delhi's strategic interests along an arc stretching from the Suez Canal to the Strait of Malacca, gateway to South East Asia. In other words, the U.S., while fulfilling its global obligations, should factor in India's aspirations and autonomy in this zone.

Fourth, while building a special relationship, India wanted Washington to understand that it would continue to source its military hardware supplies mainly from Russia, supplemented by procurements from East Europe. However, it was willing to assure the U.S. that this hardware would not be used in a manner inimical to its larger interests.

While a prominent military hardware equation was not in the offing, the two sides, nevertheless, did have a well-defined defence agenda. India is keen on expanding cooperation in the area of counter-terrorism. That means improved

intelligence sharing, especially in areas such as Afghanistan, Tibet and the South China Sea. India could benefit from the U.S. advances in satellite imagery and other surveillance techniques. Both sides could also explore the possibility of expanding cooperation in military aviation. The dialogue saw India adopting a fresh approach to address key irritants such as the nuclear question, Kashmir and Pakistan, and sought to dispel the impression that Kashmir was a possible nuclear flashpoint.

The Indian side felt that the possession of nuclear weapons alone did not necessarily threaten a nuclear war. Poor governance, political instability at home and undue external dependence could also encourage use of nuclear arms. In fact, the clash between two stable nuclear powers, the former Soviet Union and China in 1969 along the Ussuri river did not threaten a nuclear war.

The remedy for preventing a nuclear clash in South Asia therefore does not lie in the Kashmir issue,

but on ensuring that Pakistan emerged as a nation-state at peace with itself. India and the U.S., in fact, had a common agenda in encouraging democracy and economic well-being in Pakistan. A moderate democratic Islamic state was necessary and could emerge in Pakistan, if Islamabad, in its self-interest, reined in terrorism. India was also not averse to Pakistan's positive economic contribution to the South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation. Cooperation in the SAARC could also become a channel for reviving an economic relationship. On weapons of mass destruction, India's view was that chemical and biological warfare was a bigger danger than nuclear weapons. These dangers have been enhanced because the procurement of these weapons by international terrorists is easier.

Both countries have been concerned at the developments in China. Economic engagement should deepen but Beijing's evolving military capability also needs to be actively monitored.

THE HINDU

19 APR 2001

Indo-U.S. ties: pious intent alone will not do

By Inder Malhotra

An important outcome of Mr. Jaswant Singh's visit to the United States, in his rather unique capacity as Minister for both Foreign Affairs and Defence, is the two countries' joint decision to revive the practically-languished defence dialogue and cooperation between the no longer estranged democracies. In fact, this time around the two sides have resolved to raise both the level and scale of their palaver on security. For one thing, the Indian Defence Minister and the U.S. Defence Secretary are to meet at least once a year. The chairmen of the Chiefs of Staff will also exchange visits, and regular defence talks at other levels will be restarted.

Throwing politeness to the winds, one might ask: What use are these admittedly sincere resolves? For, there is absolutely no guarantee that the history of this exercise so far, disappointing to the point of being dreary, will not be repeated. Let unvarnished facts speak for themselves.

It was towards the end of the 80s, with the Cold War winding down to a halt, that the talk of Indo-U.S. cooperation in the military field first began. At that time, hardly half a dozen Indian military officers would bump into the American top brass for official business in a whole year. The comparable flow of Pakistani Generals, Admirals and Air Marshals added up to a minimum of 500.

In 1989, the National Defence University in Washington invited a delegation from New Delhi's Institute of Defence Studies and Analysis (IDSA). Senior civilian officials and military officers participated in the ostensibly Track-II activity. By the time, the two sides got together again, this time in Pune in December 1990, the mother of all wars in the Gulf was imminent and the demise of the Soviet Union not far behind. The late General Sundarji, retired by then, was at the Pune conclave and this led to

wild rumours that the Americans were "consulting him on tank warfare in tropical conditions."

By a quirk of irony, in Pakistan, the "most allied ally" of the U.S. the then Army Chief, General Aslam Beg, was publicly applauding the Iraqi President, Mr. Saddam Hussain's policy of "strategic defiance" of the mightiest nation and commending the same approach to his own government! No wonder the Americans sought India's cooperation for refuelling their Gulf-bound military aircraft and proposed cross-the-board dialogue and cooperation involving both the military men and civilians, General Kicklighter of the Pentagon, in fact, prepared a detailed plan for intensive interaction.

Nothing came of it, however, for two main

CAPITAL TALK

reasons. First, New Delhi, traditionally chary of the defence forces taking part in decision-making or diplomatic exchanges, decided that their extensive involvement with their U.S. counterparts should wait for an understanding on the future of the overall relationship between the two governments. That is where the second and the bigger obstacle came in. By then the U.S. President, Mr. Clinton, had replaced Mr. Bush Sr. in the White House and the new administration's first priority was to "first cap, then reduce over time and finally eliminate the Indian nuclear option". The Kicklighter Plan withered on the vine.

It was only in January 1995 that the then U.S. Defence Secretary, Mr. William Perry, visited Delhi and signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) envisaging regular defence talks to both engender new ideas for cooperation and to increase the scale and sophisti-

cation of the joint naval exercises that had started by then. Unfortunately, the "new beginning" also signalled why it would come to naught.

The then Prime Minister, Mr. P. V. Narasimha Rao, having decided to hold charge of defence, Mr. Perry's interlocutor was the Minister of State in the Defence Ministry, Mr. Mallikarjun. Not even his best friends would have claimed that he knew anything about matters military, leave alone the intricacies of international security relations. He, of course, must not be blamed. For educating politicians in problems of national security has never been a part of this country's political culture. The pattern in the generalist civil service is no different. Defence Secretaries, more often than not, are birds of passage, too overburdened with routine responsibilities during their woefully short tenures to acquire any expertise worth the name. Even in the Foreign Office, internationally security affairs remain the preserve of a regrettably small group.

When, shortly after Mr. Perry's visit, the first defence dialogue took place in Washington, the then Indian Defence Secretary, Mr. K. A. Nambiar, found across the table Mr. Joseph Nye, a formidable security expert. The second round of such talks fell through because of a row over the ranking of the American negotiator. And then came the Shakti series of nuclear tests. The rest, as they say, is history.

One would like to be optimistic about the future. But how can one be when Indian ethos has seen to it that the National Security Council, formed more than two years ago, hasn't met even once? To hope for productive security dialogue with the U.S. or any other country, for that matter, without the wherewithal in terms of expertise and negotiating skill is like expecting to build a comfortable home without bricks, mortar, cement and steel.

THE HINDU

11 APR 2001

Bush is determined to move faster in terms of Indo-U.S. ties: Jaswant

By Chidanand Rajghatta
The Times of India News Service

WASHINGTON: Sorry seems to be the hardest word (to say), the singer Elton John once crooned, and although the U.S. found it in itself to utter the S-word, China is still insisting on the A-word in the week-old spat between the two sides over the spy plane incident. The result: The US is now warning that if the impasse continues, it could seriously impair ties between the two countries. The warning has come from several top officials, including President Bush and secretary of state Powell. The US has been hinting at damage to trade relations (worth \$ 100 billion, mostly exports from China to US), arms to Taiwan, and other imponderables.

Speaking of imponderables though, not once has the administration publicly as much as suggested that its continuing tensions with China will lead to a deeper relationship with India. But gradually, that is now becoming an all-pervading — though unspoken thought among scholars dealing with geo-strategic studies, most of whom agree that Asia will be the theatre of action in the 21st century.

The visit this week to Washington of India's foreign and defence minister Jaswant Singh was barely noticed in the mainline media. But it definitely created a ripple in the city's weighty think-tanks. Although everyone agrees that the timing of Mr Singh's visit was fortuitous, there is a sense that his engagements, smack in the middle of the China crisis, has further embedded India in American strategic thinking.

The timing was most interesting even if it was coincidental. Clearly, India is going to be treated with greater strategic importance now, says Stephen P. Cohen, a long-time scholar on South Asian affairs, now with the Brookings Institution. Although New Delhi is coy in countenancing the idea that India is becoming part of the American power play in Asia, such concepts have

been bandied around in the highest echelons of the Bush brains trust long before the current crisis.

Among the first and most influential persons in the current dispensation to weigh in with such thoughts is Andrew Marshall, a reclusive and shadowy strategic guru who has said that by 2025 India will be far more important to US foreign policy than Russia. Mr Marshall, considered a resident Pentagon Brihaspati, believes that the US military is too focused on Europe and future challenges will come from Asia, primarily from China.

But the idea that India's relationship with the US is linked to China is galling to New Delhi, and Jaswant Singh bristled at the suggestion in an interview to *The Times of India* following his visit here. We in India must not permit our relationship with the US to be a hyphenated one. It must not be a reflection of other relationships. It must stand on its own, Mr Singh said.

In fact, Mr Singh went as far as to say the Bush administration was intent on carrying its relationship with India much further than the previous administration, independent of its China policy. The comment must be humbling to former President Clinton, who pretty much ignored New Delhi for half his term and then threw the kitchen sink in the his final year while cosying up to Beijing all the time.

"I don't see just a smooth transition (in Indo-US ties, from the previous regime)...it is much more. There is a clear determination on part of President Bush and his administration to go faster and very much further forward in terms of Indo-US relations," Jaswant Singh said in an interview in his suite at the Watergate Hotel. That seemed to be borne out by the speed with which the two sides galvanised a moribund military relationship, starting with an annual meeting of the defence ministers of the two sides and bilateral visits by the joint chiefs of staff of the two countries.

Bush offers Clinton Vision small consolation

FROM K.P. NAYAR

Washington, April 9: Even as Indian officials here and in New Delhi are ecstatic over the unscheduled and rare meeting between US President George W. Bush and foreign minister Jaswant Singh, the Republican administration here has subtly cautioned New Delhi against taking Indo-US relations too much for granted.

Although secretary of state Colin Powell acknowledged that Singh's meeting with Bush "is indicative of the importance with which we view our relationship with India", his spokesman Richard Boucher warned that the architecture of Indo-US relations may not, in future, be the same framework that former

president Bill Clinton had put in place last year along with Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

Boucher went so far as to say, "they are not scrapping it", when he was asked about the new administration's position on the framework created by Clinton and Vajpayee last year at two meetings within a span of six months.

The framework includes a "Vision Statement" signed by both which was seen by the previous administration and is still viewed by South Block as a road map for Indo-US relations in future.

Boucher said: "I don't want to say that it is strictly sort of that framework." He pointedly added that "this administration will have its own ideas about

how to proceed".

While all has gone well with Singh's visit, even exceeding expectations, it is these "own ideas" of the Republican administration that Boucher is talking about which should create nagging doubts about American objectives in Indian minds.

There is general speculation here that the gesture by Bush in inviting Singh into the Oval Office was triggered by the stalemate in US efforts to win the release of the crew of an American spy plane now in China. Hamstrung by its macho rhetoric during last year's election campaign and thereafter in office, the Republicans are now clutching at any straw to give

China a diplomatic black eye in the battle of wills over the spy plane.

Powell and other US officials told Singh that they wanted Indo-US relations to stand on its own and not in any way be linked to America's ties either with China or with Pakistan.

But the undercurrents are there for all to see. Even a Congressman as supportive of India as Ed Royce, co-chairman of the Congressional Caucus on India, could not help bring in China and the spy plane tangle in a statement commending Singh's visit.

Royce underlined the significance of the Bush-Singh meeting, but in the same breath pointed out how flawed Clinton's policy of cosyng up to China has been.

Another nagging worry about the Republican administration's "own ideas" on Indo-US ties is the

quid pro quo which Washington would demand of New Delhi for anything done in its favour.

In this, the Republican administration is certain to be quite different from its predecessor: Clinton never really asked anything of India except to be invited to make a state visit as part of the effort to fill what he called a gap in his life. Indeed, he was willing to let India have its way on many things as part of this personal objective.

But with the Republicans, it will not be the same.

Powell has already said that he envisages a peace-keeping role for India in the Indian Ocean region.

In plain language, it means that this administration expects India to answer America's calling

in the region just the way the Australians are doing it for Washington in the Indonesian archipelago and the Europeans in the Balkans.

That this White House will not give anything away to India for free was also obvious from White House spokesman Ari Fleischer's characterisation of Singh's meeting with Bush. It lacked any of the enthusiasm or jubilation with which the Indian side described the meeting.

Fleischer said: "The Indian defence and foreign minister was in the White House this morning meeting with Dr Rice (National Security Adviser). He had a brief exchange of pleasantries with the President in the Oval Office. But his meeting took place with Dr Rice."

THE TELEGRAPH

30 APR 2001

Jaswant and Friends

Jaswant Singh may have come to hold the two portfolios of defence and foreign affairs by accident, but that has given him an opportunity to explore the contours of the emerging strategic perspective of the Bush administration. More so, in view of reports that defence secretary Donald Rumsfeld has comprehensively reviewed US defence policy. On the agenda apparently are major revisions of basic strategic assumptions of the Cold War and the post-Cold War decade, including a shift in the focus of US strategic attention from Euro Atlantic to Asia-Pacific theatre. India, in other words, would need to pay close attention to the new US strategy. As it is, it was time for a reality check on the continuity of warmth in US-India relations that started to develop in the last months of the Clinton presidency. General Colin Powell's testimony to the Senate during his confirmation hearings indicated certain positive assessments of the secretary of state about India's strategic role, something unprecedented in the Indo-US history of the last five decades. All this invested Mr Jaswant Singh's visit with great significance. The optimism seems justified by what happened during the visit: President Bush dropped in on the meeting between Mr Singh and national security adviser Condoleezza Rice, escorted the Indian foreign minister to the Oval Office and accepted an invitation to visit India. This went beyond symbolism and was meant to generate a friendly climate and positive messages. A Bill to repeal the sanctions on India and Pakistan imposed in the wake of nuclear tests has been introduced in the Congress and, indeed, secretary of state Powell has indicated that a review on sanctions is in progress.

A decade after the end of the Cold War, the core issue that plagued Indo-US relations — American support to its Cold War ally, Pakistan — has lost most of its relevance and significance. While the US objective of sustaining itself as the sole superpower and ensuring an adequate technological lead over all other nations through a selective policy of technology denial will continue to be a contentious issue between Washington and New Delhi, there are also a number of international security problems on which the two countries have a large measure of mutuality of interests. International terrorism, religious extremism, security of oil lanes emerging out of West Asia, stability and progressive democratisation of the Asia-Pacific region and continuing nuclear and missile proliferation to unstable states are matters of concern to both nations. India has also dismantled most of the trade barriers with the avowed intention of expanding its trade manifold. This would mean India could become a major market for US technology, goods and services and vice versa, especially since the US has a strategic interest not being over-reliant on China in this respect. Lastly, the Indian diaspora in the US with its increasing role in the development of global leadership in science and technology, constitutes a major bridge between the two countries. Against this background a lot of homework has to be done in the Indian ministries of external affairs, defence, commerce and finance, scientific departments and above all by the National Security Council if full advantage is to be taken of the new openings.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

10 APR 2001

HQ-12
TUESDAY, APRIL 10, 2001

THE INDIA-U.S. ENGAGEMENT 10/4

WHILE THE STRATEGIC expectations of India and the U.S. about each other have not yet been delineated by either side in the latest context of the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh's surprise dialogue with the American President, Mr. George W. Bush, at the Oval Office, undeniably the warmth and the current momentum of Indo-U.S. relations appear to have been reinforced in this exchange. It is of course entirely possible that the two leaders fully explored the arguably divergent expectations of their Governments during the intensive interaction. Mr. Bush's generous and unprecedented gesture of goodwill would also have to be placed in a larger perspective that transcends the supra-protocol importance of the happy event itself. Especially relevant to this new ambience of the incremental India-U.S. engagement is the sharp contrast between Mr. Bush's emerging world view and the practised foreign policy priorities of his predecessor, Mr. Bill Clinton. Deservedly, Mr. Clinton became famous last year for breaking the vestigial Cold War-oriented mould of the U.S.-India relationship. Now, Mr. Bush and other top officials of his administration seem to have reassured Mr. Singh of the utmost importance that they too will attach to a vision of sustaining the current momentum in ties with India. Yet, the course of any upward trajectory in bilateral exchanges will largely be determined by the interplay of Mr. Bush's interpretation of the American national interest, on one side, and the Vajpayee administration's transparent proclivity, on the other front, to try and court the U.S. in a bid to confound both Pakistan and China. It is somewhat intriguing in such a complex situation that Mr. Singh has not thrown much light on the dynamics of his talks in Washington at this time.

The overwhelming impression publicly conveyed is little more than that of the Indian delegation's clearly delighted response, surpassing normative satisfaction, over Mr. Bush's perceived diplomacy of the personal touch. Some aspects of the defence-related understandings

will have to wait for a glimpse by the Vajpayee Cabinet in the first place, it is indicated. While this has evoked some interest in Pakistan, Mr. Singh's talks with the American leaders, including key officials such as Gen. Colin Powell and Mr. Donald Rumsfeld, have been characterised by the Indian camp as a categorical feel-good pointer to the future of the burgeoning equation between New Delhi and Washington. The American media briefings, in contrast, portray the picture of a robust interaction which still lacks the pulsating aura of a defining bond.

A quick reality check shows that the intensifying relationship needs to be nursed by statesmanship and courage of conviction on both sides. A good sign of course is that the two indicate that there is no move to swerve from the Vision Statement and dialogue architecture as agreed upon last year. There is also nothing new on record now to suggest that the nuclear proliferation issue and the related sanctions have either deepened or narrowed the bilateral differences. Moreover, it appears that Mr. Bush enlarged the scope of his discussion with Mr. Singh to cover global issues at this sensitive juncture in Sino-American ties. A fundamental issue, though, is whether Mr. Bush really wants India to play a U.S.-friendly role within the parameters of his evolving strategic calculus. At the other end of the spectrum, an intelligent question is whether the Vajpayee administration should at all expect Washington to provide some strategic solace in regard to what must be New Delhi's independent dealings with Islamabad and Beijing. Surely, New Delhi does not possess at this stage strong strategic credentials as a possible counterpoise to Beijing or as a potentially influential factor in the muddled U.S.-Russia equation. In a sense, therefore, New Delhi will do well to strive for freedom of strategic action in its foreign policy. It remains to be seen whether its current effort at befriending Iran with a perceived new fervour is a conscious move in this direction.

THE HINDU

10 APR 2001

India, U.S. agree on defence cooperation

By Sridhar Krishnaswami
WASHINGTON, APRIL 8. The visiting Minister for External Affairs and Defence, Mr. Jaswant Singh, and the U.S. Secretary of State, Gen. Colin Powell, in addition to proliferation, trade and regional issues also discussed Indonesia, Sri Lanka and "quite a lot of economics" as it pertained to bilateral relations, the State Department spokesman, Mr. Richard Boucher, has said.

Talking to reporters after the working lunch meeting, preceded by a private interaction, between the two leaders here on Friday, Mr. Boucher said the issue of sanctions and its effects were discussed in general terms.

Mr. Singh pointed out that in the last three years India had not broached the subject of sanctions but said Gen. Powell had asked for his views. "I told him that I do not find the sanctions have served the national interests of either India or the United States; that it is for them to decide what to do. The entire sanctions regime, to our mind, is counter-productive, both economically and otherwise."

Besides the meetings at the White House and at the State Department, a critical component of Mr. Singh's agenda was his interaction with the Defence Secretary, Mr. Donald Rumsfeld, at the Pentagon. A Guard of Honour, which was to have preceded the meeting, did not take place because of the rain, and Mr. Singh said he missed it. The substantive discussions with Mr. Rumsfeld, however, seemed to have more than made up.

By all accounts the discussion was extremely cordial, perhaps something not witnessed in bilateral relations for a very long time. Mr. Rumsfeld had met the Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister and National Security Adviser, Mr. Brajesh Mishra, in Munich recently during a multilateral conference, but the atmosphere at the Pentagon on Friday was said to have been quite different.

It was the first meeting between a Defence Minister and a U.S. Defence Secretary since 1992 and Mr. Singh later made it clear to mediapersons that his visit to the Pentagon was not simply an "appendage" of the meeting at the State

Department. It "stands on its own", he said. Mr. Rumsfeld, a known hawk in the Bush administration had been sharply critical of the Russia-India cooperation in the nuclear sector; and not too long ago had clubbed India in the "rogue state" category. But during his meeting with Mr. Singh, the Defence Secretary pointed out that while the lifting of sanctions was the domain of the State Department, there would be no objections from the Pentagon as far as India was concerned.

In terms of enhanced defence cooperation between the two countries, Mr. Singh mentioned three specifics agreed upon: first, that there would be a dialogue between the U.S. Defence Secretary and the Defence Minister similar to the one between the State Department and the External Affairs Ministry.

There would also be an exchange of visits between the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff of the U.S. and the Joint Chiefs of Staff of India. Other agreements had also been worked out, details of which would be released after Mr. Singh's consultations with the Prime Minister and Cabinet colleagues.

JASWANT CONVEYS NEW DELHI'S STAND ON N-ISSUES

Bush to work closely with India

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, APRIL 7. The Minister of External Affairs and Defence, Mr. Jaswant Singh, has said he is more than satisfied with the talks he has had in Washington and doubted if anything more could have been achieved given what took place during his interactions with senior members of the Republican administration including the U.S. President, Mr. George W. Bush.

The meeting in the White House and with the President in the Oval Office on Friday was undoubtedly the high point of Mr. Singh's visit. The important thing was not the President dropping by during Mr. Singh's conversation with the National Security Adviser, Dr. Condoleezza Rice. It was in his escorting Mr. Singh to the Oval Office and not just for "pleasantries", an extremely rare occasion for a Foreign Minister.

The two leaders discussed a range of issues including the recent standoff between the U.S. and China, the Kyoto Protocol and the National Missile Defence system. The President talked about the environment and the Kyoto Treaty as he wanted India to understand where he was coming from. "I was very impressed with the grasp Mr. Bush had of the totality of Indo-U.S. relations as also regional and other aspects. And I was also impressed with his sincere commitment to furthering Indo-U.S. rela-

tions," Mr. Singh later told reporters. In spite of domestic and international compulsions the President had made it a point to engage him in a serious dialogue.



The External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, with the U.S. President, Mr. George W. Bush, at the White House in Washington, on Friday. — PTI

This was indicative of the importance the Bush administration attaches to India, Mr. Singh said.

Significant interaction

On the meeting with Mr. Bush, the Minister said, the "gesture in itself emphasises or underlines the fact that he attaches importance to India," not just as a factor for

stability in the region but as a partner with whom the U.S. can engage on a range of issues.

Mr. Singh told the President that "his father, President Bush Sr., had initiated this movement of enhanced Indo-U.S. relations and it is only befitting that now under his stewardship the relationship ought to get greater depth, greater coverage and greater content." Mr. Singh said the proliferation issue came up during the talks, and the message conveyed was that India was not a "proliferationist". It was in an "extremely complex security environment" and certain steps had to be taken to maintain its security needs.

The Government in New Delhi remained committed for a national consensus. The Minister reiterated the unilateral and voluntary moratorium and that India would not stand in the way of the entry into force of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. He also said that while India would take into account international concerns, it would not be at the cost of "national interests". There was no hiding the extreme satisfaction — probably even giddiness — of how Friday's agenda with the Bush administration had worked out, either by the Minister or the senior Indian officials who participated in the discussions.

It was pointed out that for the first time Washington was seriously looking at India

beyond the immediate subcontinent and at the global scale; and that the President had clearly said his administration would be happy to work closely with India as there was a lot of common ground.

Dialogue on Kashmir

On Kashmir the State Department spokesman, Mr. Richard Boucher, said the Secretary of State, Gen. Colin Powell, had asked Mr. Singh to explain the current situation with a view to gaining an understanding of the developments. "We encourage all groups to take advantage of the offer (of talks) and enter into talks to reduce violence, to foster a process of dialogue."

Gen. Powell, describing it as a "very, very fine meeting", said a lot had been done in recent years. "We look forward to building on all that has been accomplished."

The Bush administration was not for scrapping the dialogue architecture as worked out by the Clinton administration but would have its own ideas on how to go about it. "I am sure this administration will have its own ideas about how to proceed," Mr. Boucher said.

At a press briefing later Mr. Singh said he and Gen. Powell had decided that the architecture of dialogue put in place would be fully implemented.

Defence tie-up: Page 8

Protocol putsch sees Bush hijack Jaswant to White House office

Bush's out-of-ordinary meeting with Singh sets Indian hearts aflutter

By Chidanand Rajghatta

The Times of India News Service

WASHINGTON: The Indian establishment was preening itself after a fabulous Friday when its first overture to the new Bush administration was met with an equally engaging response highlighted by President George Bush's out-of-ordinary meeting with external affairs minister Jaswant Singh.

Mr Singh was scheduled to meet national security advisor Condoleezza Rice, secretary of state Colin Powell and defence secretary Donald Rumsfeld in course of the day. But the very first meeting was supplanted by a protocol putsch that saw Mr Bush hijack Mr Singh to the White House Oval Office for a half-hour chat.

Mr Singh and the Indian and American ambassadors who were at the meeting declined to publicly give precise details of what transpired at the conference. But from all accounts, Mr Bush indicated that he intended to build on, if not surpass, the previous administrations positive moves on India.

Mr Bush, whose world travels are very limited, also accepted an invitation to visit India contained in a letter to him from Prime Minister A. B. Vajpayee that Mr Singh

handed over to him. "The President's gesture (of inviting him for talks in the Oval Office) is an honour for India and for me. The meeting showed that he attaches the highest importance to India not just as a region, but as a factor of stability and peace. I go back more than satisfied with the meetings," a beaming Mr Singh told journalists at a briefing that followed the eventful day.

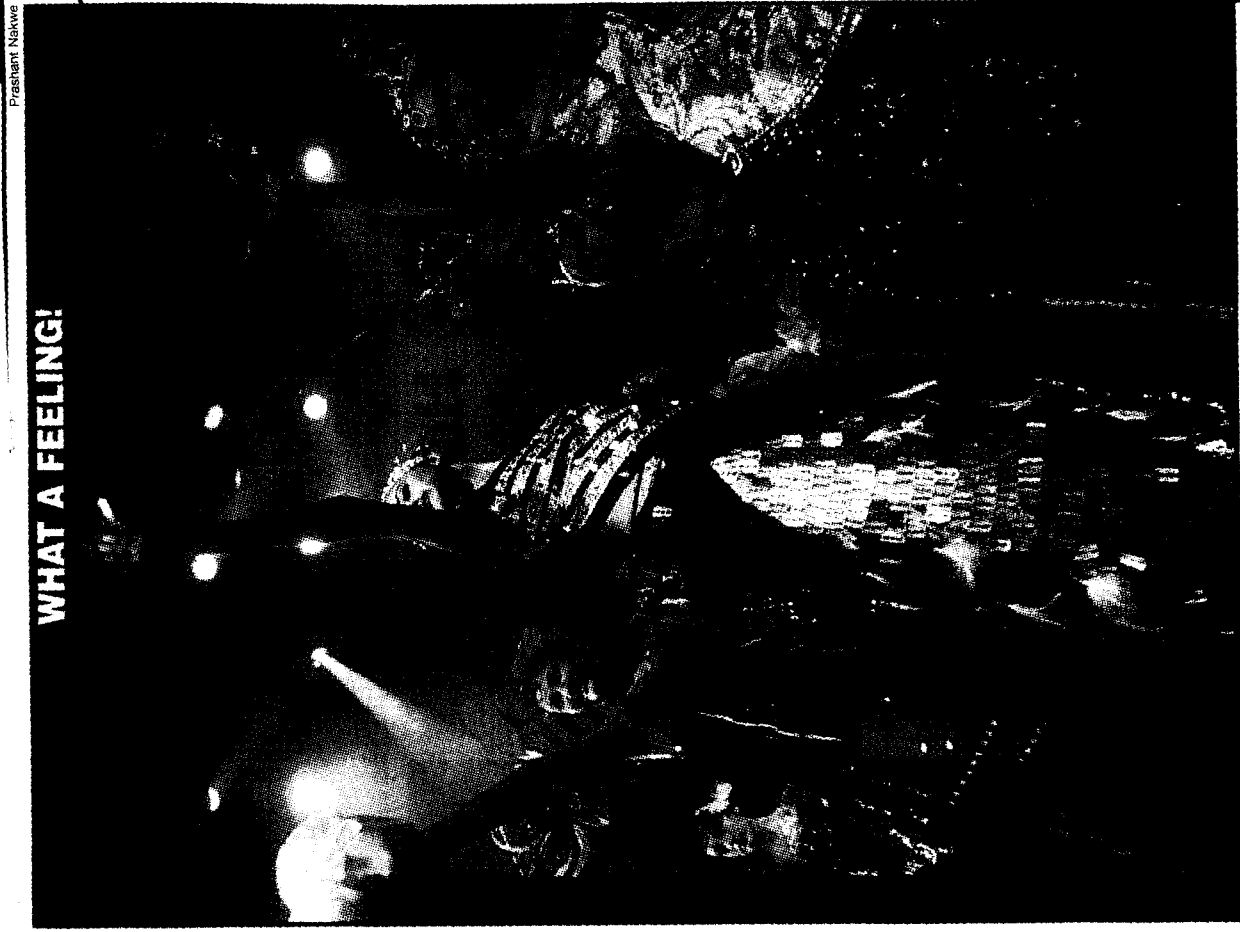
Mr Singh said he was very impressed by the grasp Mr Bush had of the totality of Indo-U.S. relations and of India's role in the region. "It was very easy flowing meeting and the President was very, very engaging," ambassador Man Singh said.

Word of the President's gesture—on a day when the domestic policy folks were busy with the tax cut vote and the foreign policy

wonks were busy with China—spread quickly in the South Asian circuit. The big question was whether Mr Bush did that little extra to send a message to China. Some people thought so. "The fact that the President took time out of his very busy schedule while we are in the midst of a standoff with China, underscores just how valuable the U.S. relationship with India is," Republican Congressman Ed Royce said.



External affairs minister Jaswant Singh with U.S. President George W. Bush at the White House in Washington on Friday



WHAT A FEELING!

CUTTING EDGE: Young models in Raghavendra Rathore costumes perform at 'Yes! The Spiry of Triumph', a dance theatre extravaganza which opened at the Jamshed Bhabha Opera House in Mumbai on Saturday night. (Report on Page 3)

Impromptu visit paves way for important talks

BY ASHISH KUMAR SEN

San Francisco, April 7: India's external affairs minister Jaswant Singh, had an unexpected host in US President George W. Bush on Friday morning.

The minister was closeted in a scheduled meeting with national security advisor Condoleezza Rice at the White House complex when Mr Bush dropped by and invited him to the Oval Office where the two then spent almost half an hour together.

Mr Bush's warm and unexpected gesture, at a time when his administration is wrestling with the Chinese to secure the return of a stranded US Navy reconnaissance plane and its crew, was interpreted by many analysts as an indicator of his administration's eagerness to engage India as a strategic partner in Asia, and perhaps also use this as a counterbalance to China's hegemony in the region.

Mr Singh later acknowledged that President Bush had, through his actions, proved that he held India in high esteem and wanted to build strong relations with it. "I am honoured that President Bush himself was gracious enough to find time to meet me and spend time with me," Mr Singh said. During their meeting, Mr Singh presented Mr Bush with an invitation from Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee to visit India.

Mr Jaswant Singh, scheduled to return to India on Sunday, was in

Washington D.C. at the invitation of US secretary of state Colin Powell. His was the first visit to the US by a high-ranking Indian official since the new administration took over on January 20.

Principal secretary to Prime Minister Vajpayee and national security adviser Brajesh Mishra, had met US defence secretary Donald Rumsfeld at a meeting of national security advisers in Munich in February.

Following his impromptu meeting with Mr Bush, Mr Singh met Mr Powell and engaged in a discussion that "covered economic issues, proliferation issues, trade issues, the issues applicable to the region."

Describing the meeting as "a very, very fine" one, Mr Powell said, "I think the fact that he (Mr Singh) met with President Bush, with National Security Advisor Rice, the conversations we have had... is indicative of the importance with which we view our relationship with India."

Though the Indians have not been too keen to raise the issue of sanctions in dialogues with US officials, Mr Powell himself raised and discussed the subject in "general terms" and was keen to know India's views on them.

Mr Singh told Mr Powell that sanctions imposed on India after the May 1998 nuclear tests were in neither India's nor the US' interest and instead only proved counter-productive. He also explained Indi-



TALK TIME: External affairs minister Jaswant Singh looks on as US secretary of state Colin Powell talks to the media outside the state department in Washington D.C. on Friday. (AP)

US praises India peace move

Washington, April 7: The United States has welcomed the latest Indian peace initiative to hold political dialogue with Kashmiris and pledged to encourage all groups to take advantage of the offer even as New Delhi urged Washington not to treat the Kashmir issue as a "territorial dispute."

External affairs minister Jaswant Singh, who had an unscheduled 40-minute meeting on Friday with US President George W. Bush at the Oval Office indicative of his administration's desire to carry forward the momentum in Indo-US relations, made it clear to Washington that New Delhi was opposed to trilateral talks involving Pakistan on the Kashmir issue. In the first high-level interaction with the Bush administration, Mr Singh also had a 90-minute meeting with secretary of state Colin Powell and held separate talks with national security advisor Condoleezza Rice and defence secretary Donald Rumsfeld during which post-Pokhran US sanctions, non-proliferation came up for discussions. (PTI)

a's stand on nonproliferation and made it clear that India would not stand in the way of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.

"They did talk about sanctions and to what extent that modified or held back some of this (economic) potential," state department spokesperson Richard Boucher said. "I think the Indian government is quite aware that we have our laws and we intend to follow our laws." Mr Powell, who has in the past made it clear that he is not in favour of most sanctions, has ordered a review of these. Defence secretary Donald Rumsfeld, however, backed by undersecretary of state-designate for security affairs John Bolton, is said to be keen to keep the sanctions in place, while Ms Rice favours ending them.

During the course of the meeting, Mr Powell raised the subject of Kashmir, and was given a rundown on this by Mr Singh. Mr Boucher said, "I would say the secretary asked the foreign minister to explain the current situation as he saw it, and to gain his understanding of current developments." He said the administration welcomed India's recent offer of talks on the issue, and added that Washington would encourage "all groups to take advantage of the offer and to enter into talks to reduce violence, to foster a process of dialogue."

Mr Boucher said while the Bush administration was not scrapping the Vision Statement signed last year by Mr Vajpayee and former

US President Bill Clinton, "I don't want to say that it is strictly sort of that framework. I'm sure that this administration will have its own ideas about how to proceed." The state department spokesperson said the meeting covered "any of the number of factors" that might affect the relationship in the economic area because "we saw not only a very healthy economic relationship, but one that had still a lot of potential to grow much, much farther."

The present diplomatic stalemate with China was also brought up during the course of the meeting, but, Mr Boucher said, "there is nothing in particular that we're asking the Indians to do in this situation." Acknowledging that a lot had been done in recent years in US-India relations, Mr Powell said the Bush administration was looking forward to "building on all that has been accomplished." Endorsing Mr Powell's optimism, Mr Singh described his series of meetings and discussions as "fruitful and very rewarding." The secretary of state assured the visiting minister that the Bush administration would be engaging the Indian government "at every level in order to make sure that we keep moving this relationship in a very positive and powerful direction."

Besides his meetings with Mr Bush, Mr Powell and Ms Rice, Mr Singh also met secretary of defence Donald Rumsfeld later in the day.

Bush plays India card with China

BY ASHISH KUMAR SEN

San Francisco, April 7: Friday morning's unscheduled meeting between US President George W. Bush and India's external affairs minister Jaswant Singh assumes greater significance in the backdrop of a diplomatic tussle playing out between Washington D.C. and Beijing over the return of a US Navy reconnaissance plane and its crew who were forced to land in China following a mid-air collision with a Chinese jet.

Through Friday's meeting Washington managed to send a signal to the Chinese that the Bush administration would place an increased strategic importance on India hereafter.

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PAGE 2

■ Impromptu visit paves way for important talks

THE ASIAN AGE

8 APR 2001

Bush plays India card with China in diplomatic row over US Navy spy plane

Continued from Page 1
In a "drop-by" described by analysts as a very routine procedure, President Bush looked in on a meeting between Mr Singh and his national security adviser Condoleezza Rice at the White House on Friday. What was unusual was his subsequent gesture — an invitation to the visiting minister to come over to the Oval Office for a meeting. After the meeting, Mr Singh emerged saying he was "honoured that President Bush himself was gracious enough to find time to meet me and spend time with me."

A "drop-by" is a routine procedure used by the White House to accommodate and accord special significance to visitors not within the range of protocol. The Dalai Lama has been the biggest

beneficiary of such visits. In fact, it was for the first time that Washington devised this backdoor method of arranging meetings with the President. Meanwhile, South Asia analysts, congressional analysts and other sources told *The Asian Age* that Friday's meeting was "a direct gift from the Chinese." "Although there is every reason for the Indian side to be jubilant that their man hit the jackpot today, the fact is that the US administration was also a great beneficiary of Mr Jaswant Singh's meeting with the President," an analyst said. The Bush administration has been grappling with the Chinese leadership, demanding the return of a US Navy plane. "The Chinese have been jerking the Americans to the extent that the superpower has been

unable to do anything to show the world that it has friends in that region," said a Washington D.C.-based congressional source. "Today, by extending a gracious welcome to Mr Singh, what the Bush administration has done is tell its own domestic audience 'Look we may not have the best relations with the Chinese, but we have friends like India — an equally large country but one which is a democracy.'" Friday's meeting, therefore, is not only a substantial gain for the Indians, but of equal significance to the Americans. In the US this is referred to as a "win-win" situation. "US-India ties should have been as good several decades ago," said a long-time observer of Indo-US diplomacy. He agreed that the Chinese situation had precipitated

the bonhomie. Others underscored the shrewdness of White House political operatives who had not ignored two facts — "former US President Bill Clinton is visiting India at present and the Republican Party has much to do to reach out to the Indian-American community." "By this single gesture, Mr Bush has gained in many ways. But don't forget this meeting was delivered by the two Cs — China and Clinton," a source said. "It is a masterstroke of luck that what could have been a major distraction has actually proven to be fortuitous. However, one has to wait and study the substance of Mr Bush's meeting with Mr Singh." Meanwhile, China expressed hope that the warming relations between India and the US would be

"conductive" to peace and stability in Asia. Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Sun Yuxi said, "We hope that such relations can be conducive to the peace and stability in Asia." Back in Washington D.C., secretary of state Colin Powell and Mr Singh touched upon the present deadlock with the Chinese. State department spokesperson Richard Boucher confirmed that China had come up but added, "There was nothing particular that we're asking the Indians to do in this situation."

Mr Selig S. Harrison, a senior fellow of the Century Foundation and a senior scholar of the Woodrow Wilson International Center, wrote in the *Washington Times*: "The symbolism is striking. In the same week that tensions between the

US and China escalate, India's second-ranking leader arrives in Washington as a counterweight to Chinese power in Asia. "American policy should be based on a tacit recognition that a multipolar Asian balance of power in which India possesses a minimum nuclear deterrent will be more stable than one in which China enjoys a nuclear monopoly," he added. He noted that the US administration had been in "disarray" over its policy on India, with the President's national security team at odds over whether to treat New Delhi as a friend or foe.

California Republican Congressman Ed Royce said President Bush's meeting with Mr Jaswant Singh signalled the administration's clear commitment to the US-India relationship.

"The fact that the President took time out of his very busy schedule underscores just how valuable the US relationship with India is," Mr Royce said, adding, "The spy plane incident has made it clear that former President Clinton's conception of China as a 'strategic partner' was misguided. The Bush administration understands that it is critical for the US to strengthen our strategic relationship with India." However, Mr Nadadur Vardhan, a Los Angeles-based Democrat and chairman of the Indo-American Vision Foundation, cautioned, "The Republicans are trying to use India to bully China. Mr Bush is trying to send a message to China — 'If you play these games with us we will align with India.'"

THE ASIAN AGE

18 APR 2001

ASIA BUSH'S GIVE PUS

Pan-Asian powwow at Oval Office



Jaswant Singh with US defence secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld at the Pentagon. (AFP)

FROM K.P. NAYAR

Washington, April 7: Living up to secretary of state Colin Powell's vision of a pan-Asian role for India, President George W. Bush yesterday had a comprehensive exchange of views with external affairs and defence minister Jaswant Singh on the "Asian scene, from Indonesia to Central Asia", during a 40-minute unscheduled meeting in the White House Oval Office.

Bush surprised the Indian minister and his delegation by casually walking into a meeting they were having in one wing of the White House with national security adviser Condoleezza Rice.

The president then invited the entire Indian delegation to the Oval Office for a

discussion. Kings, presidents, prime ministers and foreign ministers from all over the world have been trooping to Washington to get acquainted with the new Republican administration here, but this is only the second time that Bush has had an unscheduled meeting with a foreign visitor.

Bush similarly walked into a meeting between Rice and Israel's foreign minister Shimon Peres and observers here agreed that the president's gesture in equating India with Israel — one of America's closest allies — was an endorsement by the new administration of the upswing witnessed in Indo-US relations last year.

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Jaswant tutors Bush on Asia

FROM PAGE 1

Although White House was understandably grudging in its comments about the unscheduled meeting for protocol reasons, the Indians were jubilant.

"It is evident from the meeting with President Bush in the Oval Office that he places the highest importance on India in the region," the Indian minister said at a press conference at the end of his marathon meetings here.

"The momentum that was imparted to Indo-US relations is not simply fully endorsed by the Bush administration, but, in fact, it is given considerably greater importance," he said.

Officials present at the meeting said Bush asked Singh to brief him on the situation in Asia "from

Indonesia to Central Asia". The Indian minister gave a comprehensive assessment of Asia through Indian eyes.

The exchange about Asia is significant for two reasons. During his confirmation hearings in the Senate, the new US secretary of state had said he witnessed a peace-keeping role for India in the Indian Ocean region, for the first time going beyond the South Asian straitjacket into which successive American administrations had confined India.

Secondly, the US is currently caught up in a tense standoff with China over an American spy plane, the first major foreign policy challenge for the Bush White House. Any Indian input on Asia could be valuable in formulating the new administration's China

policy which is beginning to have shades of a new Cold War following the standoff with Beijing.

Significantly, the Chinese foreign ministry yesterday commented on Singh's visit to Washington, hoping it would contribute to stability in Asia. It is unusual for Beijing to comment on a mere foreign minister's visit to a third country.

Singh himself expressed satisfaction at his press conference that the standoff between China and the US was moving towards a solution and praised the restraint and statesmanship shown by the Bush administration in dealing with the crisis.

The biggest gains for New Delhi, though, were at Singh's talks with the powerful defence secretary, Donald Rumsfeld, a

Cold War hawk who has been making discordant noises about India in the context of global non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

Rumsfeld and Singh agreed that the defence ministers of India and the US should have regular meetings similar to the ones now being held between foreign ministers of the two countries.

Besides, the chiefs of staff of the defence forces of the two countries will exchange visits. There have been other agreements, but Singh refused to disclose these until he had reported to Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and got the Cabinet's endorsement for them.

Speculation here centred on a possible resumption of military ties between India and the US,

which were suspended following the nuclear tests in May 1998.

Singh also secured a commitment from Rumsfeld that should the state department move forward to scrap sanctions imposed on India after Pokhran II, the Pentagon would not stand in the way.

But on the prickly issue of sanctions itself, there appeared to have been no headway. Powell brought up the subject at his meeting with Singh, who told the secretary of state that the sanctions do not serve the interests of either India or the US.

"To my mind, this (sanctions) was counter-productive both economically and otherwise," Singh told Powell and added at his press conference that "it was for them (US) to decide what to do with the entire sanctions regime".

10 APR 2001

Clinton goes that extra mile in Mother's city

HT Correspondent
Kolkata, April 7

TRUST CLINTON the charmer. No US President, not even those out of office, has ever walked the streets of Kolkata before. But then, no US President — past or present — ever tried the namashkar Kolkata, aami bhalo aachi pick-up line either.

The informal demeanour, the captivating smile, and above all the repeated attempts to break out of the tight security cordon to get a feel of the City of Joy and mingle with the crowd: the former US President was at his enchanting best.

Clinton repeatedly slowed his cavalcade to wave at the crowds thronging the E M Bypass, walked a few yards outside Shishu Bhawan and made life hell for his securitymen as he stepped out of his limousine at Park Street and Mullickbazar.

Clinton's aircraft — leased from Indian Airlines — touched down at the tarmac 15 minutes late. No minister was present to receive him as he was on a 'private visit'.

Chief Secretary Manish Gupta made up for them. The motorcade was greeted by hundreds as it made way through E M Bypass to Mother House on A J C Bose Road.

Greeted by Missionaries of Charity Superior-General Sister Nirmala, he spent 40 minutes at Mother House. His next stop was Shishu Bhawan. By then, the crowd had swelled so much that police had a tough time keeping them behind the hastily-made bamboo barricades. Even the rising mercury failed to ebb their enthusiasm.

Stepping out an hour later, Clinton had more surprises up his sleeve. He walked a few yards, smiled and waved at the crowd. Even quenched an eager journalist's thirst for some soundbite.

"I will again visit Kolkata, I had promised Mother that I would come. Hillary and Chelsea did it earlier and implored me to come here." On the heat, Clinton said: "It's warm, but I am a Southerner."

Clinton said he would like to interact more with the Sisters. "We also have to change laws in US to enable couples to adopt children."

His next stop was the Raj Bhawan. Governor Viren J Shah made it clear that as the former President was on a private visit, there would be no press conferences. But Clinton had a lot to say.

He had come along with a delegation of American-Indians to assess the aftermath of the



Sisters of the Missionaries of Charity flank Bill Clinton in front of Mother House on Saturday.

Gujarat quake, he said, adding that American-Indian Foundation was concerned on how Bhuj would be rebuilt. He said today's visit, in which he interacted with several NGOs, was primarily a stock-taking exercise, trying to assess the situation rather than taking specific steps.

He outlined the broad spheres in which the foundation would work, saying the main emphasis would be on improving the quality of life, extending micro-credit, education and marketing products. "This we intend to do for several years."

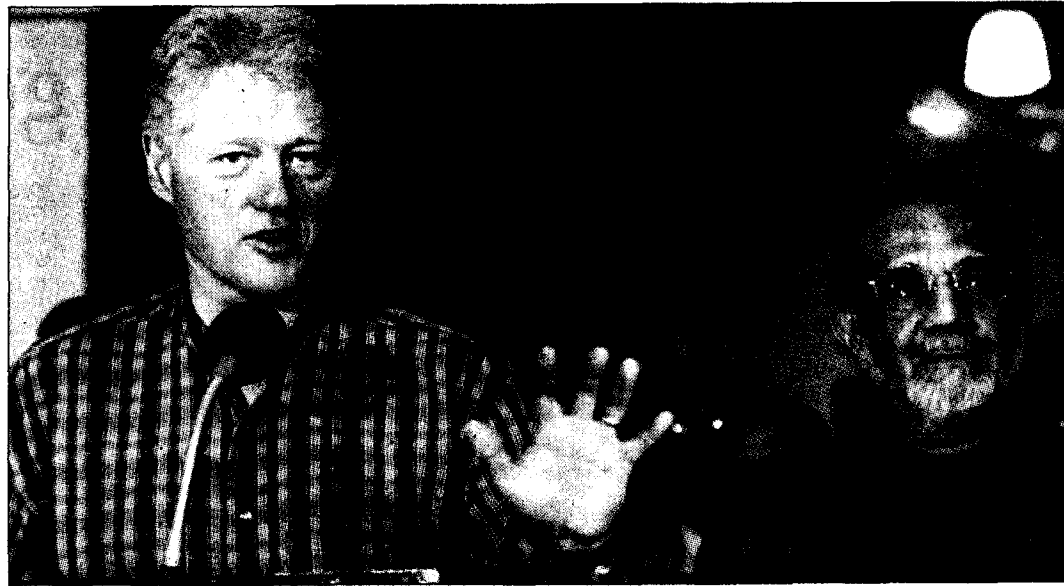
Sources said Clinton and his aides also planned a brief stopover at College Street Coffee House. The idea was shelved once the Special Branch put its foot down, saying it would be unable to provide security there at such a short notice.

It was then that Clinton took all by surprise. He stopped his convoy at Park Street, stepped out and shook hands with all within reach. The securitymen scurried around to cover him, but the former President was unperturbed. Stunned for a while, people quickly realised

this was the opportunity of a lifetime and dashed for the car. Police had a harrowing time trying to maintain sanity. Finally, traffic had to be diverted to Russell Street.

Almost 15 minutes later, at the

prodding of security staff, Clinton returned to his car, but only to get down again at Mullickbazar. He did the same there too. The cavalcade then left for the airport. His flight left Kolkata by 4 pm for New Delhi.



The former US President with Governor Viren J Shah addressing a Press meet at the Raj Bhawan on Saturday.

The portrait of a former President as a Samaritan

Kingsuk Basu
Kolkata, April 7

ON THE surface it appears a tad different — Bill Clinton in reddish brown hair, sporting a red tie over a black coat. The white-blue check shirt, deep blue trousers or even the white hair was not to be found.

Yet, it's this portrait which 13-year-old Somnil Saha would love to cherish in mind—the one that saw him working through late on Friday night before it was ready. A portrait that fetched him a dream offer: William Jefferson Clinton would provide all help for his higher studies in the US.

Minutes after Clinton stepped into Shishu Bhawan around 11.35 am, one of the members of the US security looked for Somnil from the crowd waiting on the road opposite to the main gate.

The Class eight student of Don Bosco was close by and immediately came out, carrying the portrait which he had been holding for hours.

Nearly an hour later when he returned, Somnil was all smiles. Clinton had not only put in his signature on the portrait but also offered him his card. A card that would help him get all financial succour when he takes up higher studies in the US.

Maybe, this was a windfall for which Somnil wasn't ready. May



HINDUSTAN TIMES PHOTO

Somnil Saha shows off his painting.

be not as much for the promise as for the recognition of his efforts to create a unique collection of portraits that has the signatures of all who have been sketched.

"Till date I have not missed out on any one — Sauryav, Sachin, Jadeja or even Jyoti Basu. I went down to New Delhi to get Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee put in a signature on his portrait. This time, however, I was not sure," he said.

From a distance, his mother Anjana adds: "This is the first time that he has used water colours. It was done in a hurry. We were not aware of Clinton's arrival till yesterday. He worked till 1 am in the morning to complete the portrait".

It was late in the afternoon and the crowd was thinning out. Clinton and his convoy, had by then left for Raj Bhawan. Somnil, too, walked away, holding on to the board on which the portrait was clipped.

"I have already got Chief Minister Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee's approval to hold an exhibition of my paintings at the Information Centre. He has asked me to collect few more before the exhibition is put up. I have already readied the portrait of Asha and hope to complete that of Pt Ravi Shankar and Amjad Ali Khan. That should not take long," Somnil said before leaving with his mother to home. And, maybe to a different world: a world of fame and glory.

USA welcomes Jaswant with open arms

DESKAN THIRUNARAYANAPURAM
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

relationship with India," Mr Powell said after his meeting with Mr Singh.

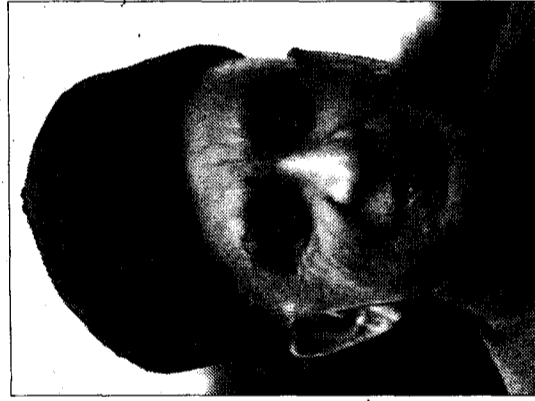
WASHINGTON, April 7. - The defence and external affairs minister, Mr Jaswant Singh, received a warm welcome from top US officials yesterday, signalling the George W Bush administration's desire to further improve relations with India.

The President, who has been busy with the stand-off with China over the collision of military planes, took 40 minutes for an unscheduled meeting with Mr Singh.

The visit also coincides with Congress members' efforts to remove the remaining sanctions against India.

Mr Singh, the first top-ranking Indian official to visit Washington since Mr Bush took office, was received with formal military honours at the Pentagon by the defence secretary, Mr Donald Rumsfeld. Mr Singh also met the secretary of state, Mr Colin Powell, and the President's national security adviser, Ms Condoleezza Rice.

"I think the fact that he met Mr Bush and Ms Rice, the conversations we have had... indicates the importance with which we view our



Mr. Jaswant Singh



Mr George W Bush

ing a review of US sanctions policy. And on Thursday, Mr Royce, and Republican Mr Jim McDermott, a Democrat from Washington state, both co-chairmen of the India caucus, introduced legislation to remove the sanctions.

The sanctions were imposed by Mr Clinton after India and Pakistan tested nuclear weapons in 1998. Since then, most of the sanctions were either removed or waived for a year.

Mr McDermott said India and USA "are logical partners on a very wide range of issues, and these sanctions only slow the development of that relationship." The Bill will eliminate all prohibitions on sales to India under the Arms Control Act. That is, it will also lift the sanctions on the sale of high-technology and dual-use equipment to India.

Mr Singh said he didn't himself raise the subject of sanctions at his Washington meetings, but both Mr Powell and Mr Rumsfeld asked his opinion on them. He said he then told Mr Powell that "for the first time" he doesn't feel that sanctions serve the interests of India or of USA. "To our mind, they are counter-productive," he said.

A former Washington Post correspondent in New Delhi, Mr Harrison, noted in his article that Mr

BUSH SAYS YES TO PM

WASHINGTON, April 7. - Mr George W Bush has accepted an invitation from Mr AB Vajpayee to pay an official visit to India, Mr Jaswant Singh said today.

Addressing a news conference, Mr Singh said the secretary of state, Mr Colin Powell, the defence secretary, Mr Donald Rumsfeld, and the national security advisor to Mr Bush, Ms Condoleezza Rice, have also accepted the invitation to visit India. - UNI

Bush, during his election campaign, promised Indian-American voters to remove the sanctions. Ms Rice supports lifting the sanctions but Mr Rumsfeld, backed by Mr John Bolton, undersecretary of state-designate for security affairs, wants to keep them in place, he said.

"Mr Singh's visit should be the occasion for burying the self-defeating sanctions policy," Mr Harrison wrote. "American policy should be based on a tacit recognition that a multipolar Asian balance of power in which India possesses a minimum nuclear deterrent will be more stable than one in which China enjoys a nuclear monopoly."

rising superpower that could provide a strong but positive balance to a rising "bad" superpower.

The underlying theme of the analysts and politicians is that Washington should remove the sanctions against India and treat it as a strategic ally.

Earlier this week, Mr Royce and 47 other Congress members sent a letter to Mr Bush, stressing the importance of Indo-US relations and urg-

analyst at the Woodrow Wilson International Centre, wrote in the Washington Times on Thursday: "The symbolism is striking. In the same week that tensions between the USA and China escalate... India's second-ranking leader arrives in Washington as a counterweight to Chinese power in Asia."

On Monday, the same newspaper carried an opinion piece by another policy expert who called India the "good"

Sisters, kids, NGOs, cops: Kolkata ready to welcome Clinton

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, APRIL 6

A SIMPLE function accompanied by a welcome song sung by children will greet former American president Bill Clinton in Kolkata on Saturday when he visits Sishu Bhavan after paying homage to Mother Teresa at the global headquarters of the Missionaries of Charity.

While the Missionaries of Charity refused to give details about their VVIP guest's visit, Sister Superior at the Sishu Bhavan, which shelters orphaned and destitute kids, said: "Our kids will sing a simple welcome note for the former US president. We couldn't have planned a more elaborate programme as his time would be divided between the Missionaries of Charity and us. Since this is his private visit, we'll not allow any outsiders in during the time he stays with the kids."

Incidentally, Clinton's private visit assumes special importance since his wife Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton participated in Mother Teresa's funeral along with



other heads of the states.

During his short visit to the city, the former US President is expected to have a brief stop-over at Raj Bhavan, where he's expected to grant audience to a few non-governmental organisations.

Meanwhile, the Kolkata police have taken special measures for Clinton's visit. They are also coordinating with US security agency personnel who are already in the city to oversee arrangements.

INDIAN EXPRESS

- 7 APR 2001

India to seek US reassurance on LoC sanctity

JYOTI MALHOTRA
NEW DELHI, APRIL 6

OLD soldiers never say die, they just come back from the cold to take charge of another day. Such as Major Jaswant Singh and General Colin Powell, whose power handshake perhaps a foreign ministerial concession to a salute — over lunch at the State Department in Washington on Friday was expected to reset the tone of the relationship between India and the US.

Singh's visit to Washington, the first by the External Affairs Minister after the Bush administration took over in January, is significant not only because this is the first high-level interaction between the

two sides. As Washington gets set to redefine the world in its own image, from Russia to China to the Kyoto climate protocol, New Delhi is watching to see what impact the superpower will have on it and the region.

Friday is the big day, when Singh meets Washington's Big Three: Powell, National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice and Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld. Interestingly, Singh's dual responsibilities as Defence and Foreign Minister entitle him to two formal welcomes in Washington — including a separate guard of honour at the Pentagon.

The Minister is accompanied by a small team consisting of joint secretaries from the Americas desk and the disarmament division, Jayant Prasad and Sheel Kant Sharma respectively, reflecting the key issues likely to be taken up in



MAKING NEW FRIENDS: Jaswant Singh; Colin Powell

the talks. Mainly, New Delhi will seek reassurance that the Clinton administration's view on the sanctity of the Line of Control as well as restraint on Pakistan's part across the LoC will be upheld by the new Washington.

Significantly, New Delhi's statement on Thursday on talks with various groups in Kashmir, incorporating a reiteration of its willingness to talk to Pakistan, has clearly been made with an eye to the talks in Washington on Friday. The old conditions remain, and yet seem to indicate some flexibility. For the first time in months, the statement moves away from the need to

"end" cross-border terrorism, to the desirability of Pakistan "curbing" cross-border terrorism.

New Delhi's assessment is that if Washington maintains a "hands-off" policy on Kashmir, and in effect helps to bring to an end to "the Western world's thesis that Kashmir remains a nuclear flashpoint", then it could open the way to a beautiful new relationship.

The MEA has determinedly resisted expressing concern over recent statements by Defence Secretary Rumsfeld as well as by the State Department on Russia's assistance to India's nuclear programme, believing that these statements were fargeted at Moscow rather than New Delhi.

Bush accepts invitation to visit India

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

Washington, APRIL 6. In an indication of the importance the new administration bestows on relations with India, the U.S. President, Mr. George Bush, dropped by during a meeting between the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, and the U.S. National Security Adviser, Ms. Condoleeza Rice, this morning.

Mr. Bush is said to have taken Mr. Singh to the Oval Office, where they spent a few minutes. It is learnt that Mr. Singh extended an invitation to Mr. Bush to visit India, and the President has accepted. "The Indian Defence and Foreign Minister was in the White House this morning meeting Dr. Rice. He had a brief exchange of pleasantries with the President in the Oval Office, but his meeting took place with Ms. Rice," the White House spokesman, Mr. Ari Fleischer, said.

After his meeting with Ms. Rice, Mr. Singh went to the State Department for talks and a working lunch with the Secretary of State,

Gen. Colin Powell. "It was a very, very fine meeting," Gen. Powell said when he came to see off Mr. Singh. In brief remarks to presspersons, Gen. Powell said that earlier Mr. Singh met Mr. Bush and Ms. Rice, and later was due to see the Defence Secretary, Mr. Donald Rumsfeld. All this was indicative of the important relations with India.

Gen. Powell said he discussed with Mr. Singh a number of issues, including economic, proliferation, trade and the region. He assured Mr. Singh that the Bush administration was keen on engaging India "at every level".

Mr. Singh said he had had fruitful meetings thus far, reflective of the present directions of India-U.S. relations. Neither Gen. Powell nor Mr. Singh took questions at the end of their remarks.

Administration officials said they were "looking forward" to the visit of Mr. Singh, which is seen as an opportunity to exchange ideas at a broad and general level on a range of

subjects. The first interaction between India and the Bush administration is not expected to focus on any one issue even if such areas as sanctions come up during the discussions.

The administration is in the process of reviewing the entire gamut of sanctions, and there is a widespread feeling on Capitol Hill among lawmakers that the punitive measures against India ought to be lifted. In fact, as many as 47 lawmakers in the House of Representatives wrote to the President earlier this week seeking the removal of sanctions arguing, among other things, that they had not furthered American interests.

Mr. Singh's delegation includes the Joint-Secretary for the Americas, Mr. Jayant Prasad, the Joint-Secretary for Disarmament, Mr. Sheelkant Sharma, the Joint-Secretary in the Ministry of Defence, Mr. S. Rajkumar, Vice-Admiral Madan Jit Singh and the External Affairs spokesman, Mr. Raminder Singh Jassal.

Photograph on Page 13

THE HINDU

APR 2002

Clinton may get the shock of his life

VIJAY THAKUR
STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

JAIPUR, April 6. — Mr Bill Clinton will get the shock of his life if he now visits Naila, the projected hi-tech village in Rajasthan, where he spent four hours last year.

Everything that the then US President was shown in the village has vanished. Naila today is no different from any other Indian village, with the most common of problems such as bad services or lack of basic necessities.

Naila had prompted Mr Clinton to say Indian villages were progressing fast, keeping pace with world technology. Little did he know that everything he saw at Naila had been arranged to create a good impression about Rajasthan villages.

Mr Clinton was shown a hi-tech milk plant and its cost calculating computerised machine, an Internet connection to the panchayat samiti office and a state-developed software through which villagers could get application and other necessary government forms. But those are still a dream for the villagers, who feel cheated by



Rajasthani women shower Mr Bill Clinton with petals at Naila's public health centre on 23 March 2000. — An AP file photograph

the government.

Immediately after Mr Clinton's visit, the chief minister, Mr Ashok Gehlot, had said Naila panchayat samiti would be a model for the rest of Rajasthan.

"Nothing has changed. Whatever the government claimed or did before Mr Clinton's visit vanished immediately after he left. Nothing has changed since Mr Clinton's visit... the same power and water problems. We get connected to outside villages mostly after half-an-hour's attempt," says Mr Prem Prakash Vohra.

The primary health centre had got a facelift with some additional facility during Mr Clinton's visit. It's now back to its original condition, says the gram pradhan, Mr Kalu Ram Meena. The government had promised to make Naila an ideal village, connect it to the Internet. It had made sundry other promises too. "But it did nothing," Mr Meena said.

"We hardly get power for six

hours in the day time, so there's not enough water supply, though it has improved a bit of late. But the telephone services have worsened..." Mr Vohra said.

"We were told that the panchayat samiti had been given some computers, but we haven't seen any, nor does anyone here know how to operate one. I remember a few months ago four boys from the village went to Delhi to be trained in computers, I don't know what happened next," said another villager, Mr Babu Lal.

Mr Clinton had praised Naila village at the World Forum. But what will he say about the village if he visits it on 8 April?

"The panchayat can't make arrangements for him like it had last year, but definitely we'll welcome and honour him to best of our capacity," Mr Meena said.

The villagers were expecting more tourists after Mr Clinton's visit. But to their dismay that didn't happen, for the village's road link is as bad today as it was before Mr Clinton's visit.

■ Another report on page 8

THE STATESMAN

FRESH START ¹⁰

The visit of the external affairs minister, Mr Jaswant Singh, to the United States will have a significant bearing on the course of New Delhi's relations with Washington under the new Bush administration. On the face of it, bilateral ties should improve even further under the Republicans, but given the roller coaster ride that India-US relations have taken over the last five decades very little can still be taken for granted. What is certain is that the external affairs minister will have to establish links with senior American officials who have never, in any substantive sense, dealt with India before, but are crucial to the strengthening of the bilateral relationship. It may be recalled that Mr Singh had developed a tremendous rapport with Mr Strobe Talbot, the deputy secretary of state, under the Clinton administration. It was their continuing dialogue and personal chemistry that contributed a great deal to the revitalizing of bilateral relations after a nadir had been reached in the aftermath of India's nuclear tests in May 1998. In this case, the key members of the Bush team that Mr Singh will need quickly to establish a relationship with include the secretary of state, Mr Colin Powell, the national security advisor, Ms Condoleeza Rice and the defence secretary, Mr Donald Rumsfeld. They, along with the vice president, Mr Dick Cheney, form the backbone of the Bush foreign policy and security team. It is coincidental but rather fortunate, therefore, that Mr Singh is the defence minister as well as the external affairs minister.

Although the Bush administration is still to find its feet, there are, already, encouraging signs for India. Mr Powell's testimony before congress is a good example. He described India as "a country that should grow more and more focused in the lens of American foreign policy". And he added: "We must deal more wisely with the world's largest democracy. Soon to be the most populous country in the world, India has the potential to help keep the peace in the vast Indian Ocean area and its periphery." Beyond personalities, however, is the growing strategic convergence between India and the US that is being recognized by the Bush administration. Two issues must be particularly emphasized.

First, the Republicans are more concerned about the future of China, and its possible emergence as a belligerent and revisionist superpower that will seek to challenge American influence and power, especially in the Asia-Pacific region. Many within the Bush administration are beginning to recognize that India, with its own deep concerns about China, could be one vital counterweight to a potentially belligerent China. This could mean that a Republican administration will be more sensitive to Indian security concerns, and more willing to accommodate India's own aspirations to be a great power. Second, the Republicans, although no less concerned about proliferation of nuclear weapons, have a less absolutist view of India's nuclear policy. Most important, given their own scepticism about the comprehensive test ban treaty, the pressure for India to sign the treaty is bound to ease considerably. India too needs to adopt a more pragmatic view of American plans to construct a national missile defence. Indeed, if the NMD is based on boost phase interception, it could well be in India's interests to support such a system. In the final analysis, this may well mean that the Indo-US dialogue could well move beyond the nuclear issue that had even stopped the Singh-Talbot talks from acquiring greater momentum.

THE TELEGRAPH
26 APR 2001

All help to quake-hit: Clinton

By Manas Dasgupta ^{40/1}

BHUJ, APRIL 4. "We welcome Mr. Bill Clinton," was how the former United States President was greeted when he arrived at the quake-ravaged Kutch district headquarter of Bhuj on a two-day visit to Gujarat. But what Mr. Clinton missed in the crowded greetings were the huge banners that criticised the "heartless, inactive and discriminatory" State Government.

"How long should we be on the roads," read a banner raised by hapless women, who, even after 65 days of the killer quake of January 26, are on the streets.

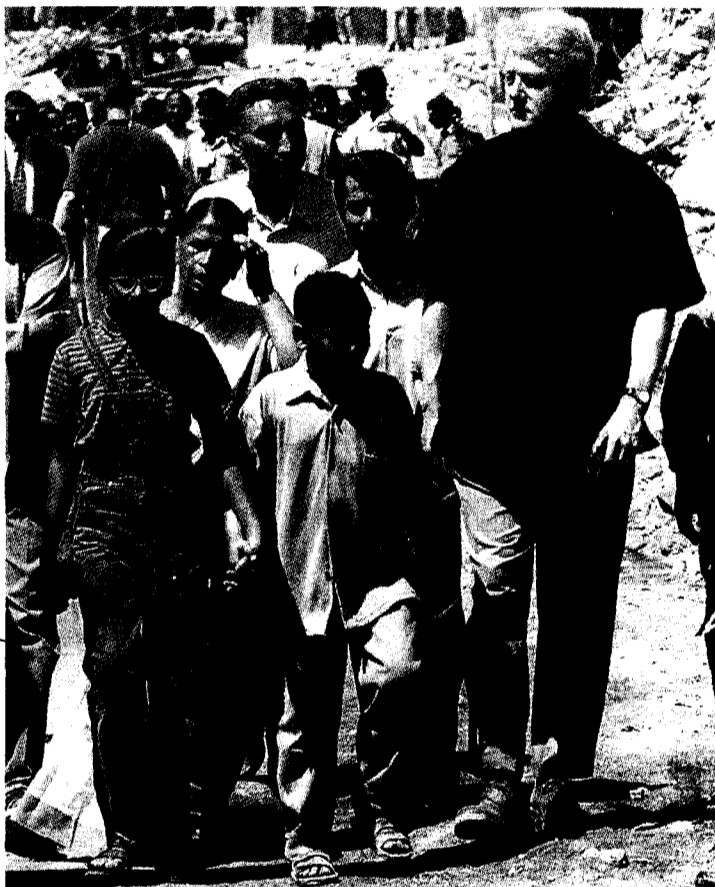
They also expressed lack of confidence in the BJP Government's efforts at rehabilitation and reconstruction of the affected areas. "Leave resettlement to us, it is our fundamental right," read a banner.

The demonstrators were prevented from going near Mr. Clinton by a strong contingent of police posted at the 151-year old Jubilee Hospital which was razed to the ground in the earthquake along with the 50-year old civil hospital.

Total lack of security was, however, evident during Mr. Clinton's visit to Anjar where people broke the barricades and virtually mobbed him, forcing the U.S. security service to swing into action. Police resorted to a mild lathi-charge to disperse the mob.

From Bhuj, Mr. Clinton left by road to Ratnal and later Anjar, where he offered floral tributes to the children who were killed in the earthquake. However, his programme of unveiling a memorial plaque for the children was cancelled in view of a controversy raised by a local shopkeeper, Mr. Hanif Khatri, who objected to the plaque being placed on his private land.

Despite running two hours be-



The former U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, surrounded by the earthquake survivors, going around a school in Anjar, 45 km off Bhuj on Wednesday. — Reuters

hind schedule, Mr. Clinton took pains to meet the people. After seeing the devastation, a visibly moved Mr. Clinton, during a brief address at Bhuj, assured the affected people of a "long partnership" — till they were properly rehabilitated. "If need be, I will keep coming back to Kutch over and over again but we will ensure that you are all properly rehabilitated and your life become normal," he said amid cheers.

Without committing the American India Foundation, of which

he is a board member, Mr. Clinton said he had come here to "see and assess" the situation and learn how best the U.S. and the Indians settled in his country could help. He had discussed the issue with the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, before he left Delhi. He agreed with Mr. Vajpayee that rehabilitation and reconstruction would be a "long-drawn process" but the Foundation would not leave the people in the lurch.

See also Page 15

5 APR 2001

Clinton listens, pledges little

Rathin Das
Bhuj, April 4

HE STOPPED for a few minutes at Khatri Chowk in Anjar, leading to the lane where schoolchildren walking in a Republic Day parade were buried alive on January 26. With him were two children who survived the earthquake, and nearby a hibiscus tree was in full bloom in the compound of a collapsed temple.

He was the world's most powerful man till a few months back. He is Citizen Clinton, who spent the half the day in Kutch visiting earthquake-devastated towns of Bhuj and Anjar. There was no firm commitment of aid, but the spirits of the people in the district seemed to lift. There were no welcome arches usually associated with VVIP visits, but there were banners welcoming the former US President.

"I came here to talk, to listen and to learn. I will come back." He had seen the devastation, and also "wonderful work done by those who responded to the tragedy". He said he discussed with Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee in the morning the long task of rebuilding health services, houses and schools.

Seventh standard student Nandish Kodrani, one of the two children who walked with Clinton in the lane in Anjar where he lost his friends, was still limping from the injuries he sustained in the quake. The other student, Mital Thacker, wore the T-shirt she was wearing on the fateful day. It had saved her life that day: a passer-by who spotted a bit of the garment sticking out of the debris had pulled her out.

Anjar residents had taken up positions all around Khatri Chowk. As soon as the former President, dressed in a green bush shirt and grey trousers, emerged from the Datar Chowk end of the lane where the children were buried, people cheered lustily from all corners.

Security had been eased a little, considering the dimension of the tragedy that had befallen the people Clinton was visiting. Still, securitymen had gone through all the motions: the lane had been thoroughly checked with the help of sniffer dogs and metal detectors before Clinton walked down it.

Related reports, photographs
on Page 9



Bill Clinton with schoolchildren at Anjar on Wednesday.

AFP PHOTO

Bill will not break bread in city

Romita Dutta
Kolkata, April 4

BILL CLINTON will not eat or drink anything offered in Kolkata-not even water. Neither will he be offered anything here. This means either he will skip lunch or will carry his own lunch pack and water.

In his brief stop-over in the city on Saturday, which will not be more than four-and-a-half hours, Clinton will spend the lunch hour with the Governor Viren J Shah and his industrialist friends at Raj Bhavan, but won't take lunch. The Governor's House has already been informed that the former US President will not eat or drink anything. As per protocol, the Governor won't be in a position to offer either. Since Clinton has declined to eat or drink anything, offering him anything and being refused in front of the guests would be insulting for Shah.

Of course there will be food in plenty for the guests and for Clinton to feast his eyes on. Apart from tea and coffee, there will be sandesh and sandwiches. It is rather strange that Clinton, known for his love for Indian cuisine has declined to eat anything here. Lots of speculations are doing the round. It could be that his security men were not getting enough time to check out and certify on the food items. The last time when he came to India, the security men did sneak into the kitchen and some of the food items were even flown from the US.

The Raj Bhawan is leaving no stones unturned to give a red-carpet welcome and a warm reception to Clinton. The whole place is being cleaned, polished and spruced up. Sources maintain that nothing special or extraordinary is being done for the former President. This is a part of the routine cleaning-up done whenever there is a VIP guest of the rank of Prime Minister or President visiting the city.

Warm welcome for Clinton at Bhuj gnd - us



Bill Clinton is garlanded and a traditional Gujarati turban is wrapped around his head after his arrival in Ahmedabad on Wednesday.

Ahmedabad, April 4

FORMER US President Bill Clinton, who arrived here this evening from Bhuj, was accorded a warm welcome as a "State guest" by the Gujarat Government.

Chief Minister Keshubhai Patel and his cabinet colleagues were at the Sardar Patel International Airport to welcome the former President. City mayor Himmat Singh Patel was also present at the airport to receive him. Earlier, Clinton flew from New Delhi in the morning to Bhuj in a chartered Indian Airlines aircraft.

Clinton said he was "trying to be useful" by visiting quake-ravaged Kutch.

Anjar, April 4

"FATHER CLINTON", called out an onlooker as the former US President held the hands of two children, who survived the quake, and retraced the steps of their nearly 300 schoolmates who perished while participating in a Republic Day procession here.

Neetal Thakkar and Nandish Kodnani held Clinton's hand firmly as he walked about half a kilometre, paid floral tributes, bowed his head and observed a minute's silence at Datar Chowk, the site of the gruesome tragedy.

"We are trying to raise funds to help people face their loss. We shall continue to work. We are interested in results," Clinton told reporters as a hysteric crowd chanted his name repeatedly.

"After assessing the situation and requirements of the people, we will declare the package so that it can be implemented fast and people can get homes and employment," he said.

Clinton brought with him the keys of a 50-million dollar (over Rs 200 crore) fund put together by the America-India foundation to help the quake victims.

"Yes, I will come back to India. May be once or twice in a year," Clinton said.

Security personnel including US secret service guards had a

"I am just trying to be useful at a place I care about," Clinton said when asked about his role as a goodwill ambassador after his

presidency.

The former President termed as "wonderful" the relief and rehabilitation work being

carried out by Indian and international agencies in the wake of the tragedy. "Today I am here to look, listen, learn and ask

Clinton not to join Reliance Group

DESPITE PERSISTENT reports to the contrary, former US President Bill Clinton is not becoming a director of the Reliance group. He is not even becoming the group's advisor on international operations. But, he is a friend and will have a quiet lunch with the Ambanis on Friday.

The lunch, which was fixed many weeks in advance, was originally to be held at Seawind, the palatial Ambani residence on Mumbai's Cuff Parade. But after the US Secret Service objected to it, the Ambanis have taken over the Chambers (a businessmen's club) at the Bombay Taj.

They will have an entirely Indian meal, cooked by Chef Hemant Grol, for the former President. No

one will be invited for lunch. Only Dhirubhai and his sons Mukesh and Anil will dine with the former President. Bill Clinton has taken a policy decision not to accept corporate directorships or even to accept the rank of advisor to any commercial enterprise. So, the lunch with the Ambanis—like his famous meeting with them last year when he was the President—is being passed off as a mere exchange of courtesies between friends. But of course, the Ambanis are friends with everybody. They may have invited Clinton for lunch, but Anil and his wife Tina were the only couple from India to attend George W. Bush's inaugural ball.

HTC, Mumbai

'Father' wins quaked hearts



Bill Clinton wags the crowd at Anjar on Wednesday.

tough time as crowd surged forward to shake hands with Clinton and help obliged. Sporting a shirt with

matching khakis and suede shoes, Clinton first visited a pre-fabricated hut built by the America-India foundation.

Women wearing traditional Kutch attire received him by applying vermillion on his forehead and showering flowers.

questions, and see what we can do to help."

After spending a day in the earthquake ravaged Kutch district, he arrived here in the same flight an hour behind schedule. His flight landed at the airport at 6.20 pm.

Clinton and his entourage, after the welcome ceremony at the airport, straightaway drove to the Taj Residency for the night halt. Tomorrow, Clinton would be meeting NGOs involved in rehabilitation work in the quake-ravaged areas of Gujarat. He is also scheduled to hold meetings with the Gujarat Chief Minister and the Governor SS Bhandari. He would also visit Sabarmati to pay his respects to the Mahatma.

PTI

Earlier, on his arrival at Bhuj airport, Clinton said, "Today I am here to look, listen, learn and ask questions and see what we can do to help."

"People of this place have lived through an unimaginable tragedy. The most important thing now is to think how it should be re-built and people return to normal life."

The former US President said the America-India foundation had undertaken a survey as a fact-finding mission to make an in-depth assessment of the devastation.

He said a result oriented rehabilitation strategy and modality will be worked out by the foundation with the help of industrial houses in Delhi and Kolkata by raising funds.

On his way back to Bhuj, Clinton once again stopped at the quake-ravaged Ratlan village before proceeding to Anjar and visited a shelter housing 150 people.

Before emplaning for Ahmedabad, he spent about an hour at the makeshift international Red Cross hospital in Bhuj and interacted with patients and staff members.

Present on the occasion were Gujarat Industry Minister Sureshchandra Mehta, Information and Technology Minister Bimal Shah and several other officials.

PTI

Jaswant-Rumsfeld meet may open up defence possibilities

Our Political Bureau

NEW DELHI 4 APRIL

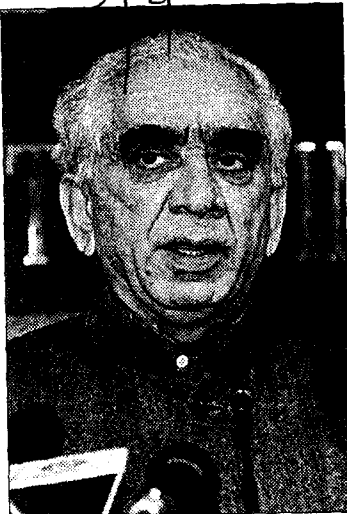
THE MOST important part of Jaswant Singh's first engagement with the Bush administration is not his meeting with secretary of state Colin Powell or the national security adviser Condoleezza Rice, but the defence secretary Donald Rumsfeld. In the first indication that India is also taking a serious look at shoring up a non-existent defence relationship with the US, Jaswant Singh wearing his new hat as defence minister, has taken along with him senior defence policy advisers from the ministry of defence, Madanjit Singh and Mr P. Rajkumar.

If the key touchstones for the Clinton administration vis-a-vis India was CTBT and information technology, the resonances with this Pentagon-reliant administration are negligible to the point of being non-existent. Pentagon has almost no institutional linkages with India, and what little did exist has been steadily eroded by sanctions.

Although Clinton restored the IMET programme in defence relations, it's only the tip of the iceberg. Jaswant's visit will not open the floodgates but it is expected that training exchanges can be started between India and the US.

The first tentative steps towards reviewing defence relations came with an attempt to work together in the area of peacekeeping, basically, to build on common strengths. The US presence at the international fleet review earlier this year too was an effort in that direction. But clearly, much more needs to be done, but in the current atmosphere of defence sanctions, India's leverages are few.

The importance of the Pentagon cannot be overestimated in this administration. Just a plain run-through of the key personalities of Bush's cabinet gives an idea about the driving forces. From Dick Cheney, former defence secretary, Don Rumsfeld, even Colin Powell, Paul Wolfowitz, deputy



Jaswant: In a new guise

defence secretary and Richard Haass, the policy planning chief in the state department, there is a surfeit of defence brains in the Bush pantheon.

Don Rumsfeld clearly does not have India on his radar screen, and his only statements have clubbed India with 'rogue' states like Iran and Libya. In fact, even the American press acknowledge his strong-man credentials and even Henry Kissinger has been quoted as saying that Rumsfeld was the most ruthless man in the world that he knew.

Mr Rumsfeld believes the US shares a "complicated" relationship with China, and being head of the Congress committee to assess ballistic missile threats to the US, is convinced that missile defence is the way forward and that the US military should be tailored for the 21st century.

To the world, Mr Rumsfeld appears most confrontational in the Bush Cabinet, he wants to arm an Iraqi opposition and is the most ardent proponent of the unilateral approach vis-a-vis Taiwan, Korea and Balkans. India therefore needs to seriously engage with Mr Rumsfeld, and according to reports, the powerful vice-president Dick Cheney is clearly leaning towards the Pentagon.

US senator uses Tehelka scandal to slam India

Aziz Haniffa

WASHINGTON 4 APRIL

INDIA'S BETE noire in the US Congress, Dan Burton, has seized upon the recent disclosures by tehelka.com about alleged irregularities in defence deals, to castigate New Delhi.

Indiana Republican Burton also used the scandal to slam former defence minister George Fernandes, referring to an article in the Indian Express two years ago that had reported that the minister was allegedly trying to put together an anti-US security alliance.

Mr Burton, whose remarks were inserted into the Congressional Record, said: "The world has been shocked by the recent news stories about a corruption scandal that has engulfed the Indian government. Already the president of the ruling BJP (Bharatiya Janata Party) and the defence minister have been forced to resign after they were caught taking bribes from two internet news reporters posing as arms dealers in regard to a fake defence contract. The opposition is calling for the government to resign."

Mr Burton said: "The resignation of defence minister George Fernandes is no loss for friends of democracy. Mr Fernandes is the man who led a meeting in 1999 with the ambassadors of China, Cuba, Russia, Libya, Serbia and Iraq aimed at putting together a security alliance 'to stop the US.' This meeting was reported in the May 18, 1999, issue of the Indian Express." "Those of us who have been following Indian and South Asian issues are not surprised. The Indian government has demonstrated many times before how deeply it is infected with corruption," he said.

IANS

INDIAN EXPRESS

- 5 APR 2001

India Caucus leaders move to lift curbs

INDIA CAUCUS leaders in the US Congress have introduced a Bill to lift the post-Pokhran sanctions against India and Pakistan. The move comes two days ahead of Jaswant Singh's arrival here for India's first formal interaction with the Bush Government.

Singh is expected to pursue the matter during his talks with Secretary of State Colin Powell on Friday. Powell has instituted an omnibus review of sanctions against several countries, but has not set a deadline. The Congress's past efforts helped mitigate the rigours of sanctions, but they did not quite culminate in the lifting of the sanctions.

HTC, Washington

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

5 APR 2001

The fuss is missing, not the warmth

Soni Sangwan
New Delhi, April 2

HE WILL be staying at the same hotel and sleeping on the same bed. Even the fridge in his suite has been stacked with his favourite Diet Coke. There is, however, one difference - during his last visit to India he was First Citizen Bill Clinton, this time round he is just Citizen Clinton.

Getting into Maurya Sheraton during Clinton's visit last year was near impossible - even the hotel staff needed special passes. The entire hotel had been taken over by the US Secret Service and no guests were allowed. But this time, things are different. While an advance team is already

at the hotel, its presence is not noticeable. "The last time, the lobby was swarming with Secret Service agents with a stock reply to all queries 'We do not know'," says a hotel employee.

Clinton's entourage has been drastically trimmed to about 15 rooms and suites in all. There's also a difference in the profile of his team. "Last year the bulk of the rooms were taken by officials, Secret Service and the media team. This time Clinton's entourage comprises NRIs," a hotel source revealed.

On this visit, Clinton is a guest of the America India Foundation, a group of NRIs working towards strengthening Indo-US relations and also for charity.



Vinod Gupta, a moving force behind the AIF, is believed to have invited him for this visit.

The hotel staff eagerly await their "most friendly guest". "He broke the security cordon during his last visit and mingled with the staff in the kitchen, knelt on

the floor to pose for photographs and just won everyone over," recalled an employee. But the pressure of the last visit is not there. "We know what he likes and what he dislikes and everything has been taken care of."

And so the Chandragupta suite awaits Clinton with arrangements of orchids (he is allergic to pollen), a stepper for him to start his day (he is a health freak), muesli and honey for breakfast and fresh fruits (he hates canned fruits). The hotel hopes that what his last visit did to the Bukhara, this one will do to their Golf Bar.

On Page 3: Security beefed up for Clinton visit.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

- 3 APR 2001

Jaswant to discuss sanctions with U.S.

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, APRIL 3. The External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, arrives here on Thursday on a short and yet crisp official visit. Mr. Singh's main programme is on Friday before he leaves for home on Saturday.

The Minister comes at a time when the foreign policy establishment here is consumed with the developments in the South China Seas and in yet another shouting match between the United States and China. But this backdrop should have little or no impact on the general discussions Mr. Singh is due to have with the key players of the Bush foreign policy team.

Mr. Singh also comes to Washington at a time when the person generally credited with the upswing in bilateral relations - the former American President, Mr. Bill Clinton - is in India. Aside from visiting the earthquake hit areas of Gujarat Mr. Clinton is expected to have discussions with senior leaders in India.

Mr. Singh joins several other high-ranking officials, ministers and leaders from all over the world who have visited Washington to learn more about the Bush administration, especially the general thrusts of foreign policy. The administration here, for the most part, is still feeling its way around; and in that context it too would be keen on finding out from Mr. Singh where India is coming from on a range of issues, bilateral, regional and global.

The Minister is due to meet the key players of the Bush foreign policy team - the Secretary of State, Gen. Colin Powell, the Defence Secretary, Mr. Donald Rumsfeld, and the National Security Advisor, Ms. Condoleezza Rice. Mr. Singh is also due to interact with some lawmakers at a dinner on Thursday night. Congress will be starting its Easter Recess at the time of Mr. Singh's arrival in Washington.

The discussions that Mr. Singh will be having here - including on the issue of the existing sanctions - will be on a general level, it is being pointed out. The Minister may have some private meetings with Indian American community leaders, but at present there are no plans for Mr. Singh to address the community. Senior Indian diplomats make the point that the

Bush administration has been quite receptive towards India and that all indications thus far have been that Washington is keen on maintaining the width of the bilateral cooperation and engagement as has been laid out in the last two years of the Clinton administration. Of particular emphasis are the Dialogue Architecture and the Vision Statement.

What will be of interest in the coming months is to see the extent to which India and the United States pursue the depth of the bilateral relations; and at the level at which the two countries are going to maintain the dialogue.

And the 12 rounds of talks with the then Deputy Secretary of State, Mr. Strobe Talbott, Mr. Jaswant Singh is credited with having laid new and more solid parameters of the new evolving friendship. It remains to be seen whether the Bush administration is keen on maintaining interactions at the Deputy Secretary level; though an argument could be made that even if the present administration is not inclined to pursue at this level, it has more to do with the style of functioning than anything else.

It is being pointed out that the Bush administration has already signalled its intention of keeping a high level of interaction with India in the appointment of Mr. Robert Blackwill as the American Ambassador to India. Mr. Blackwill is known to be close to Mr. Bush and his national security advisor, Ms. Rice. At one time Mr. Blackwill was tipped to be the Deputy National Security Advisor, a very senior position in the White House. The Bush administration is also said to be close to naming the Assistant Secretary for South Asian Affairs, although it is not clear if a nomination will be made before Mr. Singh arrives here or during his stay. Any number of names have been doing the rounds in the last several weeks including that of Mr. Mathew Daley, a known India hand and presently in the Policy Planning Division of the State Department; and Ms. Christina Rocca, a senior foreign policy advisor to Republican Senator Sam Brownback who heads the Senate Sub Committee on Near East and South Asia of the Foreign Relations Committee.

THE HINDU

4 APR 2001

Jaswant's U.S. visit aims at getting the ducks in a row

By Chidanand Rajghatta

The Times of India News Service

WASHINGTON: In the first formal high-level bilateral contact between the Vajpayee government and the Bush administration, external affairs minister Jaswant Singh will arrive in Washington later this week while the U.S. is still labouring over the decision to lift sanctions against India.

Mr Singh, who is India's first minister to hold both the foreign and defence portfolios, will meet with the troika of Bush foreign policy principals, including secretary of state Colin Powell, defence secretary Donald Rumsfeld and national security adviser Condoleezza Rice.

No Indian minister has managed such a feat, but officials say too much need not be read into it because this is more in the nature of introductory meetings. Still, it is quite a calendar for the peripatetic Indian minister in the first warm month of the year when the world's power-mongers troop into Washington. Mr Singh's meeting with Mr Rumsfeld and Ms Rice was fixed even before the former Indian Army major took up the additional job as defence minister.

Just how weighty the visit would be given the Bush administration is still in its teething days is a matter

of conjecture just now. Although one U.S. official used an American colloquialism ("it will be useful for getting the ducks in a row") to sum up the expectation from the visit, his subsequent observations could well lead Indians to extract a different meaning from the expression.

The official said he did not see sanctions being lifted now, because

NO MEAN TASK

- Jaswant's visit is the first high-level call on Bush administration
- Visit comes when U.S.-China relation is at a low over collision of planes

the administration was still reviewing the sanctions policy at a global level. Considering the number of times New Delhi has expressed hope that sanctions would be revoked, Indians may have added another duck to the several they have scored in this game.

Mr Powell, in fact, is yet to hold a South Asia policy meeting aside from the introductory briefing he had from the South Asia bureau soon after his appointment as secretary of state. Officials acknowledge that he has been more focused on squeaky wheels like China, West Asia, Japan and Macedonia.

Getting the ducks in a row could also suggest other imponderables. Washington is in a state of high dudgeon these days, with the row between the U.S. and China over mid-air collision of military planes and American edginess over Pakistan's journey to rack and ruin.

Also in town this fortnight are a Taliban representative trying to explain his organisation's bizarre outlook of life and religion and the intense Kashmiri separatist Yasin Malik, who is here for medical treatment.

Mr Powell will host a lunch for Mr Singh on Friday. He will meet Mr Rumsfeld later in the day. Mr Singh's visit also comes amid reports of differences between the state department and the defence department over policy matters. The general perception is that the Rumsfeld-Cheney combination is the more Cold War-oriented hardline combination and the Powell-Rice team is the more pragmatic one.

Mr Rumsfeld, in fact, ruffled some Indian sensitivities few weeks back when he clubbed India amid the so-called rogue nations that were receiving Russian missile technology. Administration officials now say the remark was aimed more at Russia and it was unfortunate that India got clubbed with the other countries.

Celeste successor's China link worries Indian policy experts

Raises concerns he may be partial to China due to his association with the PLA

BY ASHISH KUMAR SEN

San Francisco, March 29: US President George W. Bush's nominee to replace Mr Richard F. Celeste as the next ambassador to India, Mr Robert Blackwill's close association with high-ranking officers in China's People's Liberation Army has become a cause of concern for some South Asia policy experts. The fact that Mr Blackwill could soon be representing Washington D.C. in New Delhi has added a poignancy to this concern.

"Mr Blackwill's association with the Chinese could cut both ways," cautioned Sumit Ganguly, a professor of Asian studies and government at the University of Texas, Austin. "It could either help him understand India's concerns about the Chinese or his long association with PLA colonels could have dulled his senses into believing the Chinese are blameless," he said.

Prof. Ganguly was referring to Mr Blackwill's involvement in a "Colonel Programme" at Harvard University. The programme involves bringing PLA

colonels to the US and educating them about US foreign policy through dialogues with policymakers. He also participated in a similar programme with the Russians.

However, Prof. Ganguly said, "One hopes Mr Blackwill, who will have access to classified information on the Indian subcontinent should he become ambassador, will use his own judgment to realise that the Indians are not just blowing smoke."

A retired career diplomat, Mr Blackwill has still to go through a Senate confirmation before he can be sure of his new assignment.

Sources in Washington D.C. told *The Asian Age* that in Mr Blackwill's case, it would not be unlikely for the Conservative wing of the Republican Party, notably Senate foreign relations committee chairman Jesse Helms, to raise objections to his alleged softness towards the Communist regime in China.

Currently the Belfer Lecturer in international security at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government,

Mr Blackwill served as a special assistant for national security affairs in Mr Bush's father, former President George H.W. Bush's administration from 1989 to 1990.

Mr Stephen Cohen, a South Asia policy scholar at the Brookings Institution in Washington D.C., dismissed concerns over Mr Blackwill's association with the Chinese saying his contacts with China would give him "a global view" on the subject. "Clearly you can't understand India without understanding its concerns about China. He will build on his past experience and will also have a good understanding of the situation in the region," he said.

A South Asia analyst who has played a key role in moulding US-India relations agreed with Mr Cohen's contention. "Mr Blackwill may have run the China initiative, but this only makes him more sensitive to the problem China poses to India," he said, preferring not to be named.

Announcing his intent to nominate Mr Blackwill to the post, President Bush had said, Mr Blackwill understood "the

important place India holds in my foreign policy agenda, and he will be an outstanding American ambassador to India."

The Washington DC-based South Asian analyst agreed. "The selection sends a signal that this administration is serious about cultivating India as a strategic partner in order to bring some stability in the Asian theatre in the context of the rising hegemony of China," he said.

Describing Mr Blackwill as a man deeply entrenched in Republican Party politics, who has not only worked in the various embassies in the world but also in the National Security Council and has the ear of the President, a congressional source said, "Mr Blackwill is emerging on the same level of thinking as men like Henry Kissinger. He's no ordinary pin-striped diplomat. This is a man who takes charge."

Mr Cohen suggested that Mr Blackwill organise a US-India dialogue between policymakers on the same lines as the "Colonel Programme."

Prof. Ganguly, on the other hand, was not quite convinced of the effectiveness

of this programme.

He recounted his experience lecturing to "rigid" Chinese Colonels at Mr Blackwill's programme a few years ago.

"At the end of the course I was left wondering whether their views had changed at all. There was a certain hostility in their attitude towards India," Prof. Ganguly said recalling being bombarded with "utterly banal and predictable questions" about the presence of Tibetan refugees in India and why the government of India was not more forthcoming on border talks with China.

"They completely ignored their own unwillingness to discuss such matters with India and conveniently shifted the blame on to India," he said.

The officers were also unwilling to concede that China had contributed to Pakistan's growing nuclear prowess. "In spite of the fact that they were presented facts reported in the Western media that showed this to be true, they very heatedly told me I must not spread lies," Prof. Ganguly said.

Conceding that in the "unlikely event"

that these reports were correct, they drew parallels with America's "Atoms for Peace" programme. "This was a completely specious example," said Prof. Ganguly adding, "The Atoms for Peace programme was based on the use of nuclear power for peaceful means, not building a nation's arsenal."

Mr Cohen, who has worked with Mr Blackwill in the past and has even travelled to China along with him, said, "Mr Blackwill believes that regardless of what one's views are of a country, the only way you can actually put things in perspective is by visiting the place."

He described Mr Blackwill as an "excellent choice" for the job adding that he was "one of the most knowledgeable diplomat/scholars."

Both Mr Blackwill and his wife are said to be very interested in Indian society and culture. Of Danish origin, Ms Blackwill is a linguist, and a professor.

"New Delhi is a very infectious town," said the South Asian analyst. "Once he gets to India, the social virus will catch up with Mr Blackwill very quickly."

THE ASIAN AGE

THE ASIAN AGE

THE ASIAN AGE

30 MAR 2001

Tehelka may not affect Indo-U.S. dialogue

By K.K. Katyal

NEW DELHI, MARCH 27. Will the recent Tehelka expose and its impact on the Central Government affect India's dialogue with the new U.S. administration, scheduled for next week? Marginally, if at all. Just as the alarm caused by the recent off-the-cuff remarks from Washington has waned, so a drastic reassessment by the U.S. on the degree of stability of the BJP-led coalition is increasingly unlikely now.

None among the American interlocutors of the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, (who will be seeing, among others, his counterpart, Mr. Colin Powell) could be expected to pretend that nothing serious happened in New Delhi in the last three weeks but the possibility of a major change, of attitude or of strategy, is to be discounted.

In the final analysis, Mr. Jaswant Singh's interaction with the new administration in Washington would be what it was meant to be before the Tehelka shake-up. With one difference — Mr. Singh may be queried on the happenings in the aftermath of the expose and he may restate the known official position.

As was intended, the dialogue will be significant as the first formal high-level contact between India and the new administration, and as an opportunity to be used by New Delhi to fill the information gaps that might have appeared during the transition. And the issues could not be different from those envisaged earlier — nuclear and security matters, in the context of the Indian tests, New Delhi's nuclear doctrine, especially its plans for a minimum credible deter-

rent, the situation in South Asia, notably India-Pakistan ties, prospects of dialogue and the like, and American decisions on National Missile Defence.

If Washington treats the Singh-Powell meeting as part of the "architecture of dialogue", agreed upon during the visit of the former U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, last year, it would be a good augury for continuity.

Any misgivings that might have arisen in Washington because of the recent developments here may well be offset by the realisation there that there was a high degree of consensus in India over the development of relations with the U.S. The position of the ruling coalition was clearly enunciated during and after the high-level visits — of Mr. Clinton to India and of the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, to the U.S. — with the two sides happy at the opening of a new chapter. The Congress, largest party in the Opposition, has no difference with the basic stand of the Government — the same ideas, same reservations.

Congress concurs

This was evident from the resolution on foreign policy, adopted recently by the Congress plenary in Bangalore. 'India and the U.S.' was the first item, under specific heads, followed first by the relationship with the European Union and then the ties with Russia.

"The Congress welcomes the growth of a wholesome relationship with the U.S., our major democratic partner in world politics," it said while noting that "even as a friend the U.S. pursues foreign policy objectives that are, at

times, quite different from ours." There was no discordant note in regard to the official policy towards the U.S. Like the Government, the Congress too recognised that the new administration would take time to address, in a meaningful way, issues related to South Asia; and called for removal of the sanctions and the repeal of the U.N. Security Council resolution adopted after Pokhran-II. The Left parties, however, have a different perception of U.S. policies.

There was no serious difference between the Government and the Congress on the conduct of economic relationship with the U.S. The resolution on economic policy did seek to demarcate the Congress from the official stand, not because of any substantive reasons but because it did not want to be projected as the B-team of the NDA as was done by the ruling side after the Congress support to it on insurance bill, land ceiling legislation and FERA.

Blackwill's task

The nomination of a new U.S. ambassador to India, Mr. Bob Blackwill, and the projection of the appointment by the U.S. President, Mr. George W. Bush, have been received well here — in particular, the President's remark: "Bob Blackwill understands the important place India holds in my foreign policy agenda." The meetings of the new Indian ambassador, Mr. Lalit Mansingh, and Mr. Blackwill, timely for obvious reasons, may serve to absorb misperceptions in Washington over the impact of the expose.

THE HINDU

28 MAR 2001

Indo-U.S. dialogue on NMD?

ND-12 14/3 By C. Raja Mohan

India could adopt a positive attitude towards the emergence of missile defences if it is part of a considered shift to a more credible nuclear order.

AS INDIA prepares to engage the Bush Administration in the next few weeks, there will be a renewed focus on the perennial theme of nuclear weapons and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. As it turns out, the advent of the Bush Administration may have opened a real possibility for New Delhi and Washington to change the traditional framework through which they have discussed nuclear questions.

The External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, is likely to meet the U.S. Secretary of State, Gen. Colin Powell, early next month in Washington. The Jaswant-Powell meeting should be able to set the course for the long promised new engagement between India and the United States. Although Indo-U.S. relations improved significantly in the last year of the Clinton Administration, much remains to be done in finding common political ground.

Since India's first nuclear test in 1974, differences over nuclear non-proliferation have been one of the most difficult obstacles for the improvement of bilateral relations. After the second round of Indian tests in May 1998, New Delhi and Washington launched on an intensive and sustained dialogue on nuclear issues. The ten rounds of talks between Mr. Jaswant Singh and the then U.S. Deputy Secretary of State, Mr. Strobe Talbott, helped reduce mutual misperceptions on nuclear issues.

While Messrs Singh and Talbott changed the tone and tenor of the Indo-U.S. nuclear discourse, there was no final bridging of the divide. The U.S. was keen to get India on board the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, which New Delhi found difficult to sign. Right up to its last days, the Clinton Administration had insisted that the full potential of Indo-U.S. relations would not be realised unless the nuclear differences were resolved. While many of the U.S. sanctions imposed after Pokhara were diluted, some key measures have remained in place.

Mr. Singh and Gen. Powell will no doubt discuss the question of continuing the nuclear dialogue under the new Administration and decide the level at which it will be conducted. But what makes the next phase of Indo-U.S. nuclear dialogue an

exciting one is the promise of the President, Mr. George W. Bush, to depart radically from the nuclear agenda of the Clinton Administration.

The Bush national security team has come to Washington with a set of nuclear assumptions that are very different from those which informed the world view of Mr. Bill Clinton. First is a strong commitment to build defences against ballistic missiles. In the last couple of months, the Bush Administration has proclaimed its determination to go ahead with the plans despite political opposition in Europe, Russia and China. Mr. Bush has signalled that he is ready to proceed unilaterally if necessary and in violation of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty of 1972 that restricts the development and deployment of defences.

Second, the Bush Administration is also debating the possibility of negotiating deep reductions in offensive nuclear forces with Russia. There are some suggestions in the U.S. media that the Bush Administration might even be prepared for unilateral reductions in its nuclear arsenal. Third, the Bush team rejects the CTBT as a fatally flawed arrangement. Underlying that view is the assumption that some proliferation of nuclear weapons is inevitable, and treaties like the CTBT are incapable of preventing backlash states from acquiring nuclear weapons.

Somewhat counter-intuitively the Bush Administration's nuclear package appears to have opened up a rare opportunity to recast the basic assumptions of the Indo-U.S. nuclear dialogue. That the CTBT, which dominated Indo-U.S. dialogue over the last few years, may no longer be central is only of limited significance. Far more important is the new direction that the Bush Administration has begun to set with its simultaneous emphasis on building defences and reducing offensive nuclear forces.

Until now, both nuclear deterrence and

arms control were premised on the belief that offensive nuclear weapons were "good" and defences against them were "bad". The theology decreed that peace between nuclear adversaries could only be sustained by the certainty of retaliation by offensive nuclear forces. Defences, the mantra said, would complicate deterrence by reducing the effectiveness of nuclear forces. The new emphasis in the U.S. on defences, then, challenges the nuclear mythology of the last five and a half decades. It also implies a basic re-consideration of traditional assumptions of arms control, which is the flip side of nuclear deterrence. A new dialogue focussed on NMD and its impact on arms control should help India and the U.S. transcend the framework of their nuclear dialogue in the last couple of years.

India, on its part, had exercised some restraint in responding to the international debate on the U.S. plans for missile defences. Curbing its traditional temptation to launch into an attack mode, India reacted in a low-key manner to the NMD. India certainly cautioned the U.S. against a unilateral termination of the ABM Treaty and pointed to the dangers of militarisation of outer space. But unlike China, Russia and France, it was unwilling to get into a confrontation with the U.S. on missile defences.

The Indian reserve on the NMD has turned out to be a prudent move. Sensing the depth of the U.S. political commitment to the NMD, the West Europeans have begun to tone down their criticism. They propose, instead, to engage Washington in order to influence American policy. Russia is opposed to the NMD, but has come up with its own proposals for defences against missiles. Negotiations have now been set on the subject between the U.S. and Russia. China continues to campaign against the NMD, but it is within reason to expect that Washington and Beijing would soon talk about defences.

The U.S. Defence Secretary, Mr. Donald Rumsfeld, is also believed to have offered to talk to India on the NMD. This should provide a much wider template for a future Indo-U.S. nuclear dialogue. It would open the door for the two sides to review together where the idea of nuclear deterrence is headed in the new millennium. It should also create new room for thinking about the best possible means to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the prospects for bilateral cooperation in the future.

India could adopt a positive attitude towards the emergence of missile defences, if it is part of a considered shift to a more credible nuclear order. Four elements may be critical in shaping India's approach to missile defences. One, the NMD must be accompanied by deep cuts in existing nuclear arsenals. India also believes the nuclear arsenals of the major powers must move towards a less threatening posture. Deep nuclear cuts could be an important step towards the long proclaimed Indian objective of total nuclear abolition.

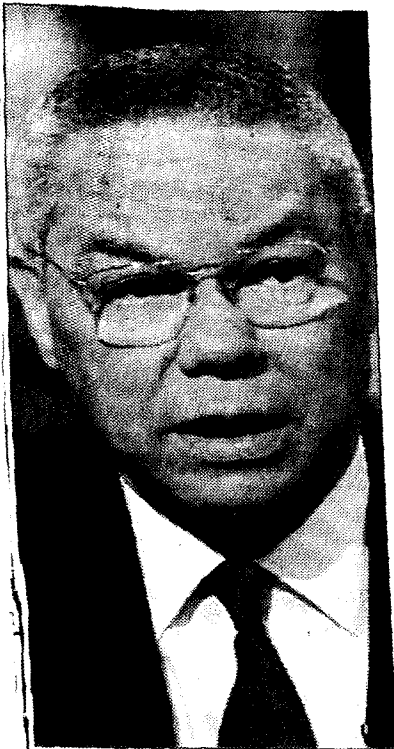
Two, the transition to a defence-oriented nuclear regime must be through negotiations and widest possible consultations among the nuclear powers in order to ensure stability. Russia itself might not be averse to a negotiated modification of the ABM treaty. Three, there is a strong need for political and technological cooperation among the major powers in promoting a defensive nuclear regime. In the U.S., itself, the idea of cooperating with others has been central in the evolution of the thinking on defences.

Four, in the creation of a more effective international regime against proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, the U.S. needs to treat India as part of the solution and not the problem. That logic was built into the Jaswant-Talbott dialogue but could not be taken to its logical conclusion because of the basic limitations of the nuclear thinking within the Clinton Administration. But the nuclear departures being proposed by the Bush Administration may hold out the prospect, if only over the longer term, for a better nuclear understanding between New Delhi and Washington.

THE HINDU

14 MAR 2001

Delhi drive to maintain Clinton-era tempo



Powell

FROM PRANAY SHARMA

New Delhi, March 8: South Block is pressing for a bilateral meeting between foreign minister Jaswant Singh and US secretary of state Colin Powell this month.

The government is insisting on an early date for the meeting because it is keen not to lose the initiative in the current bonhomie in Indo-US relations and also because it wants to build up "an early rapport" with the new dispensation in Washington.

Though it's a bilateral visit where the entire gamut of the India-US relations will come up for review, the proposed trip is being termed as a "familiarisation" programme for Singh with the key players in the Bush administration, particularly Powell.

If the visit materialises, it will not only be the first meeting between the two, but also the first high-level visit from Delhi to Washington after the Bush became President early this year.

Senior foreign ministry officials here feel that earlier Singh builds a rapport with his Ameri-

can counterpart the better. "Moreover, we should not let go of the momentum the two sides have been able to build during the Clinton administration," an official in South Block said.

Chinese foreign minister Tang Jiangxuan and British foreign secretary Robin Cook have had meetings with their American counterpart over the past few months. South Block officials feel Singh should not lag behind.

The only problem with the dates of Singh's visit — which are still being worked out — is that the foreign minister is also the leader of Rajya Sabha and, therefore, may not be able to be away from the country for a long time when Parliament is in session.

But external affairs ministry officials argue that Parliament is in session for nearly six months in a year and though it curtails trips abroad for the foreign minister, it should not be made to stand in the way of his undertaking important visits.

The provision for regular interactions between the Indian for-

9/13
eign minister and the US secretary of state has already been thought of in the Vision Statement the two sides announced during the visit of Bill Clinton to the country early last year. Though it is unlikely that Singh will get a chance to meet the President, he will get the opportunity of meeting other key functionaries, including Vice-President Dick Cheney and national security adviser Condeleeza Rice.

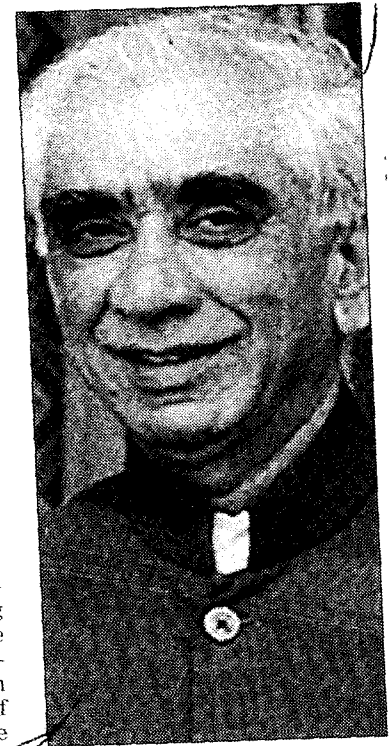
Though Singh got a number of opportunities of interacting with his former US counterpart Madeleine Albright, his main discussion on key issues like disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation were held with the number two in the state department, Strobe Talbott. The two had last met in London in January during the 12th round of their talks on these key issues, before Clinton embarked on his state visit to India — the first American President to come here in 22 years.

Despite the excellent personal chemistry between Singh and Talbott, no meetings between the two had taken place after Clinton's

visit. This is primarily because the Clinton administration was at the end of its tenure. And perhaps because there was no further movement on the contentious issue of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) — an agreement on which the Americans were keen to see Delhi put its signature to.

Singh can at least go ahead with the meeting with Powell in the full knowledge that CTBT under the Bush administration is no more an issue. The Republicans had played a key role in ensuring that the American Senate does not ratify it. It is unlikely that they will press India to put its signature to the treaty, which, according to many experts, is almost a dead agreement.

This apart, the two sides will get a chance to talk about a number of important issues, including the US-proposed national missile defence system, international terrorism, developments in Afghanistan and the status of India-Pakistan relations and the possibility of resuming their stalled dialogue.



Jaswant

At a time when it should be cultivating the new Bush team, India is sending out wrong signals

Beating about the Bush

BY BRAHMA CHELLANEY

APR-8
\$73

BILL CLINTON and George W. Bush were born in the same year, graduated from college in the same year, and rose from being governors of their home states to leading their country. But these two baby boomers are as different as can be found in the American political class. The Bush presidency will be far removed from the Clinton approach and style.

Clinton was a wily showman, with a knack for stealing other people's ideas and playing to the public gallery. What he lacked most was consistency, as shown by the way his policies zigged and zagged. He cared little for his touted goals. The Clinton Doctrine, in keeping with its author, was largely exhibitionist, leaving things messier wherever the President intervened.

Bush, in contrast, is a methodical planner and tenacious plodder, whose policies will be founded on clear principles and strategies. He has wasted no time as President to plainly lay out his National Missile Defence priority. At a time of unparalleled American prosperity and dominance, it needed a resolute strategist like him to edge out the incumbent vice president, however contentiously.

Indian diplomacy has to deal with the profound change that has taken place in Washington. Although the Democratic Party is a sizeable minority, the fact remains that Washington today is a Republican city, with the White House, Senate and House in Republican control. For the first time since 1956, the Democrats don't control any of the centres of the government. For India, there is no "my dear Strobe" to hold secret talks with. Nor is there a President who knows how to massage the Indian ego without delivering on substance.

Clinton had no India policy, even in the last nine months of his presidency when he made himself immensely popular with the Indian chattering class. Clinton demonstrated his lack of understanding or concern for the world's largest democracy throughout his administration. He was the first US President to raise Kashmir in his UN address. He also sold hundreds of millions of dollars worth of high-tech arms to Islamabad under the Hank Brown amendment, and grouped India with North Korea and Pakistan in his State of the Union address.

When he finally came to India towards the fag end of his presidency, he exulted over Indian food and his dance with Rajasthani village women. But what did he deliver? If he spent five days in India and just five hours in Islamabad, it is because Pakistan has been doing a great job soiling its international image, what with its Kargil invasion and subsequent military coup and its enduring support to the Taliban. Before leaving the White House, Clinton let China off the hook on its missile transfers to Pakistan and blessed an IMF bailout package



REACH OUT TO HIM: President Bush at the Chicago Mercantile Exchange

for Islamabad.

After the sterile years under Clinton, the US and India now have an opportunity to begin forging a real strategic partnership. The growing convergence of Indian and US interests in Asia undergirds the need for such a partnership. India, however, is sending out wrong signals, even if inadvertently, at a time when it should be assiduously cultivating the new Bush team.

An easy way to be unpopular with the Bush White House is to be associated with the Washington-based lobbying firm, Verner, Liipfert, Bernhard, McPherson and Hand, a firm that for long has funded the Texan Democratic establishment. Founded by men close to fellow Texan President Lyndon B. Johnson, Verner, Liipfert, *et al* has over the decades provided seed money to Texan Democrats seeking national office. It funded Lloyd Bentsen, who beat Bush senior in a Seventies Senate race, and incumbent Governor Ann Richards, who lost to Bush junior and now works for that firm.

Such is the Bush family's allergy to Verner, Liipfert, *et al* that Republican Senator Dan Coats was whispered to have lost out to Donald Rumsfeld for the Defence Secretary's job because he works for that firm. Nonetheless, India still retains Verner, Liipfert, *et al* for lobbying.

Another wrong Indian signal to the Bush White House is the latest controversy over Enron. The Texas-based Enron Corp. is headed by close Bush buddy Kenneth Lay. As the single largest contributor to the Bush campaign, donating more than half a million dollars, Lay has a direct line to the President.

The Nineties Enron deal — the largest ever single foreign investment in India — was advertised as the harbinger of major FDI flow. But such was the Indian zeal to clinch the deal that Enron was given exceptionally sugared terms, including a pricing formula that saddled the state electricity board with the liability of a surge in international oil price and a fall in the rupee exchange value. Even before the Dabhol project's three times larger second phase has been commissioned, Maharashtra cannot afford the electricity bills. The newest Enron controversy, unfortunately, erupted just as Bush entered the White House.

The worst signal to the Bush White House is India's readiness to host a visit by Clinton, who wants to emulate another former US President, Jimmy Carter, as a peace broker and global healer. Clinton, in his first major overseas trip since leaving the White House, is tentatively scheduled to begin a tour of earthquake-ravaged Gujarat from April 2.

Clinton's coming to India at a time when he is engulfed by a swirl of controversy, particularly over his midnight pardons of more than 140 felons, can only yield negative publicity. It will take Clinton a lifetime to rebuild his shattered image. The scandals show him as a corrupt, self-centred man: the connection between donor pledges to the Clinton Library Foundation and certain pardons; the role of his brother and brother-in-law in pleading the cases of drug dealers and other assorted felons; the release of four convicted swindlers in exchange for votes from their Hasidic Jewish community for Hillary Clinton; and the Marc Rich par-

don after the fugitive broker funnelled money to Clinton and the Democratic Party through his ex-wife. Now it is easier to understand how China managed to buy influence all the way up to the Clinton White House.

Although the idea of a Gujarat tour was suggested to Clinton by some members of the Indian-American community, his planned visit puts India in a tight spot. While the 'healer' Clinton seeks atonement in his trip, efforts to address homelessness and inadequate relief in Gujarat can only be disrupted by another high-profile tour. At a time when storm clouds still follow Clinton and few Democrats are willing to offer even a token defence of him, India would do well to advise him to come some other time.

The tour is unlikely to make India popular with the Republicans who would like Clinton to continue to stew in his own soup at home. All this at a time when India can ill-afford to take the risk of getting on the wrong side of Bush Inc. As it is, the Government of India stirred up an avoidable impression during the US presidential campaign that it favoured Gore.

This notion was reinforced by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's poorly timed visit to Washington and New York last September and his meetings with Gore, Hillary Clinton, *et al* and some Democratic fund-raisers from the Indian-American community. In the presidential race, the Indian-American community — which has been playing a central role in rallying support for India in Washington — erred in putting most of its eggs in the Democratic basket.

India will have to work hard to develop a rapport with the Bush team, which includes a who's who of corporate America. While China has been quick to appoint a new ambassador in Washington personally known to the Bush family, India can boast of no such special connection. But India enjoys a greater commonality of interests with the US. Bush's national-security agenda, although driven by hawks, is of no direct concern to India.

In Asia, where China is anything but a status quo power, there can be no power equilibrium without New Delhi and Washington working together on shared interests. Vajpayee, who could not meet Bush last September, should plan an early working visit to Washington.

If India is to be an important element in the Bush foreign policy, it has to be seen in Washington as a reliable strategic partner. This in turn means that it should be able to contribute tangibly to any joint strategy and deliver on its part of the bargain. An India that is unable to deal with Pakistan-backed terrorists in Kashmir and allows the situation there to become messier, and is too diffident on China, will be treated the way it has been by all previous US administrations — in a purely subcontinental framework.

Are Indo-US relations going off the rails?

Early days yet

98-6
873

WHEN George W. Bush took over as president of the United States, the general expectation was that there would be continuity in Indo-US relations. This was based on the views expressed by Bush in his election campaign and Secretary of State General Colin Powell talking about the need to give more attention to India in his testimony before the US Congress during his confirmation hearing. Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee had spoken to Bush on telephone during his visit to Washington in September. His Principal Secretary Brajesh Mishra had met Bush's National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice. There were signals that there shall be continuity in Indo-US relations. The earthquake in Gujarat was an unexpected catalyst for testing this assumption. Bush spoke to Vajpayee immediately after the earthquake conveying sympathy and concern and assurances of relief assistance. Condoleezza Rice spoke to Mishra on the same lines.

The senior foreign and security policy appointments made so far by Bush confirmed assessments regarding continuity. Vice-President Cheney and new Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld are experienced hands in security problems, having been defence secretaries in the previous Republican administration. General Colin Powell as Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff oversaw the beginning of defence cooperation on security matters between India and the US in the 1990s. Richard Armitage, whom Bush had appointed as Deputy Secretary of State for Defence, has dealt with Asia and the Far East during the Reagan administration. Bush has not appointed an Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia to succeed Karl Inderfurth.

The month of February witnessed some critical developments in Indo-US relations. First, the US threatening imposition of trade sanctions on Indian exports to the US, if India did not remove quantitative restrictions on importing

soda ash from the US. (It is not an accident that Vice-President Cheney comes from Wyoming, the largest soda ash producing state in the US).

Then the US Secretary for Defence Donald Rumsfeld, while describing Russia as a nuclear proliferator, criticised Russia for supplying nuclear reactors for power generation to countries like Libya, North Korea and India, which could constitute a security threat to the US. Rumsfeld's clubbing India with Libya and North Korea is resented in India, and generated concern about the Bush government's attitude. Rumsfeld's statement was compounded by the

ing a visit to New Delhi in January said that India and the US should be prepared to face some hiccups in bilateral relations as the new US administration settles down.

How should one react in terms of policy towards these developments. First, we must remember the mindset of the top political figures advising Bush on foreign and security policies. Cheney, Rumsfeld and Colin Powell have a mindset of the Republican administrations of the 80s and the 90s. They were participants in the US' assertive postures against the former Soviet Union and the architects of its Middle East policies culminating in



J. N. DIXIT

The new policy makers of the Bush administration would do well to remember that punitive restrictions against India have never worked

US State Department spokesman's statement in which he suggested that Russia should not supply uranium fuel for the Tarapur atomic power reactor. He proceeded to suggest that Russia should pull back from the contracts which it has signed with India for supplying reactors to be located in Tamil Nadu.

The fourth critical development was the US carrying out air strikes against Iraq without referring the matter to the Security Council. The US spokesman justified this action as a routine operation within the framework of the earlier Security Council resolutions. India was sharply critical of the air strikes. The Government of India considered them unnecessary and increasing the sufferings of the people of Iraq.

The question is whether Indo-US relations are again going off the rails or whether these developments are only a temporary phase. That such difficulties may arise was not unexpected. Frank Wisner, former US envoy to India, dur-

the Gulf War. Their perceptions about India and Pakistan is also rooted in their experiences of this period.

Rumsfeld's views about Russia being a nuclear proliferator is a reaction to Russia's opposition to the National Missile Defence which the Bush administration proposes to implement, combined with Theatre Missile Defence plans in the Far East.

While on issues like the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, the US may not be insistent with India because the Bush administration itself is not keen on it, it (the Bush Administration) would want India to remain under general pressure for falling in line with the global non-proliferation agenda of the US. Bush policy planners may have the assessment that while asking India to roll back its nuclear capacities may not be a practical proposition, the attempt to freeze India's nuclear capacities could be a feasible objective. The US objecting to supplies of nuclear fuel to the Tarapur reactor is and

should be a matter of serious concern for India, as it has significant economic and technological implications. There is every reason to examine the implications of these critical developments and Washington must also take note of the fact that over the last two months, Mishra has had useful discussions with Donald Rumsfeld and with Condoleezza Rice on the expansion of Indo-US relations. The US has lifted sanctions against the supplies of spare parts for Sea King helicopters of the Indian Navy. One can hope for some practicality in the USA's attitudes towards India, given these latter interactions. One should also wait for the full complement of South Asia Policy advisers to take position in the US government. So far Assistant and Deputy Assistant Secretaries for South Asia have not been appointed. So Rumsfeld might not have had the benefit of relevant political advice, while he had inputs from the non-proliferation hawk when he made the statement referred to.

The new policy makers of the US would also do well to remember that punitive restrictions against India have never worked. The US stopped the supply of Russian cryogenic booster engines for Indian satellites. There was a certain delay but India developed its own booster engines by the late 90s. US sanctions, post-Pokharan, created difficulties for India but they did not make any impact on India's policies. One hopes that the Bush administration exercises its capacity for historical recall in these respects while formulating its India policy. India should remember that Clinton came to terms with India and adopted a positive attitude only during the second half of his second term. In the first five-and-a-half years of his presidency India was not even a blip on his foreign policy radar screen. There is no cause for alarm or disappointment. India's reactions need not be instant and reactive. Let us come to conclusions after the six-month or one-year period about President Bush's policies towards India.

INDIAN EXPRESS

8 MAR 2001

Indo-Russian cooperation betrays US Cold War hangover

'India is desperate for energy and if America doesn't help, someone else will'

BY ASHISH KUMAR SEN

San Francisco, Feb. 23: Washington's concern over the growing cooperation between India and Russia in the transfer of nuclear technology and fuel betrays a post-Cold War hangover, one that some experts believe could put considerable strain on Indo-US relations.

Last week, US defence secretary Donald Rumsfeld's warning that Russian weapons technology provided to India was posing a threat to the United States was promptly corroborated by a statement from the state department saying it regretted Russia had shipped nuclear fuel to the Tarapur power reactors. The state department called for the deal to be scrapped.

Prof. Sumit Ganguly, a professor of Asian studies and government at the University of Texas, Austin, was critical of both Mr Rumsfeld as well as the state department accusing them of being stuck in a "Cold War time warp."

"These comments are going to play very badly in future Indo-US relations," Prof. Ganguly predicted, adding, "It was an incredibly thoughtless statement from Washington." "Mr Rumsfeld is stuck in

a time warp... Those in power must realise that the Cold War is over. It is comments such as these which are indicators that President Bush's advisers haven't come to terms with the changed world order," he said.

Mr Rumsfeld had said in an interview that armed with nuclear technology from Russia, countries like India, Iran and North Korea were proving a threat to the US and Western Europe.

"To club India with Iran is an insult," fumed Prof. Ganguly. "This reveals how little India matters to Washington in spite of secretary of state Colin Powell's encouraging remarks on US-India relations."

Ms Teresita C. Schaffer, director of the South Asia programme at the Washington-based Centre for Strategic and International Studies, said this was a problem more between the US and Russia rather than the US and India.

"On Washington's side it's an issue more with Russia than India," she said, adding, "Russia is still a wobbly point when it comes to non-proliferation. But I won't say the present situation has nothing to do with India."

From 1989 to 1992, Ms Schaffer

served as deputy assistant secretary of state for South Asia, at that time the senior South Asia position in the state department.

Pointing out that disagreements between the US and Russia over deals concerning nuclear technology had been around for a long time, Ms Schaffer said the Clinton administration would have reacted in a similar manner.

"However, at that time these deals had still not been formalised," she added.

Recent reports suggest a Russian willingness to help in the construction of four more nuclear reactors for the Kudamkulam power plant in Tamil Nadu.

The deal to supply Kudamkulam's first two reactors was formally signed in 1988 but revived only in 1997 when the supplement to the agreement was signed.

A Russian daily also reported New Delhi and Moscow could be close to clinching a deal on leasing a Russian nuclear submarine to the Indian Navy.

Mr Stephen Cohen, senior fellow, foreign policy studies, at the Washington-based Brookings Institution wasn't sure how these recently-aided concerns would play in Washington as the new adminis-

tration hadn't even set up a South Asian bureau as yet.

But he conceded that the Bush team needed to "take another look" at such defence deals and sanctions. "We need to understand more fully the military balance implications of Russia's dealings with India. It's unlikely to upset the present balance in the region and will probably increase, only marginally, India's defence capabilities vis-à-vis China," Mr Cohen explained.

Calling the US an "unreliable defence partner," Mr Cohen said, "It's for the simple reason that we keep slapping sanctions on other countries. Even if India wanted to engage the US in such a partnership it would be hesitant to do so for this very reason."

While Mr Philip Reeker, a spokesperson for the state department, termed Russia's supply of nuclear fuel to the Tarapur power reactors in India a "violation of Russia's non-proliferation commitments," Prof. Ganguly retorted that it was the US that was violating international law by not supplying fuel to Tarapur.

An agreement had been worked out under President Jimmy Carter's adminis-

tration after which the French started supplying India with nuclear fuel for the reactor at Tarapur.

"The US, which helped India set up the plant at Tarapur, should now assist in shutting it down. It's an unsafe plant," Prof. Ganguly said. "India is desperate for energy and if the US doesn't help someone else will."

Saying statements such as Mr Rumsfeld's betrayed a "pathological insensitivity" towards India, Prof. Ganguly added, "If things continue in this vein I see much of the good work achieved by Mr Jaswant Singh and Mr Strobe Talbott unravelling."

As a member of the 39-nation Nuclear Suppliers Group, Russia is committed not to engage in nuclear cooperation with any country that does not have comprehensive safeguards on all its nuclear facilities.

Mr Reeker said that at a December 2000 meeting of the Nuclear Suppliers Group, an "overwhelming majority" of the members expressed their strong concerns about Russia's planned shipment of nuclear fuel to India, which they regarded as inconsistent with Russia's commitments.

Rejecting Washington's protestations, officials in New Delhi said Tarapur was fully under International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards and that the Americans had themselves once supplied fuel to it. Prof. Ganguly pointed out that regardless of what the US wanted, India would continue with its nuclear weapons programme. "India clearly is not high on Washington's list of priorities. President Bush hasn't even appointed an ambassador to India," he said.

Mr Cohen presented a less pessimistic view saying there had been "no significant departure" in Indo-US ties so far.

"However, there are still a lot of unanswered questions," he said, adding, "While the Bush administration will not be too bothered about the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, non-proliferation is still a major concern for it."

He was optimistic that remaining sanctions against India would "go very quickly." Ms Schaffer echoed Mr Cohen's point of view adding there would not be a significant change in President Bush's policy towards India. "The things that basically determine the relationship are pretty well set," she said.

Friends of India in US focus on sanctions

FROM OUR SPECIAL
CORRESPONDENT

New Delhi, Feb. 21: India caucus co-chairman Ed Royce today said one of his top priorities was to get Washington to lift the post-Pokhran sanctions on Delhi.

The visiting Republican, who skipped the visit to Pakistan this afternoon, said US secretary of state Colin Powell had made very encouraging noises on the issue. "We want to take advantage of this opportunity and throw the sanctions on India out of the door," he said.

Royce said lifting of the sanctions, including those on the defence sector, would create the right atmosphere for India to get access to dual-use technology.

Royce had come to India on February 17 with three other members of the India caucus in connection with relief for the Gujarat quake. The team had also stopped over in Mumbai for the international fleet review.

Though Royce held talks with Hurriyat leaders, he and another Republican Joe Pitts today chose not to go Islamabad citing prior engagements. Pitts flew back home this morning.

The decision to skip the visit fuelled speculation that the US was serving a reminder to Pakistan that it was unhappy that the country had not taken steps to restore democracy. At the same time, the visiting leaders were proof that Islamabad was not to-



Royce in Delhi. (AFP)

tally off the US agenda.

Royce said his team had discussed the evolution of the ceasefire with the Prime Minister and senior Cabinet members. "The Indian caucus is supportive of the peace initiative taken by the Indian government in Jammu and Kashmir... We know where it is meant to lead and we hope it is leading there," he said.

Royce said though the Indian caucus was the second most-important pressure group in Capitol Hill, it had to go a long way to make American investors interested in a big way in India. Referring to a recent survey where 56 per cent American investors readily agreed to invest in China, Royce said only 14 per cent were willing to put money into India. "Our main task is to think of ways of bringing India firmly on the US trade map," he said.

THE TELEGRAPH 1

22 FEB 2001

New Delhi is growing complacent in its US policy

The power to hurt

DIPLOMACY

K.P. NAYAR

Here is a story which the new United States secretary of defence, Donald Rumsfeld, recently told an audience, among them India's national security adviser and principal secretary to the prime minister, Brajesh Mishra. Speaking at a conference on European security policy in Munich, Germany, the 69-year-old Rumsfeld said that on his flight to Munich, he had read some eight newspaper articles, some of which reminded him that he was US ambassador to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization 28 years earlier; others told him that he was America's youngest secretary of defence 25 years ago, but now he is the oldest.

Rumsfeld continued: "My wife, Joyce, has read so many of these articles in recent days that when I wake up in the morning now, she rolls over, looks at me, and says, 'Well, old timer, do you think you are going to be able to make it out of bed?'" The anecdote has far greater significance than what Rumsfeld intended to convey to his audience. Rumsfeld acknowledged in Munich that "Europe today is different from the Europe that I lived in as ambassador to Nato". So is the world. If Rumsfeld is aware of what these changes have meant to humanity — as he well seems to be — it can only be positive for American diplomacy and the international community.

But herein lies the problem. And countries like India are going to be at the receiving end of the problem. Even as the new US secretary of defence freely acknowledges that he is dealing with an altogether new world in his second tour of duty at the Pentagon, he genuinely believes that he has played a historic role in making this new world possible. "I approved the M-1 tank and that is the main battle tank", Rumsfeld has said on record more than once since he returned to the Pentagon last month. "I was at the roll-out of the F-16 aircraft, and the F-15 was brand new, and I approved the B-1 bomber. That is all 25 years ago. These capabilities are what we have today in large measure."

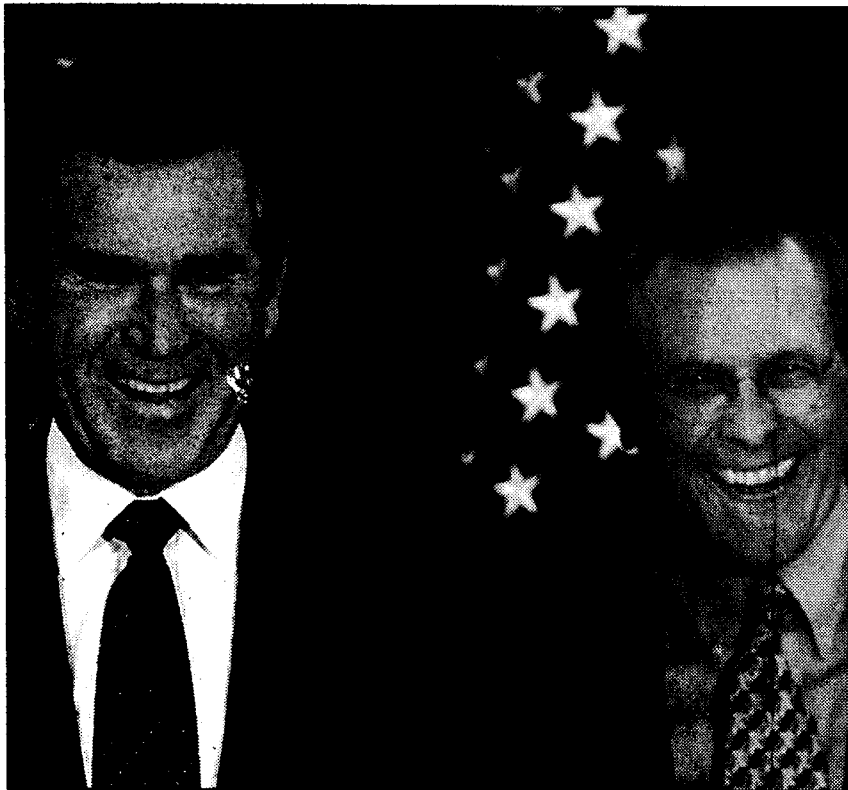
Rumsfeld is on record that "the world has changed dramatically since most of the capabilities of our current military were fashioned." It is a matter of deep conviction for Rumsfeld that because he ordered and supervised the building of these capabilities, "we do not get up every morning and expect the Soviet Union to come back to life and come racing across the north German plain or to be poised with a ballistic missile attack against the US".

No wonder that Rumsfeld's second tour of duty as secretary of defence is often described as "back to the future". No wonder at all that Rumsfeld said what he said about India last week. To briefly recapitulate, the new secretary of defence remarked on one of America's most-watched television news programmes that sale of weapons technologies to India, North Korea and Iran was a major proliferation problem facing the George W. Bush

administration, that these technologies in the hands of Iran, North Korea and India "are threatening other people including the US, western Europe and countries in west Asia".

Much as South Block, smitten by the US, would have liked to have pretended that Rumsfeld never made those comments, the US state department made

Second, is there anything that India can do about it? There is nothing so far to suggest that the Bush administration is in any way inimical to India. Quite the contrary. In fact, Bush said after his telephone conversation with the prime minister that the call to 7, Race Course Road would have been made even if the earthquake had not occurred in Gujarat. But



this impossible for the mandarins of Raisina Hill. Spiking rumours of differences of opinion between Rumsfeld and the new secretary of state, Colin Powell, the former said a few days ago: "That is utter nonsense...there is no daylight between Colin Powell's views...and my views". As if to prove this point, within 48 hours of Rumsfeld's outburst against India, Powell's state department called upon Russia to halt shipments of nuclear fuel to reactors in Tarapur. It now turns out that during the transition from Bill Clinton's presidency to that of George W. Bush, the US had led the effort among the 39-nation Nuclear Suppliers Group to stop Russia from supplying nuclear fuel to India. Unsuccessfully as it turned out.

Two questions are relevant in the context of these early signals from the Bush administration of a low level of comfort with India. First, is this administration against India and do these statements mark a return to the pre-Bill Clinton era when the world's most powerful democracy and the most populous democracy distanced themselves from each other?

In the Republican world of black and white, India is a proliferator of weapons of mass destruction

the fact remains that the Republican White House needs a whipping boy or several whipping boys in order to go to a near-evenly divided congress and get money for the horrendously expensive national missile defence system which Bush is committed to.

And the favourite whipping boy, as far as one can see, is going to be Russia. But this is not to say that India is only incidental to the process. There has been great rejoicing in New Delhi that the Bush administration will not resubmit the comprehensive test ban treaty to the US senate, which refused to ratify it during the Democratic presidency.

There are people in South Block and sections of the National Democratic Alliance government who have equated

this reluctance by Republicans to ratify the CTBT with some sort of empathy with India's own principled opposition to global test ban the way it is structured now. The truth, though, is very different.

The Bush administration's commitment to non-proliferation is deep. Unlike in the Clinton administration, there are no two views on relations with India in the context of non-proliferation in the present White House. Those in New Delhi who think that the Bush administration will turn a blind eye to India's pursuit of nuclear deterrence are living in a fool's paradise. Of course, it is another matter that the White House is quite helpless about it: that there is very little it can do to roll back or eliminate India's nuclear strength.

The Republicans now in power see proliferation of weapons technologies as being at the root of insecurity and instability in the post-Cold War world. They see America's vulnerabilities in future as stemming from the access which Washington's enemies have to such technology. India may not fit into the description of an enemy of the US the way Iran or North Korea does, never mind the fact that the Republicans do not consider New Delhi as an ally either. But in the Republican world of black or white — with no room for grey — India is a proliferator of weapons of mass destruction.

New Delhi is not a signatory to the nuclear non-proliferation treaty which the Bush administration is sworn to uphold. New Delhi does not accept comprehensive safeguards by the International Atomic Energy Agency for its nuclear installations. New Delhi is also a missile proliferator, and as the Bush administration sees it, promotes instability in Asia through an arms race with Pakistan. In Rumsfeld's world view, which is rooted in the time when he was Gerald Ford's secretary of defence, an impending deal between Moscow and New Delhi for leasing a Russian nuclear submarine may be yet another "provocation" on the highway of a grand conspiracy against America, which Cold Warriors made the most of in Washington for many decades.

This is a scenario which India can do without after its recent bonhomie with the US. But in order to avoid any slide-back in relations, urgent steps are needed on South Block's part to balance the administration's actions. Stepped up activity on Capitol Hill is one way of checking the Rumsfelds in the new administration before the gains of the Clinton presidency in terms of Indo-US relations are negated.

The record of Indian government activity in recent weeks certainly does not inspire confidence. That the leaders of the India caucus on Capitol Hill have gone to south Asia — to India as well as to Pakistan — in search of an inevitably elusive solution to the Kashmir dispute is a sure indication that complacency is setting into New Delhi's America policy after the dizzying successes of the last two years.

Back to nuclear bickering with U.S.?

19/2 By C. Raja Mohan PD-13

NEW DELHI, FEB. 18. Will India and the United States get back to the familiar nuclear bickering of the past? The choice is entirely up to the Bush Administration, informed sources here suggest. On its part, the Government appears to be holding its fire to give the benefit of the doubt to the new mandarins in Washington who are expected to take some more time to settle down and come to grips with the minutiae of various policy issues.

It would take very little for New Delhi to slam the remarks of the U.S. Defence Secretary, Mr. Donald Rumsfeld, a few days ago clubbing India with Iran and North Korea and categorising them as countries threatening the security of the U.S. and its allies. Nor is it difficult for New Delhi to challenge the interpretation of the U.S. State Department that the nuclear cooperation between India and Russia violates the international norms.

Those who live in glass houses should not be throwing stones. Accusing others of violating arms control agreements does not sit well with an administration which wants to scrap the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty with Russia, and has refused to ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty which the U.S. has sponsored with so much fanfare in the early 1990s.

Mr. Rumsfeld thinks the ABM treaty is a relic of the Cold War. He argues that the conditions that generated the treaty no longer exist, and hence wants to either revise or scrap the agreement. India too believes that the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) is an anachronism. New Delhi argues the nuclear rules derived from the NPT are neither effective nor capable of addressing the complex realities on the ground.

Just as Washington wants to change the nuclear rules, which prevent it from moving forward on missile defences, New Delhi too thinks the current non-proliferation regime must be revised to accommodate India's interests. Both Russia and France believe the time has come to change some of the outmoded non-proliferation rules that end up targeting only India.

Passage of time and evolution of technology have in any case begun to make many of the past principles of arms control irrelevant. Instead of grandstanding in public, the Bush Administration must find a way to build on the nuclear dialogue that took place between the

two countries after India's nuclear tests in May 1998. A new and more purposeful dialogue between the two might produce more common ground on arms control issues than many think possible at this moment.

Mr. Rumsfeld's nuclear remarks have not come out of the blue. In the last few weeks there has been a sustained campaign against Russian nuclear exports. Late last month, in a leader article, *The Economist* from London accused Moscow of cheating on international nuclear agreements. The article titled, 'Russia breaks its word', cited the Russian decision to supply enriched uranium fuel to the Tarapur Reactor and the agreement to sell nuclear reactors to India. A few days later, the Director of U.S. Central Intelligence, Mr. George Tenet, told the U.S. Congress that Russia is using trade in sensitive technologies to promote its relations with countries such as China, India and Iran. Mr. Rumsfeld has now followed with his own tirade.

India is clearly caught in the new crossfire between the U.S. and Russia on nuclear arms

DIPLOMATIC NOTEBOOK

control issues. Russia is campaigning against the Bush Administration's plans to build missile defences. And the U.S. is accusing Russia of being an "active proliferator". The Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin, has, in fact, come up with comprehensive proposals to rework the current non-proliferation regime to facilitate greater international cooperation in peaceful uses of sensitive technologies while curbing more effectively the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

To avoid being a victim of this new tension between Washington and Moscow, New Delhi needs to articulate a comprehensive view on missile defences, nuclear arms reduction and non-proliferation to stake out a position of its own in the incipient great debate on nuclear issues.

Meanwhile, it is quite clear that one hand of the Bush Administration does not know what the other is doing. Here is the Secretary of State, Mr. Colin Powell, calling on the U.S. "to deal more wisely" with India and initiate a broader engagement with New Delhi. But the word has not clearly reached Mr. Rumsfeld

who rather casually brings up India in a discussion of Russian nuclear policies.

In his first testimony to the Congress, Mr. Powell said, "Soon to be the most populous country in the world, India has the potential to keep the peace in the vast Indian Ocean area and its periphery. We need to work harder and more consistently to assist India in this endeavour".

This is the first time ever that the U.S. has talked about a role for India in maintaining peace and stability in the Indian Ocean region. It will clearly be a long while before this objective is reconciled with the differences with New Delhi over non-proliferation and other issues.

Seasoned observers of U.S. politics say mixed signals are quite common in the early days of a new administration. It takes many months before the foreign policy team of a new President finds a coherent set of ideas and a rhythm in their articulation and implementation. It may be sensible then to wait and watch than respond with full-blown rhetoric against every statement from Washington. But it is equally important for India to convey its displeasure through appropriate channels.

There is no hiding the fact that the non-proliferation establishment in Washington remains a big obstacle to improved relations between India and the United States. The non-proliferation fundamentalists in the U.S. have been sore with President Bill Clinton for letting India "get away lightly" with its "defiance" of the international nuclear order in May 1998.

Instead of "punishing" New Delhi, they believe, Mr. Clinton was "seduced" by the charms of India. They argue that President Clinton had during his visit to India in March 2000 had "over-compensated" for Washington's past neglect of New Delhi.

How could they accept the fact that India's nuclear tests were followed by a highly successful visit of an American President to India, the first in 22 years and a quick return visit by the Indian Prime Minister with no real movement in resolving nuclear differences. New Delhi must expect that the non-proliferation lobby in Washington will create more problems for Indo-U.S. relations in the coming months, and devise a smart diplomatic strategy to overcome the challenge.

THE HINDU

19 FEB 2001

USA protests Russian N-supply

gndv-wj 57-10-82

are under International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards, India does not have such safeguards on all of its facilities and is indeed pursuing a nuclear weapons programme.

As a member of the 39-nation Nuclear Suppliers Group, Russia is committed not to engage in nuclear cooperation with any country that does not have comprehensive IAEA safeguards on all its nuclear facilities, Reeker said.

At an NSG meeting in December 2000, the majority expressed their strong concerns about Russia's planned shipment of nuclear fuel to India.

Mr Reeker further said Russia's help to India and its "sensitive nuclear assistance"

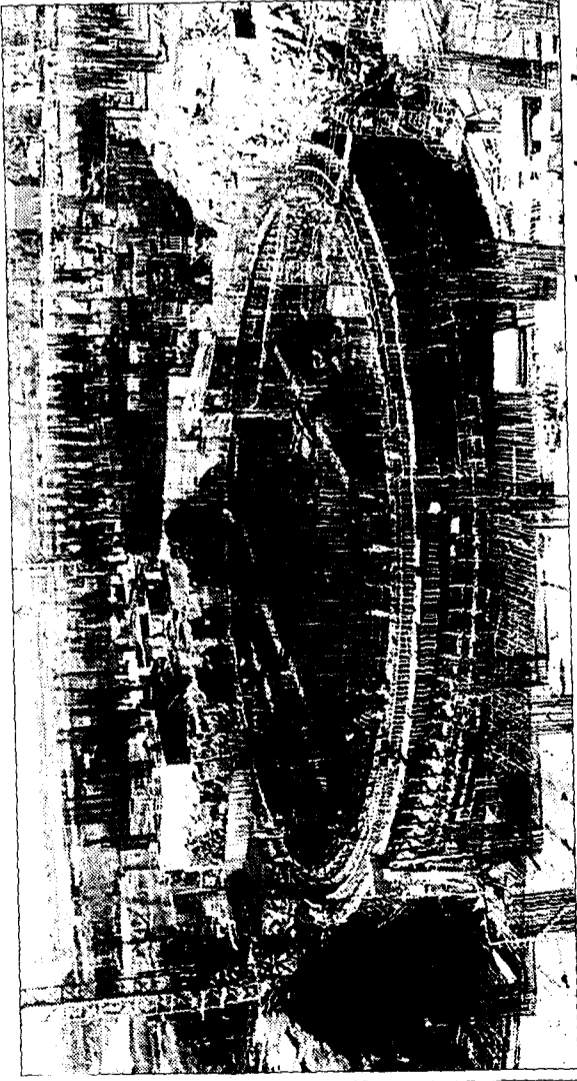
When it broke its commitment to supply fuel to Tarapur for the life of the plant, by retroactive legislation demanding full-scope safeguards, i.e. safeguards over not only that plant but all of India's nuclear facilities, it had a bad impact on Indo-American relations, they added.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

WASHINGTON, Feb. 17. - Strongly objecting to Russia's supply of nuclear fuel for India's Tarapur power reactors, Washington has asked Moscow to cancel the arrangement which "violates" its non-proliferation commitments.

"We deeply regret that the Russian Federation has shipped nuclear fuel to the Tarapur power reactors in India in violation of Russia's non-proliferation commitments" and call on Moscow "to cancel this supply arrangement and live up to its non-proliferation obligations," state department spokesman Philip Reeker said in a statement yesterday.

"Although Tarapur reactors



The first indigenous 500 MW pressurised heavy water nuclear reactor under construction at Tarapur. It's expected to be complete by 2004. - PTI

THE STATESMAN

10 FEB 2001

American arms swipe strains honeymoon

FROM K.P. NAYAR

Washington, Feb. 16: America's new Republican administration has clubbed India with Iran and North Korea and accused New Delhi of being a proliferator in the technologies of mass destruction.

Worse, it has openly said that the US is threatened by such proliferation of missiles and other weapons.

The allegation, the most serious against India's arms policies since Indira Gandhi ordered the Pokhran nuclear tests 27 years ago, was made by the new US secretary of defence, Donald Rumsfeld, in a highly respected TV programme, *News Hour with Jim Lehrer*.

The charge, which has the potential of ending the honeymoon between the US administration and Delhi, came only days after Rumsfeld met national security adviser Brajesh Mishra in Germany for the first high-level meeting between the Bush administration and the Atal Bihari Vajpayee government.

Rumsfeld's unexpected outburst came when Lehrer asked him why Russia was objecting to the Bush administration's pet project for National Missile Defence.

"Let us be very honest about what Russia is doing. Russia is an active proliferator; they are part of the problem," he told Lehrer. "They are selling and assisting countries like Iran, North Korea and India ... with these technologies which are threatening other people, including the US and Western Europe and countries in the Middle East."

While India has so far sought to quietly push the allegations

under the carpet, Russia reacted swiftly. "Even America's allies don't believe in the US fairy tales about missile threats that Rumsfeld talks about," Gen. Leonid Ivashov, head of the Russian defence ministry's international relations department, said in Moscow yesterday.

"Russia is irreproachably fulfilling its international obligations, including those under the regime of non-proliferation of missile technologies," he said and ruled out any early meeting between Rumsfeld and his Russian counterpart Igor Sergeev.

Only last week, India had bent over backwards to please the US by refusing to join China in condemning the proposed missile shield. The clubbing of Delhi with North Korea and Iran — renegade states in the eyes of Washington — also show that South Block's calculations about bonhomie with the Bush regime are thoroughly misplaced.

Rumsfeld's comments came even as a four-member Congressional team left for India and Pakistan after announcing its intention to play a role in settling the Kashmir dispute. They also coincided with reports that Delhi and Moscow were close to finalising a deal to lease a Russian nuclear submarine for the Indian Navy.

The charges also came at a time when military contacts between India and the US are at their height because of relief work in Gujarat. Besides, an American naval ship is in Mumbai for the International Fleet Review.

Rumsfeld's comments are, however, a reminder to Delhi that relations with the Bush team will strictly be on America's terms and not the other way round as it was with the Clinton regime.

THE TELEGRAPH

17 FEB 2001

Naresh Chandra to discuss sanctions with Powell

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, FEB. 11. India's outgoing Ambassador to the United States, Mr. Naresh Chandra, is expected to have his first meeting with the U.S. Secretary of State, Gen. Colin Powell, on Monday. Aside from the formalities of the meeting, the Indian envoy is expected to push for early high-level meeting between the two countries. And issues in bilateral relations such as the subject of sanctions are also expected to figure at the meeting.

Mr. Chandra, in an interview with Reuters, has expressed optimism that the remaining sanctions against India would be eased. The coming of "every new administration creates opportunities. . . There is a certain degree of optimism", the top Indian envoy has been quoted. The optimism is well placed in that several lawmakers on Capitol Hill, cutting across party lines, have also been calling for doing away with sanctions and putting bilateral relations on a newer footing.

Through Congressional waivers the Clinton administration which was mandated by law to slap sanctions against India in the aftermath of the 1998 nuclear tests had removed many of the punitive measures, especially in the eve of Mr. Bill Clinton's visit to India last March. But what has been pointed out that some

critical ones, particularly with respect to high technology, remain besides general restrictions on some 150 Indian companies in doing business with the United States. And on Capitol Hill some senior lawmakers have complained that the Clinton administration had not fully used the waivers given.

The general expectation is that the Bush administration will be doing away with sanctions once the State Department's review of the entire gamut of sanctions is completed. Much of the criticism on the issue of sanctions has come from business houses which see it as hurting business and placing restrictions on the development of fuller ties. But for political reasons the Bush administration will keep the punitive measures on countries such as Iraq and Cuba.

Politically, the expectation is that the momentum in bilateral relations will pick up after a meeting between Gen. Powell and India's External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, has taken place. But what is equally important is for other senior slots to be filled in Washington — the two important ones being the post of Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia; and in picking America's envoy to India.

For all the swiftness in which Mr. George W. Bush went about

finalising his Cabinet, the naming of the number two and three tiers of his administration has been slow. This is especially true in the State Department where nominees are yet to be named for the post of Deputy Secretary and the American Ambassador to the United Nations.

In the case of South Asia, for instance, what is pointed out is that the earlier two Clinton administrations had not been much different in naming senior officials in the sense that both Ms. Robin Raphael and Mr. Karl Inderfurth — who served as Assistant Secretaries of State for the region — had only been nominated around March/April of 1993 and 1997 and confirmed by the Senate in July of those years.

The overall impression is that while there will be a change of style in which the Bush administration may deal with India, in substantive terms it will be one of picking up from where the Clinton administration left off, particularly in such areas as terrorism, science and technology, environment and trade.

The Bush administration may not have much use for the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty but Washington is expected to keep the pressure on India and Pakistan on the areas of testing, weaponisation, deployment and export controls.

THE HINDU

12 FEB 2001

India and the Bush administration

By Eric Gonsalves

JUST OVER 20 years ago, before the inauguration of President Reagan, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi sent a special envoy, B. K. Nehru, to test the waters. The response was unexpectedly positive. In the next two years, the dispute over the Tarapur nuclear agreement was resolved. Mrs. Gandhi was invited for a state visit for the first time after Bangladesh and the Emergency. The most successful Festival of India anywhere was set in train. At their first meeting at Cancun differences did not prevent a chemistry from developing between Reagan and Indira Gandhi which continued with Rajiv Gandhi.

All the world is speculating what attitudes the Bush administration will adopt. The uncertainty in Delhi is palpable and may continue for some time as India is not a top priority. That is why it is worthwhile to recall that Republican Presidents have been constructive. During the early Clinton years, while Ms. Robin Raphael was in charge of South Asian affairs, there was a tilt on the surface favouring the Pakistan and human rights lobbies. But as the India hands in the U.S. have been saying for a decade, strategic convergence between Indian and American interests has developed in the post Cold War era. The Clinton and Vajpayee visits have suddenly highlighted this. Even Pokhran-II only caused a limited setback. The need for the new President to seek consensus after the nature of his mandate, his limited experience and the team of professional advisers he brings in should reinforce the trend of continuity.

During his confirmation hearings, the Secretary of State, Gen. Colin Powell, put his finger on the central reason for convergence. Both the U.S. and India are essentially status quo powers. They intervene to maintain the status quo according to their interest. However, their perception of the "status quo" was almost diametrically opposed during the cold war. Dismantling of the colonial empires of America's European allies, challenging U.S. and (Soviet) alliance strategies to expand the scope for independence and development under the

ideology of non-alignment, accepting Soviet military and political aid to maintain the status quo in South Asia, following socialist development policies and keeping out predatory multinationals were obviously in the Indian interest, but were seen in the U.S. as consorting with the enemy under Cold War rubrics. The "communist" threat was very real to the U.S. Government and people and this justified policies inimical to India.

The end of the Cold War, a unipolar world and globalisation have made it necessary to revise these perceptions radically. India and America now share an

this as inevitable while drawing back from the brink of making it a reality. The challenge for India is to hold the initiative in normalisation and stabilisation of the region. This would be an important component of a strategic partnership between India and the U.S. Similar partnerships with like-minded Governments in the Gulf, Central Asia and Southeast Asia are possible.

The visit of the President, Mr. K. R. Narayanan, and the Chinese leader, Mr. Li Peng, have indicated the desire of both India and China to further improve relations even beyond those obtaining before

As the Bush administration gets ready to deal with the outside world, the Indian establishment can use the time to prepare itself to maximise the convergences and minimise the divergences.

interest in maintaining the territorial status quo in Asia and particularly in South Asia and seeing that any dispute (i.e. Kashmir) is settled without violence and by dialogue. Both share high stakes in containing and eradicating cross border terrorism — something they once condoned. Despite the rhetoric, the shared commitment to democracy is still unlikely to override vital interests. There are differences about the need to shore up Pakistan, and who to deal with there and how. But India now seems reconciled to the fact that the U.S., China the international financial community and almost all of Pakistan's neighbours do not want that country to self destruct and that the military will have to be given an important if not leading role in governance. India's increasing flexibility on the normalisation of politics in Kashmir and reopening a dialogue with the present regime in Pakistan, and using these to restart regional cooperation within and beyond South Asia would fall in line with U.S. desire to keep the region from becoming a crisis area. Almost every Pakistan Government over the last decade has sought to project

Pokhran-II. Similarly there is an implicit promise in the visits of the Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin, and the Japanese Prime Minister, Mr. Yoshiro Mori, to India. The merits of strengthening these linkages in improving India's stature giving her more room for manoeuvre are self-evident. The American relationship will develop better in such a climate.

The global agenda, both economic and geopolitical, contains problems for Indo-American convergence. It is still the political and security agenda that comes first with Governments in both countries. The convergence on stabilising South Asia does exist. Further common ground can be found on other Asian questions. Differences exist on nuclear policy. More dialogues may remove some of them. The only way to put the nuclear genie back in the bottle is to accept comprehensive nuclear disarmament. Since this seems unlikely in the near future, the only alternative is for the P5, India and Pakistan to work out a *modus vivendi*, to accommodate present realities. A constructive dialogue on the CTBT, the FMCT etc. should be encouraged, even if

the political establishments wish to keep them on the back-burner, so that a consensus might become possible. The importance of military factors in U.S. decision-making despite absolute civilian control needs to be understood in New Delhi. New Delhi needs to replicate a similar system. A much more robust dialogue at the professional level between the two defence security and nuclear establishments is obviously called for in addition to that already existing at the Track I and II levels.

Reforms and liberalisation have led to a welcome rise to Indian economic growth. But if that is to be maintained greater access to markets, capital and technology from the industrialised countries is vital. This is another important area for dialogue at the bilateral and global level. Mr. Bill Clinton's farewell address laid considerable stress on this approach. But will an incumbent U.S. President be as idealistic? He needs to be reminded. India too needs to be much clearer about its programme for collaboration. Preparing for competition is necessary, but not feather bedding. Initial partnerships may be bilateral but the target should be the global market. Information technology may provide one of the largest and fastest growing areas of convergence, but it would be unwise to concentrate so much attention on it as to crowd out many other worthwhile areas of economic cooperation. And it is economic cooperation and the ability to influence domestic politics through business and NRI lobbies that will provide the real long-term leverage.

Convergence between India and American interest must grow. As the Bush administration gets ready to deal with the outside world, the Indian establishment can use the time to prepare itself to maximise the convergences and minimise the divergences. This must be in real terms and proactive policies not just in public statements. To mature a partnership requires both understanding and accommodation, but not necessarily subservience.

(The writer is a former Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs.)

US should recognise India's security concerns: Brownback

S Rajagopalan
Washington, February 14

REPUBLICAN SENATOR Sam Brownback, a staunch advocate of lifting sanctions against India, says the US ought to recognise India's security concerns even while continuing its dialogue on nuclear restraint.

Presenting 'a Congressional perspective on US-India relations' at the Brookings Institution on Tuesday, Mr Brownback expressed the view that too much emphasis had been placed on differences between the two countries on nuclear issues.

Mr Brownback, who heads the Senate Foreign Relations Committee's sub-committee on Near East and South Asia, wanted the Bush administration to take some bold initiatives to give bilateral relations a more meaningful thrust. "There are a myriad of ways in which to do this," he said and urged the new administration to take the first step by lifting all the remaining economic sanctions against India. It should be accompanied by a serious focus on trade issues, including a thorough review

and a narrowing of the so-called "entities list".

Some 200 Indian governmental and private sector entities are currently prohibited from receiving certain US exports. This list, Mr Brownback pointed out, had been drawn up by casting the net rather too broadly and including entities not connected in any manner with the nuclear weapons programme.

"The result has been to hurt both the Indian entities and the US firms and research organisations that have ties with them. The quantitative commercial impact of the blacklist is small, but the list is a needless sore point in our improving bilateral relationship with India," he said.

Among the sanctions still in place is the US opposition to loans for India from World Bank and other international financial institutions for purposes other than humanitarian. Under this policy, Washington has been opposing loans for infrastructure and other long-term development projects.

Mr Brownback remarked that the US's approach in the matter "makes no sense". The previous Clinton administration had set the

condition that India should sign the CTBT for the US to relent, but this basis lost its validity once the US Senate itself refused to ratify this treaty.

Like other activists of the India Caucus, the Republican Senator is a strong proponent of the line that the US should recognise India as a strategic counterbalance to China. "India sees a threat from China, a nuclear nation with which it has fought wars...The US also has problems with China and clearly a closer relationship with India would provide a strategic counterbalance in South Asia and help maintain regional stability."

Mr Brownback is among a host of Senators (Democrat John Kerry is another) who feel that the US has not done enough for the Gujarat earthquake relief. "Our 'on the ground' presence was minor and I believe the US Government could have done more in the immediate aftermath of the quake by sending out more field hospitals, doctors and medical and rescue personnel." As he put it, Washington could still make up as Gujarat now enters the reconstruction phase.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

15 FEB 2001

'Govt. playing into U.S. hands'

By Our Special Correspondent

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, FEB. 14. The CPI(M) general-secretary, Mr. Harkishan Singh Surjeet, said today that the Vajpayee Government was playing into the hands of the U.S. by not taking parties outside the Government into confidence on ways to tackle terrorism in the Kashmir Valley.

Mr. Surjeet told a news conference here that the Centre was dilly-dallying on the question of issuing passports to the Hurriyat leaders and warned that this would have "serious repercussions."

The Hurriyat was pulling in different directions — while one section stood for the independence of Kashmir, the other wanted it to become a part of Pakistan. The recent massacre of Sikhs in Srinagar was a sign of the way the situation had deteriorated in the Valley.

Mr. Surjeet said the third front would become a reality in a month or so, with all those who had been approached agreeing to its formation. The front would consist of the Left parties, the Samajwadi Party, the Rashtriya Janata Dal, the Janata Dal (Secular), and other regional parties. The former Prime Minister, Mr. V. P. Singh, would also form a part of the front.

On whether the AIADMK would also be a part of the front, Mr. Surjeet said "we are not thinking of Ms. Jayalalitha at this moment."

To a question on how his party could be seen in the company of Ms. Jayalalitha who had been accused of corruption, he said the CPI(M) was not the only party which had links with the AIADMK. The Congress(I), the TMC, the PMK and several other parties were also her allies.

The CPI(M) had not offered support to the Congress candidate in the Majitha constituency in Punjab. The party's decision was to defeat the Shiromani Akali Dal.

Mr. Surjeet said the CPI(M)-led Left Democratic Front would return to power in Kerala. The coming Assembly elections were of great importance as two of the States going to the polls — Kerala and West Bengal — were the party's major bases.

There were some problems in West Bengal and these were being sorted out. It was certain that "the lady" (the Railway Minister and Trinamool Congress leader, Ms. Mamata Banerjee) would not be able to do anything there. Coming down heavily on the BJP Government for the exclusion of Dalit Christians as a category from the Census questionnaire, he said it had been done deliberately.

THE HINDU

15 FEB 2001

U.S. delegation clarifies on India visit

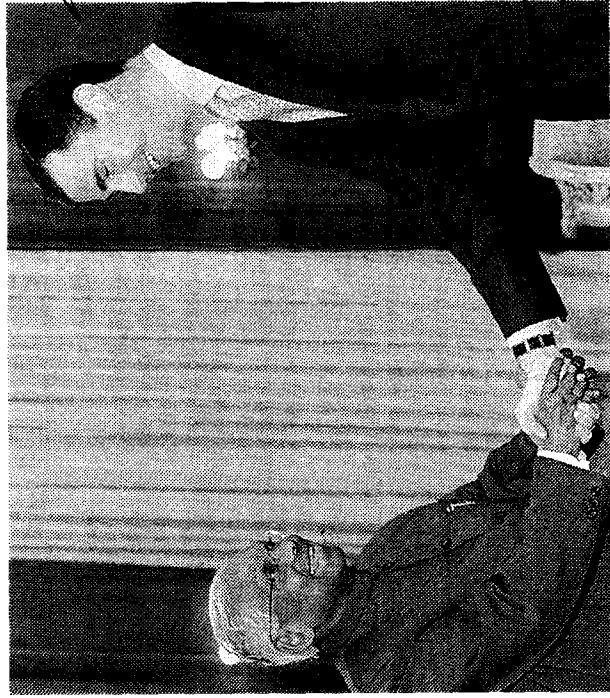
Washington, FEB. 15. The Congressional Caucus co-chairman, Mr. Jim McDermott has said that his now-cancelled visit to the Kashmir Valley was meant to be a fact-finding mission and not in any way connected to fulfilling Pakistan's demand that Americans should mediate in the Kashmir problem.

Mr. McDermott is part of the four-member U.S. Congressional delegation which is embarking on a visit to the subcontinent. At the last minute, the team decided to drop from its itinerary the Kashmir leg of the tour. However, barring the leader of the delegation, Mr. Edward Royce, others are visiting Pakistan and the Pakistan controlled Kashmir.

At a news conference addressed here before their departure to India, Mr. Royce and Mr. McDermott

said their move should not be misconstrued as one seeking third party intervention in issue. Nor did they have any intention to legitimise the military rule in Pakistan.

Mr. McDermott recalled that the India Caucus itself was formed in the 1980s when some misinformed Congressmen introduced amendments against India for what was going on in Punjab. "Unless someone knows what was going on in Punjab you cannot fight the people making irrational and untrue statements about a given situation," he said. "We are perceived as some white knights coming on horses to fix things in Kashmir. We are not saying we are the answers to the problem. In some ways it is like educating ourselves on the problem," he said. — UNI



The President, Mr. K. R. Narayanan, receiving the Crown Prince of Spain, Mr. Don Felipe de Borbon Y. Grecia, at Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi, on Thursday.

— Photo: V. Sudershan

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6 FEB 2007

Accept India as main regional power: US study

HF 19
19/2

Aziz Haniffa in Washington

DESCRIBING INDIA as a "rising power" and an "Asian state of major consequence," a high-ranking bipartisan task force of US policymakers and scholars has asked Washington to devise a "new and more appropriate strategy" to deal with New Delhi and recognize its predominance in relation to the smaller states of South Asia.

"Our policy in South Asia must increasingly reflect India's importance in that regard. Indian cooperation is required to achieve some key American goals in the region, ranging from nonproliferation to regional stability to an improved relationship with China," said the 37 member task force commissioned by Asia Foundation.

In the section on South Asia, the task force report titled "America's Role in Asia," released Monday, said: "Although there has been a recent expansion in economic ties and a warming in political relations between the United States and India, the two nations are unlikely to become firm allies in the immediate future."

The task force report represents the culmination of a yearlong examination of US policy in Asia and is intended to inform the new administration, Congress and analysts of US-Asian relations.

It acknowledged that the "previous administration developed a

framework in which the United States and India can explore common interests and coordinate policies.

The new administration should continue and expand upon that framework. For example, the president should visit India within the first two years of his administration," the report said. "However," it added, "at the heart of this expansion in relations should be the recognition of India's predominance in relation to the smaller states of the South Asia region."

But it added that, "Nevertheless, a strengthening of US-Indian ties must avoid exacerbating tensions in the region, particularly between India and Pakistan, which would thwart US interests and goals in the region."

"The United States should move beyond its recent offers to provide information about confidence building measures and assume a more active role in ensuring that India and Pakistan do not stumble into accidental nuclear exchange," the report said.

"Regular strategic consultations with Pakistan, once an important ally," the report said, "need to be revived for reasons both of security and democracy promotion," the report said. It called for the restoration and enlargement of military exchanges, manoeuvres, and training with the Indian military, "one of Asia's most professional forces."

IANAS

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

14 FEB 2001

Pressler leads race for new US envoy to India

HT Correspondent
New Delhi, February 12

WHO WILL be the next Ambassador of the United States to India? Two names are in circulation. Former Republican Senator from South Dakota, Larry Pressler and present US chief of mission to China, Mr. James Lilly. The present Ambassador, Mr. Richard Celeste, a Democrat and former Governor of Ohio, has been asked to continue in his post till such time as his successor is named.

According to Dr. Raj Bothra, chairman of the Michigan-based "Ethnic Republicans" Group, the choice would depend on whether the new administration would continue with the Clinton era's preference for political appointees or

give career diplomats a greater role. In his initial remarks, secretary of state Colin Powell has indicated he would give the latter more posts.

Dr. Bothra, who called on the national security adviser, Mr. Brajesh Mishra today after touring the earthquake-hit areas of Gujarat, also revealed some names

in the race for the post of assistant secretary, South Asia, in the US State Department. This was a post created during the Clinton era and the last incumbent was Mr. Karl Inderfurth.

Mr. Matt Daley, who was based in New Delhi as a journalist till some years back is one of the frontrunners. Another old India hand, in

his capacity as deputy chief of mission in Delhi, Mr. James Clad, has a strong chance because of his experience in handling the Strobe Talbott-Jaswant Singh talks. A third contender is Mr. Paul Berkowitz, reportedly an expert on Tibet, who worked closely with former chairman of the House International Relations Committee, Mr. Benjamin Gilman.

Dr. Bothra said Indo-US relations were poised to take off, with the Bush administration keen on removing the irritant of sanctions and increasing trade relations.

"Mr. Bush has personally told me that he does not believe in the CTBT and therefore does not think the sanctions should continue. I expect them to be lifted in a year", he said.

George Bush writes to Vajpayee

US PRESIDENT George W. Bush has written to Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee expressing the hope that the two would foster a strong and mutually beneficial bilateral relationship. The letter, dated February 7, was delivered to Mr. Vajpayee on Monday by the US Ambassador to India, Mr. Richard Celeste. Mr. Bush said he believed there exists "tremendous potential" for co-operation between the two countries. The letter is a follow up of the telephone call made by Mr. Bush. He had expressed sympathy for the quake-hit.

HTC, New Delhi

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

13 FEB 2001

'USA must move closer to India'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

WASHINGTON, Feb. 11. - A senior Pentagon official has indicated that the USA will have to move closer to India by 2025 since it will be a major military and economic power and a force of stability and peace in Asia, media reports said.

In an American military strategy review, the head of the Pentagon think-tank, Mr Andrew W Marshall, said: "India will develop its inherent strength in the coming years while the threat for the USA in Asia will be from China's hegemonistic ambitions."

He said the USA must prepare to fight major battles with heavy tanks and other weapons against world's largest conventional force, Russia, and that may be a future threat in Asia where it may have to defend Taiwan if it is attacked. This would require lighter armies and mobile forces in smaller groups of integrated forces. The Wilson Centre, funded by the Congress, has launched a major study by prominent academics bluntly called the Working Group on Hegemony. It plans to publish the product of their brainstorming later this year. South Asia has been clubbed with Israel and Palestine in the newly-constituted 107th congress, adds UNI.

What was known as the Asia-Pacific sub-committee in the House of Representatives has now been vivisected into East Asia and South Asia by its operational International Affairs Committee and the latter has been tagged on to the most contentious region in the world.

Congressional sources said India, perceived as a long-standing democracy providing abundant opportunity for US business houses after it opened up its economy, was receiving undivided attention of the House over the past few years.

THE STATESMAN

12 FEB 2001

Nirmala denies media reports

GANDHIAN **NIRMALA** Deshpande today denied having stated the disputed structure at Ayodhya was demolished by a blast. She accused the then UP Government of having connived with the 'kar sevaks' to demolish the structure.

Appearing before the Liberhan Commission, probing the events leading to the demolition of the structure on December 6, 1992, she claimed that the statements attributed to her by a section of the media and a witness, who had earlier appeared before the panel, were "mischievous". While deposing before the Commission, RSS chief K S Sudarshan had earlier said that a bomb might have been used for demolition of the structure. Subsequently, she had in an interview to a TV channel denied the blast theory.

HTC, New Delhi

Soda ash war: Bush signals hardline on Indo-US trade

Pramit Pal Chaudhuri HT-11
New Delhi, February 8

SODA ASH gives washing powder its bubbles. It's also at the centre of a looming trade conflict between India and the United States. New Delhi this week officially responded to a US threat to withdraw tariff concessions on \$ 2.8 billion worth of Indian exports. Analysts see this as evidence that the Bush administration plans to be tough about trade.

Soda ash has been a low-key trade dispute between the two countries for over two years now. The US claims India unfairly blocks US soda ash exports. Last month, the day before George W. Bush's inauguration, the Office of the US Trade

Representative for the first time took the dispute from words to deeds.

9/2
USTR said it would withdraw tariff benefits on seven key categories of Indian exports, including leather goods. This could potentially affect \$ 2.8 billion worth of exports. India was given until February 16 to respond. India has filed a defence of its trade action, just days before the deadline. An industry representative called the move "damaging to our morale and the momentum in our relationship with the US".

Indian officials say they were "surprised" by this sudden threat. USTR, a quasi-independent agency, has long wanted to apply pressure on India over the dispute. Trade analysts believe the Clinton administration's

larger interest in India led it to put the dispute on the backburner. Bill Clinton was not averse to hitting other countries with similar trade action. Pakistan was a victim in 1996. Gary Stanley of the Washington-based trade law firm, Shawn Coulson International, notes that Mr Clinton stripped Argentina of half its trade concessions "over an intellectual property dispute" in 1997. India, however, escaped punishment.

Indian observers believe the USTR action was reviewed and okayed by the incoming Bush administration. This is being interpreted as a sign that President Bush lacks a larger vision of India, at least of the kind that led Mr Clinton to shelve trade problems.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

9 FEB 2001

Post-Clinton, Kashmir still haunts Indo-US ties

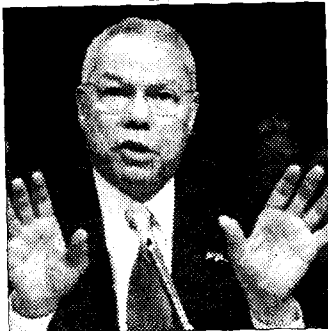
JYOTI MALHOTRA
NEW DELHI

GEORGE W. Bush may have passed over India while calling Asia's major leaders in the first week of taking over as President. When Bush was confabulating with friends at home and abroad, his Secretary of State Colin Powell was outlining the parameters of an ambitious relationship with this country that at first reading, seems to go much beyond Clinton's India honeymoon.

Though the Republican Party had already endeared itself to the Indian political class several months ago by refusing to give Clinton the votes he needed in the Senate to ratify the CTBT — Bush has since insisted the treaty is not a priority with his administration — India had remained nervous about the new administration's designs on the region.

Would the Republicans continue the much-vaunted "strategic dialogue" with India? Would they abide by Clinton's famous 'Four Rs' mantra (restraint and respect for the Line of Control, among others) that has supervised the India-Pakistan relationship since the Kargil war? Would the Republicans lift the sanctions imposed upon India after it went nuclear in May 1998?

Powell's comments attempted



to answer some of those questions. Forty-eight hours before US Defence secretary Donald Rumsfeld met Principal Secretary Brajesh Mishra in Munich at an international conference, Washington announced that it would be lifting its Pokharan-inspired ban on providing key components for India's Seaking helicopters (many of the helicopters have been grounded for lack of critical spare parts). Meanwhile, National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice had already, much earlier, declared that India had the "potential" of becoming a major power.

In the strategic pantheon, then, Powell, Rumsfeld and Rice are the Holy Trinity. They are, together, George W's eyes, ears and mouth, say analysts, since the President is hardly hands-on the way Clinton was. Moreover, he's likely to leave a lot of delegating to Vice-President — or as the US media

has already dubbed him, "Prime Minister" — Dick Cheney.

Rice is well-known as an old friend of George W., while Rumsfeld served in George Bush Sr's cabinet. Interestingly, Powell was President Bush's national security assistant in the National Security Council when the then Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi visited Washington in 1987.

But for all the positive signalling so far, Delhi still seems to be fathoming the superpower's mind on the "K" word: Kashmir.

Sources say one of the elements of its dual strategy on Kashmir — ceasefire plus talks with Pakistan if Musharraf can end the *jehad* in the state — has been aimed at the international community. Shirin Tahir-Kheli, the strategic affairs analyst who heads the prestigious programme on South Asia at John Hopkins university in the US, said though the Bush administration had decided to "delink" its relationships with India and Pakistan, Kashmir and its potential for conflict would remain on its foreign policy horizon.

Powell, in fact, is said to be of the view that the US cannot continue to look at India and Pakistan as "hyphenated" twins. At his Senate confirmation hearings, he insisted upon Washington's independent handling of South Asia's feisty neighbours.

INDIAN EXPRESS

6 FEB 2001

Bush committed to better ties with India: US Defence Secy

US Congress tear to visit Kashmir

Berlin, February 4

THE BUSH administration is committed to maintain the "momentum" in consolidating Indo-US relations, American Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said.

Washington's intention in further strengthening Indo-US ties was conveyed by Rumsfeld to National Security Adviser Brajesh Mishra at their meeting last night on the margins of the ongoing 37th annual security conference at Munich.

The 45-minute meeting held in a "warm and cordial" atmosphere was the first high-level contact between India and the US after George W Bush assumed presidency two weeks back.

India's ambassador to Germany Ronen Sen was also present.

In his address at the conference, Rumsfeld said the participation of non-NATO countries like India at the prestigious Munich security meeting provided a useful reminder that security in this globalised world cannot be achieved by isolating one part of the world



Donald Rumsfeld

Brajesh Mishra

from other, by separating Europe from Asia.

India along with China and Japan were invited for the conference for the first time in 1999 and Mishra has been attending the event for three consecutive years.

Mishra had a series of bilateral meetings on the sidelines of the three-day conference with themes at the security meeting like the national missile defence system.

Mishra's interlocutors also pledged to render all assistance in connection with relief work at the

quake-hit areas in Gujarat.

The national security adviser also met German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer, UN Security Council President Sergei Ivanov and German Foreign Policy Adviser Michael Steiner.

Fischer and Mishra discussed the implications of US' NMD project and the South Asian situation. They noted the recent intensification of Indo-German ties with Fischer saying the planned visit of Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder to India

later this year will give an added momentum to these relations.

Fischer said Germany would actively support any initiatives by multilateral institutions like the World Bank in granting aid and loans to help India mitigate the financial burden while undertaking the quake relief work.

During Mishra's talks with Ivanov, there was a review of Indo-Russian relations besides exchange of views on the situation in Afghanistan.

(PTI)

S.Rajagopalan
Washington, February 4

A US congressional team is to visit Kashmir later this month and confer with leaders in India and Pakistan for a "better understanding" of the situation in the troubled state.

Leaders of the India Caucus, Mr Jim McDermott (Democrat) and Mr Et Royce (Republican), will be part of the team. The visit beginning February 16, is understood to have been worked out in consultation with New Delhi and Islamabad.

That the US team has no intention to play the role of a mediator or interlocutor in the Kashmir dispute was made clear by Mr McDermott. Speaking to *The Hindustan Times*, he said: "India has said it does not want interlocutors on Kashmir and we don't want to assume that role."

The idea behind the visit is to look at the Kashmir situation, to have a better understanding and to try to be useful". Besides Srinagar, the Congressional team will be visiting New Delhi and Islamabad for an interaction with both the Gov-

ernments.

The team's visit comes at a time when Pakistan-backed Kashmir militant groups are persisting their reign of terror in the Valley despite New Delhi holding out olive branch by extending cease-fire yet again.

The Congressional team is slated to visit Gujarat. McDermott and Mr Royce have taken the lead in the passage of resolution last week that prompts the Bush Administration to step the aid package from \$ 5 million to \$ 9 million the very next day.

For Mr McDermott, the self-confessed India buff, it will be his 16th visit to the country. Gujarat and Orissa have been the only States that he has not visited so far.

Mr McDermott is among those who believe that when it comes to South Asia, the Bush Administration will follow the Clinton regime's policy approach. He himself holds the view that India, as a counter-balance to China, has the potential to become the US's most stable ally in the region.

On Kashmir, the senior Congressman wants Washington to adopt a cautious approach.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

5 FEB 2001

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2001

FEEL-GOOD DIPLOMACY

A NEW IDIOM, indicative of a potentially substantive bilateral engagement, has been spelt out by the U.S. Secretary of State, Gen. Colin Powell, in a warm reference to India. Responding to questions during a Senate panel's hearings over the confirmation of his appointment, Gen. Powell agreed that "India has to be a high priority for foreign policy activities of the United States of America". Now, it is a truism that the U.S. must first initiate steps to translate the phraseology concerning "a high priority" into a diplomatic reality before this can actually define the new Bush administration's India policy. However, Gen. Powell has quite eloquently summed up the general impression that a feel-good factor determines the first impulses of an evolving administration in reading New Delhi's relevance to a whole range of international issues. Describing India as a "powerful" and "nuclear-armed country" with a recent history of opening up its economy, Gen. Powell did some loud thinking that the Bush administration should "engage more broadly" with New Delhi. There is no hint in this of any desire for a paradigm shift from the Clinton administration's vibrant interaction with India last year. The sheer diplomatic resonance of the montage of bilateral exchanges that occurred last year was noteworthy for a historic reason. Manifest was the recognition by both sides that the two largest democracies could rise above the mutual misperceptions of the Cold War era and thereafter in a determined effort to strike a partnership. The psychological dynamic of such proportions in the U.S.-India ties remains the most formidable bilateral asset, and Gen. Powell seems to be aware of this.

A critical aspect of the evolving U.S.-India equation was not illuminated at the conclusion of the visit by the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, to Washington last year. The Clinton administration officials at that time hinted at the possibility of a diplomatic trade-off without

fully exploring it. The idea apparently canvassed was the scope for an eventual lifting of the residual U.S. sanctions. It seemed that a crucial factor under the spotlight was the extent of India's willingness to accept (or accommodate) Washington's strategic considerations concerning non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction as also the systems usable for their delivery. It is in this perspective that Gen. Powell's preliminary and largely generalised comments on India's nuclear security posture acquire meaning. In a direct message to New Delhi, he noted that "we (the U.S. authorities) have to do what we can to constrain their (Indian) nuclear programme at this time". On the related issue of diminished but prevailing impediments to a full-fledged relationship with India, he held out the assurance that the State Department would "review all of these sanctions... to see whether this is the time to move forward and remove" them. He clarified no less that he was "not in a position to make that commitment now". A good sign, since he said that, is the lifting of a ban on the supply of American spares for some British helicopters that were sold to India.

A rider about the U.S. compulsions in the nuclear sphere, given also its specific timing, does not necessarily imply any deepseated reservations about the sanctions issue. Yet, New Delhi, which should know that there is no magical 'open-sesame' formula for good ties with the Bush administration, cannot ignore that Gen. Powell has not chosen to view India, at least at this stage, as a strategic friend of the U.S. Important, no doubt, is his notion of the need to help New Delhi in the economic sphere. However, there is hardly a coded message in his strategic perception of New Delhi as a player that needs assistance to keep the peace in the Indian Ocean and its periphery. Washington, in his opinion, should help India in this regard "while not neglecting our (U.S.) friends in Pakistan".

THE HINDU

5 FEB 2001

US allows spares sale for Indian Navy copters

S. Rajagopalan

Washington, February 2

IN THE first relaxation of American sanctions in the defence sphere, the Bush Administration has permitted the sale of spare parts for Indian Navy's Seaking helicopters.

The issue had been hanging fire for a long time. The predecessor Clinton regime, while easing certain other post-Pokhran II curbs, was firm on the defence-related restrictions until India signed the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.

Owing to the sanctions, the British manufacturer could not export the American components needed for Indian Navy's Seaking helicopters as the transaction was deemed to be violative of the US's Arms Export Control Act.

Welcoming the Bush Administration's relaxation that was notified on Thursday, Indian Ambassador Naresh Chandra commented: "Things are moving."

With the new dispensation set to go easy on the CTBT because of its own reservations over the treaty, Mr Chandra was hopeful of an early end to the sanctions regime that is now being reviewed.

The Ambassador, who will soon be completing his five-year tenure here, was fairly upbeat on the continuance of the new high in Indo-American relations under the Bush Administration. As he put it: "The atmosphere is good and the statements are supportive."

In this connection, he singled out

for praise Secretary of State Colin Powell's clear indications that he would carry on a serious and purposeful dialogue with India. Gen. Powell had stated during his Senate confirmation hearing that the new administration would accord high priority to India.

Mr Chandra also complimented the singular contribution made by the bipartisan India Caucus as also the Indian-American bodies in bringing about the turnaround in bilateral relations.

Meanwhile, the first interaction between the Indian Government and the Bush Administration is slated for Saturday. It will not take place in Washington or New Delhi, but in Munich, where National Security Adviser Brajesh Mishra will meet Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld on the sidelines of an international security meet.

Significantly, Mr Mishra, currently in Paris en route to Munich, avoided a comment on the US's controversial National Missile Defence System (NMDS), a project which Bush, Rumsfeld & Co. are determined to pursue with vigour. India, said Mr Mishra, would evaluate the scenario and see how it develops.

The resumption of regular Indo-US Foreign Office level consultations will have to wait a while as the new administration is still to decide on key appointments in the Department of State, including the Deputy Secretary, Under Secretary and the Assistant Secretary of the South Asia Bureau.

Plummeting arms export market may have led to the decision

Shishir Gupta

New Delhi, February 2

INDIAN NAVY'S Seaking helicopter fleet is to get a fresh lease of life with the United States lifting the ban on sale of helicopter equipment to India.

Seaking 42-B anti-submarine warfare helicopters had been virtually grounded after US imposed sanctions on India following nuclear tests at Pokhran in May, 1998. India had purchased these helicopters from UK-based Westland Helicopters Company, which manufactured them in collaboration with US-based Sikorsky Company.

As a number of critical components in the Seaking helicopters were of US origin, its British manufacturers could not supply these parts or service them till the US sanctions were lifted. This had left a large number of "servo packs" and "gear boxes" of Seaking helicopters lying unserved in Britain due to lack of US spares.

While the Navy was facing a similar problem of spare parts for its Sea Harrier jump jet fighters, the matter was apparently resolved with Hindustan Aeronautics

Limited (HAL) being able to manufacture these parts indigenously.

The Seaking fleet, on the other hand, has been hamstrung and was operating at around 25 per cent of its capability with severe flying restrictions for the past two years. The Navy has around three squadrons of Seaking 42-B helicopters, which along with Sea Harrier fighters, form the backbone of India's forces.

With the arms export market plummeting down by 30 per cent last year, it seems the US, perhaps

relief after media reports from Washington indicated that the Bush administration had relaxed the ban on sale of helicopter spares by Britain to India even if they contained parts of US origin.

Indian Navy had been taking up the matter of Seaking spare parts with Britain and the US, directly and through diplomatic channels.

During the Indo-UK Defence Consultative Committee group meeting last August, the then Defence Secretary T R Prasad had brought up the Seaking issue. The Indian delegation had made it clear to Britain that New Delhi could only think in terms of Hawk advanced jet trainer for its air force if continued product support was guaranteed.

The defence ministry and the Navy also took up this issue during the visit of Admiral Dennis Blair, Commander-in-Chief, US Pacific Command, to India last year.

The US Commander was told to lift the ban on supply of US helicopter spares by Britain to India in no uncertain terms. It is learnt that Admiral Blair had promised the defence ministry that he would convey New Delhi's message to his superiors in Washington.

News Analysis

after weighing the commercial benefits and pleas of the British aircraft industry, had little option but to relax the ban.

Another significant factor that may have contributed to the lifting of the ban is Rs 6,000 crore Hawk AJT deal, which is currently being negotiated by India with British Aerospace, and the possible purchase of US passenger jets for India's civil aviation sector.

However, the Navy Headquarters heaved a sigh of

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

3 FEB 2001

US must accept India's nuclear status

Ashok Easwaran in Chicago

TWO AMERICAN experts have suggested that the United States should accept India's position as a nuclear power not only because it is a fait accompli, but also because it is in the interests of maintaining stability in the South Asian region.

"If the United States' overriding interest is in stability in South Asia, then it must accept India as a nuclear power. It is also very important for the US to advocate that India get a permanent seat in the United Nations Security Council," said Richard Friedman, president and chairman of the National Strategy Forum (NSF) here.

"The time is ripe for an enhancement in Indo-US relations. But it will probably take another decade for a so-called alliance to emerge," Friedman said at the NSF seminar titled 'India

in the 21st century' organised by the Consulate-General of India and the Kellogg Graduate School of Management, Northwestern University.

Friedman predicted that under President George W. Bush, Indo-US relations would

Expert Opinion

improve, although it would take time. "No political scar tissue remains from the days of the Cold War," he said, adding that three factors would hasten the process of better relations - democracy in India, India's burgeoning international trade and its "staggering demographics" which made it "immensely attractive to US industry."

John Mearsheimer, Wendell Harrison distinguished service professor at the University of Chicago, said: "India will not only keep its nuclear arsenal" despite world opposition, "but it is likely to grow in time." He said India lived in a "dangerous neighborhood," adding "nuclear weapons are a wonderful deterrent. The threat of incineration tends to make the attacker extremely cautious."

"There is a certain measure of hypocrisy in the US attitude towards nuclear weapons. Nobody else is getting rid of them and there is no evidence that the US will get rid of its nuclear weapons," Mearsheimer said, while warning that Bush's National Missile Defence would provoke China into increasing its nuclear arsenal as a counter measure. "If there is an emerging superpower, it is the Chinese. Naturally, India will respond in kind," he added. (LANS)

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

3 FEB 2001

U.S. considering more aid

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

NEW YORK, FEB. 1. In expressing deep sorrow and anguish over the recent earthquake in Gujarat, leading members of the United States Congress are now exploring the possibility of boosting assistance for funding the reconstruction process in India.

The Chairman of the House International Relations Committee, Mr. Henry Hyde, and the Ranking Democrat, Mr. Tom Lantos, have written to the President, Mr. George W. Bush, urging him to immediately dispatch a high-level delegation to survey first hand the extent of the damage and have also called on the President to come up with a substantial package of assistance to the victims. A move is also on in Capitol Hill to call for the lifting of sanctions against India.

"I am going to explore the possibilities of assisting India with emergency financial aid to the tune of \$100 million for the reconstruction of Gujarat. I will begin consultations with my colleagues to see how this could be accomplished," the Democratic Congressman from New York, Mr. Gary Ackerman has said.

Mr. Ackerman, who was the floor manager in the House of Representatives during the debate on the Gujarat earthquake on Wednesday, referred to the fact that tens of thousands of people have died and that property damage is now put at over \$5 billions. Asserting that the destruction was on a "staggering scale," Mr. Ackerman remarked, "Mere numbers cannot capture the extent of the devastation, nor the horror at the loss of live and loved ones."

A bipartisan Resolution in the House expressing sympathy for the victims and banking for the ongoing relief was passed with overwhelming support. "The physical destruction of Gujarat will not be erased for many years and the psychological scars may never be eliminated.

It is in this time of tragedy that we must stand by our friend India, and the Indian people and offer all we can to aid their efforts," said Mr. Jim McDermott, a Democrat from the State of Washington and one of

the co-sponsors of the Resolution. A similar Resolution in the Senate is expected to be passed shortly.

Carey Foundation pledges \$1 million

In what is the largest private sector commitment thus far for relief assistance to the Gujarat earthquake, the W. P. Carey Foundation has pledged \$1 million. At a press conference here, Mr. William Polk Carey, Chairman of W. P. Carey and Co. LLC, handed over the cheque to the Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations, Mr. Kamallesh Sharma. Pending approval, the pledged funds are to be committed to various organisations including the Prime Minister's Relief Fund.

The Chairman of the Foundation, Mr. Carey, spoke of his long interaction with India dating back to 1960 and hoped that larger foundations would come forward with such assistance. The long-term benefits to the U.S. were enormous, he said. In the Foundation's view, the U.S. as the world's most vocal democracy must make strides to further strengthen its ties with India.

"When we visited India last November we were most impressed with the entrepreneurial spirit of its people and the untapped opportunities to provide long-term financing to Indian businesses. In the light of the horrific recent developments in the country however, we have decided to get involved in the relief effort. It is my sincere hope that other philanthropic institutions will also lend support and help ease the suffering of this earthquake's victims", Mr. Carey said.

Asked where he would want the funds to be earmarked, Mr. Carey said India's needs at this stage were enormous and rebuilding would be costly. "Money can't turn the clock back. It can be moderately helpful".

"While the W.P. Carey Foundation has pledged funds for immediate relief, W. P. Carey International LLC maintains its plans to pursue long-term financing for Indian businesses and to invest in the economic infrastructure and future of India," a press release said.

THE HINDU

2 FEB 2007

US Congress asks Bush to step up aid

S. Rajagopalan
Washington, February 1

IN A strong show of empathy for quake-hit Gujarat, the US Congress has urged the Bush administration to substantially step up its \$ 5 million aid package. The bipartisan resolution was carried by 406 votes to one.

Even as the Congress expressed its solidarity with India, a New York-based private foundation, W.P.Carey, pledged a \$ 1 million assistance. Possibly the biggest offer of its kind by a private venture, the foundation said its assistance will be channelised through the Prime Minister's relief fund and several other organisations.

On Capitol Hill, India Caucus co-chairmen Jim McDermott and Ed Royce spearheaded the mobilisation effort in the House of Representatives. In the Senate, Sen. Brownback and Robert D. Celler, moving the resolution,

made out a case for military logistical support as well to meet the Gujarat tragedy. "It is with a heavy heart that my colleagues and I have introduced this bill," said McDermott. "The physical destruction in Gujarat will not be erased for many years, and the psychological scars may never be eliminated. It is in this time of tragedy that we must stand by our friend India, and the Indian people and offer all we can to aid their efforts."

The resolution expressed "the sense of Congress that the people of India and people of Indian ori-

gin have displayed strength, courage and determination in the aftermath of the earthquake". The House of Representatives voted the resolution 406 votes to one, the lone dissenter being Ron Paul, a Republican from Texas.

In a separate communication to President Bush, House International Relations Committee chairman Henry J. Hyde and ranking member Tom Lantos said the US should provide

"a substantial package of assistance" to India which has mounted a "heroic effort".

While commending the Bush Administration for the initial aid package of \$ 5 million, they said: "We believe the humanitarian and economic devastation in Gujarat will require much more."

Former co-chairman of India Caucus Gary Ackerman said: "We have to help our friends in the tough task of reconstruction of Gujarat. It is a challenge and, I am confident, it can be met. And the United States must show the way."

Estimating the damage to property at over \$ 5 billion, Ackerman said he would hold consultations with colleagues to explore the possibility of assisting India with emergency financial aid to the tune of \$100 million for the reconstruction. The W.P.Carey Foundation, announcing its \$ 1 million assistance, said it has taken the action "to relieve the suffering of victims and to encourage other charitable institutions to make similar or large contributions".

Bush calls PM

US PRESIDENT George W Bush has offered aid to India for quake victims during a telephonic conversation with Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, White House sources said on Thursday. Mr Vajpayee has accepted the offer. The US had so far sanctioned \$ 5 million, of which \$ 2 million had been spent. Mr Bush called up Mr Vajpayee on Tuesday and told him during the five-minute conversation that "this is the least a friend can do for a friend in need."

(PTI)

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26/11

Powell to review sanctions *922/11/03*

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, JAN. 25. Following up on what he said at the Senate Foreign Relations Committee last week, the U.S. Secretary of State, Gen. Colin Powell, has asked his assistants in the State Department to look at the range of sanctions imposed on other countries and possibly reconsider some of the measures.

At the same time, his deputies have been instructed to find ways of re-invigorating the sanctions against Iraq. The Bureau of Near-Eastern Affairs will be in charge of this review. During the presidential election campaign, the Republicans promised the electorate that they would take a fresh look at Iraq against the backdrop of the sanctions regime falling apart, with several nations taking their own initiatives beyond what had been outlined in United Nations Security Council resolutions.

Gen. Powell "has asked various

people in this building to look at the issue of sanctions in Iraq and come up with ideas about how he might achieve his goals of re-energising them. There is no question in his mind about the need for the international sanctions to be maintained and re-energised so that Iraq can't reconstitute its threat to the region", said the State Department spokesman, Mr. Richard Boucher.

The Secretary of State has, however, set no timeframe for the review and it is also not clear whether this is a formal process that would require the setting up of special committees. At the time of his Senate hearing, he made a pointed reference to his wanting to review the sanctions but did not give any commitment.

Gen. Powell said he had "battalions of lawyers and experts and analysts" who wanted to be involved in regional strategies rather than writing reports about which country should be certified

or not. In fact, when he was specifically asked about the prospects of removing the existing sanctions against India, Gen. Powell said he would review "...all of these sanctions, including those with respect to India, to see if this is the time to move forward to remove the remaining sanctions that are in place. But I am not in a position to make that commitment now".

Whether it is a question of tightening the sanctions against Iraq or removing the punitive measures against many other countries including India, the Secretary of State has said the Bush administration could only ask Congress for their repeal for, many of the punitive measures have been mandated by the legislature.

"The sanctions just keep coming. I think I had seen about half a dozen new ones even before I took office in the last couple of weeks", Gen. Powell remarked. The sanctions should be only one

of the tools available to the President and the Secretary of State while talking about a range of issues with another country.

Meets Chinese envoy

Gen. Powell also met the outgoing Chinese Ambassador to the U.S. — first such meeting with a foreign envoy.

According to the State Department spokesman, Gen. Powell told Mr. Li Zhaoxing, that China must be more tolerant of the Falun Gong and respect the law in the context of its actions against the banned spiritual group.

During the 30-minute farewell call by Mr. Li, the Secretary of State, it is said, went through some of the things he told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee — that Washington did not see Beijing as an "inevitable foe" and that while there could be cooperation in some areas there would be differences as well.

THE HINDU

26 JAN 2001

Chandra: Indo-US ties will remain buoyant under Bush

HT Correspondent

Washington, January 23

INDIAN AMBASSADOR Naresh Chandra has expressed his confidence that Indo-US relations, which witnessed a dramatic turnaround during the last one year of Clinton presidency, would continue to prosper under the Bush administration. Mr Chandra, who will soon be completing his tenure here, told the American University here on Monday: "With the momentum that was imparted in the Year 2000, there is every reason to believe the new administration will carry on the same program."

Speaking on "Indo-US relations in the 21st Century", Chandra gave much of the credit for the current buoyancy in ties to the Indian-American community that has carved a niche for itself in the US high-tech sector.

While reviewing the progress of relations from a phase of estrangement to one of engagement, the Ambassador mentioned that defence remained the only area where differences remained to be reconciled. India's defence programme may have conflicted

with the "non-proliferation goals which the US and other powers have set for themselves", yet New Delhi and Washington have been able to fashion a complete turnaround in their relations. Mr Chandra said he had been "amazed" by this development.

Meanwhile, Congressman Steeve Rothman called upon the Bush administration to further strengthen the US ties with India which has been serving as an

Prez bars overseas abortion funds

US PRESIDENT George W. Bush strode into a political minefield on just his second full day in office by reimposing a ban on federal funds for overseas family-planning groups that support abortion. "It is my conviction that taxpayer funds should not be used to pay for abortions or advocate or actively promote abortion, either here or abroad," he said in his executive order on Monday. The restriction aims to prevent overseas groups that accept federal aid from using their own resources to do the surgery, lobby foreign governments to ease access to abortion, or advocate the procedure in family planning.

AFP, Washington

important symbol of freedom and a role model for other countries in democratic governance.

"The United States must enhance its alliance with India. As the world's most populous democracy, India serves as an important symbol

of the freedoms that we cherish in the United States," said Mr Rothman.

Meanwhile, Rothman has announced that he will proudly renew his membership in the Congressional Caucus on India for the 107th Congress that has just convened. Rothman, who represents New Jersey's 9th District, said he believes membership in the India Caucus is vital to help him best represent Northern New Jersey's "large and active Indian American community."

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

24 JAN 2001

Celeste effort signals Dabhol II revival

Girish Kuber

MUMBAI 23 JANUARY

THE STAGE appears to have been set for the renegotiation of the Enron's Phase II.

That was the signal emanating from the meeting Richard Celeste had with the chief minister Vilasrao Deshmukh, after which the US ambassador dubbed the government's move to appoint the expert committee to review the project as "the positive move".

"The Celeste-Deshmukh tete-a-tete seems to signal a rapprochement," said the top government official.

Though Mr Celeste was ostensibly leading the nine-member delegation to discuss the "investment opportunities in Maharashtra", according to highly placed sources, the meeting revolved around Enron.

"Every crisis is an opportunity," said Mr Celeste about the cur-



Celeste: Tough mission

rent row over the high tariffs being charged by the Enron promoted Dabhol Power Company (DPC) and expressed confidence that the outcome will be "positive".

Mr Celeste welcomed the move by the state government to

appoint an expert committee to study the DPC dynamics. "It is certainly a more positive step than scrapping the project," Mr Celeste said.

"The government should speed up the process of the committee formation and it should be given a fixed time-frame to submit the report," said Mr Celeste. He added: "The whole world is watching the developments in Maharashtra."

He explained the repercussions the scrapping of the project could have on Indo-US relations.

"The scrapping will have wide implications as a number of bankers, financial institutions, and companies like GE are involved in the project," Mr Celeste informed the meet.

"We certainly want to lighten the burden that DPC has been putting on the state's resources. We are in touch with the Union

government in this regard and after our proposed committee's report we will come out with a formal proposal," chief minister Vilasrao Deshmukh informed the ambassador.

"The cash-strapped Maharashtra State Electricity Board (MSEB) has been left high and dry. DPC's burden has to be shared with others," said Mr Deshmukh.

"Energy distribution companies are facing more and more problems as the price of power is rising and consumers are not willing to pay the high cost of power. It is the trend all over the world. Even in US some states are facing the similar crisis," the meeting was informed by the state government officials.

"This meeting has certainly help create an atmosphere for renegotiation," said one of the official present during the meeting.

The Economic Time.

24 JAN 2001

Clinton lauds PM's J&K¹⁹⁻¹⁷ peace efforts^{22A1}

BEFORE HE left the White House on Saturday, former US President Bill Clinton applauded Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee for his perseverance, despite setbacks, in efforts to "achieve peace in Kashmir."

In a letter to Vajpayee this week, Clinton described his India visit as "memorable" and Prime Minister Vajpayee's Washington trip in September as "turning points" in Indo-US relationship.

Clinton said forging of a "new relationship" between the two countries was one of the achievements that he was most proud of.

He spoke of his admiration for the Prime Minister in "tackling the economic and political challenges" faced by India.

Clinton then went on to wish the Prime Minister well in his quest for "peace in South Asia" and for "better life" for the Indians.

HTC, New Delhi

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

23 JAN 2001

HD-1
20/1

Indo-U.S. ties exciting: Bush

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, JAN. 19. The U.S. President-elect, Mr. George W. Bush, has described America's friendship with India as "one of the most exciting and promising relationships."

Responding to the President, Mr. K. R. Narayanan's congratulatory letter on his election as the U.S. President, Mr. Bush wrote, "I am honoured by the choice of the American people and grateful for the opportunity to work with leaders such as you. During the campaign, I stressed that America's friendship with India is one of the most exciting and promising relationships. I look forward to working with you to strengthen relations between our two nations."

Mr. Narayanan had said, "as

two great democracies of the world, India and America share common ideals, values and aspirations and we entertain a new vision of partnership and friendly cooperation. I am confident that under your Presidency, the relationship between our two countries will acquire a new depth and vigour."

In his reply, Mr. Bush wrote, "we will undoubtedly face a number of challenges in the years ahead. I am confident that with a spirit of mutual respect, cooperation and open dialogue, we can successfully meet these challenges. The future also presents enormous opportunities. Together we can use these opportunities to advance the peace, freedom and prosperity of our peoples."

THE HINDU

20 JAN 2001

U.S. hints at lifting sanctions on India

WASHINGTON: The incoming Bush administration has given enough indications that it might review and lift the post-Pokhran sanctions imposed on India.



Colin Powell

Addressing the Senate foreign relations committee during his confirmation hearing on Wednesday, U.S. Secretary of State-designate Colin Powell said he would see whether it was time to move forward to remove all the remaining sanctions against India and consult his colleagues on the issue.

Describing India as a country that would emerge as the most powerful and populous, he said, "We should engage more broadly with India, do what we can to restrain their nuclear programme and also help them with economic development."

Mr Powell, the first Black American to be nominated secretary of state, said the Bush administration should deal more wisely with India keeping in view its vast potential in the Indian Ocean and its periphery.

"India is a country that should grow more and more focussed in the lens of our foreign policy. We need to work harder and more consistently with India ... while not neglecting our friends in Pakistan," he said.

Regretting the trigger-happy attitude of Congress members where sanctions were concerned, he said there were too many embargoes against too many countries and pledged to review all of them.

Every sanction must have a "sunset clause" at the end of which it should automatically cease to be in

force or be renewed, he said.

Mr Powell also indicated that the CTBT would not be brought up in the next session of the Congress.

On Bush administration's policy towards China, he said, "A strategic partner China is not. But neither is China our inevitable and implacable foe... China is a competitor and a potential regional rival as also a trading partner willing to cooperate in areas such as Korea where our strategic interests overlap. China is all of these things; but China is not an enemy and our challenge is to keep it that way."

Significantly, the outgoing president, Bill Clinton, had hailed China as a "strategic partner" who played a "positive role" in South Asia.

Referring to Taiwan and the one-China policy, he said the U.S. had long acknowledged that there was only one China. "In that respect Taiwan is a part of China. How the People's Republic of China and Taiwan resolve the differences in interpretation of that view is up to them; so long as military force is not one of the methods used," Mr Powell said.

He also indicated the U.S. national missile defence shield would not be shelved despite opposition from China and Russia.

He said Russia stood to gain enormous benefits from its relationship with the U.S. and with the West in general. "But that relationship can only be strong and successful if Russia does what it needs to do... like getting on with reforms, rooting out corruption, halting proliferation of missile technology and nuclear materials... and, in general, living up to the obligations it has incurred as the newest democracy with world power credentials," Mr Powell said. (PTI)

THE TIMES OF INDIA

19 JAN 2001

New US regime sees Delhi as peacekeeper

FROM K.P. NAYAR

Washington, Jan. 18: In his first official statement after being designated US secretary of state, General Colin Powell yesterday stopped short of a commitment to lift sanctions on India, but promised to review all of them on taking office.

But more significantly, he envisaged a peace-keeping role for New Delhi in the Indian Ocean region even as it was made clear that the Bush administration would not ignore "our friends" in Pakistan.

Appearing on the opening day of his two-day confirmation hearings before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Powell described India as "a country that should grow more and more focussed in the lens of our foreign policy".

In a 24-page written deposition before the committee, he said: "We must deal more wisely with the world's largest democracy. Soon to be the most populous country in the world, India has the potential to help keep the peace in the vast Indian Ocean area and its periphery. We need to work harder and more consistently to assist India in this endeavour, while not neglecting our friends in Pakistan".

He continued: "As you know,

this is a delicate process in the midst of what by any accurate account would be labelled an arms race between these two countries.

Recently, however, there have been encouraging signs, including India's extended moratorium on operations in Kashmir and Pakistan's restraint along the line of control".

On the prickly issue of the nuclearisation of South Asia, Powell said: "We have to do what we can to constrain their nuclear programme at this time. We have to help them with economic development so they can handle this increased population."

The secretary of state-designate said the Bush administration did not plan to send the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) back to the Senate for ratification. But nor did the US plan any more nuclear tests.

Typically for someone who served in several Republican administrations during the Cold War, Powell said: "During the Cold War period and even when I was chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (we) didn't have to think much about India. They were somewhere else, trapped in another kind of world to us...But now it's all opened up and it is the soon-to-be largest country by popula-

tion on the face of the earth, and it is a powerful country and it is a nuclear-armed country."

The retired general's comments on the sanctions did not come voluntarily, but in reply to questions by Senator Sam Brownback, who has been vigorously campaigning on Capitol Hill for a repeal of the restrictions imposed after the nuclear tests in May 1998.

"With respect to the sanctions," Powell said, "I've discovered one thing over the last several weeks as I've prepared for this job, is that there is a wide range of sanctions and certifications and various constraints. And what I'm really going to have to do before I answer your question directly is to get into office and, with my other colleagues in the administration, review all of these sanctions".

He remarked that "I certainly agree with you (Brownback) that India has to be a high priority for foreign policy activities of the US". The promised review, he said, would enable the incoming administration to determine "whether this is the time to move forward and remove the remaining sanctions that are in place... especially with respect to India. But I am not in a position to make that commitment now".

THE TELEGRAPH

18 JAN 1999

Sanctions a mistake, says Celeste

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

KOLKATA, Jan. 13. — The post-Pokhran sanctions imposed by the USA on Indian scientists and transfer of technology were a mistake, Mr Richard Celeste said here today.

The US ambassador to India was addressing a gathering at the SN Bose Institute of Scientists. The sanctions had been "an emotional decision...a reaction to being aggrieved, spurned and deceived by our Indian friends", Mr Celeste said.

He had admitted yesterday that the Pokhran tests and the sanctions had "rekindled a sense of paranoia on both sides". The new Bush administration will have to decide

early whether or not to continue the sanctions.

The US government may have been justified in imposing sanctions on nuclear research institutes, but not ones working on scientific and technological research, Mr Celeste said.

Indian scientists like Mr R Chidambaram should not have been discouraged from participating in conferences in the USA, which did not deal with nuclear research.

Mr Chidambaram was refused a US visa because he was a nuclear scientist. But he was then working on a crystallography project that had nothing to do with nuclear weapons.

The two countries should increase scientific collabora-

tion, so that such misunderstandings can be avoided, Mr Celeste said. Better collaboration would act as a "buffer to political intrusion in what should be free of political intrusion".

The US embassy's new science advisor in India said the biggest challenge for Indian scientists is the country's demographics and "how to make the pie bigger". To solve this problem, they would have to look at their own backyard, instead of turning to other countries.

Dr Marco Di Capua said India's fears of a 'brain drain' are unfounded. He cited the examples of Korea and Taiwan, which fostered similar fears till adequate infrastructure and opportunities

were developed in both countries to stem the drain.

The Indo US Science and Technology Forum, set up last year, is due to convene soon. At present, 17 US agencies in scientific and technological research are collaborating with Indian agencies.

The US ambassador yesterday praised Mr Buddhadev Bhattacharya for his pro-active attempts to invite foreign investors to West Bengal, but pointed out that the state's reputation for calling bandhs and a "less than robust work culture" discouraged investment.

Optimistic about the growing partnership between India and the USA, Mr Celeste said visa applications to the USA have report-

edly gone up from 2,65,000 in 1997 to 4,95,000 in 2000. He predicted that there would be one million applications per year by 2003.

Mr Celeste praised Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee's ceasefire offer in Jammu and Kashmir and hoped that conditions would allow India to resume dialogue with Pakistan soon.

The Kargil conflict "fought against the Pakistan-supported infiltration into Kargil" had led to a dramatic shift in Indo-US ties, Mr Celeste said. He commended the NDA government for moving "beyond the doubt and suspicion which left previous governments ambivalent about identifying common interests and making common cause with the USA".

THE STATESMAN

10 JAN 2001

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Work culture a hurdle to US investments in State

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HT Correspondent
Kolkata, January 12

WHILE INDO-US relations have moved from paranoia to partnership in the last three years, bandhs and a less than robust work culture in West Bengal have made it an unattractive investment destination, said ambassador of USA to India Richard F Celeste here today. He even chided the state's politicians for their role in this.

On a farewell visit to the city before he ends his stint as the US ambassador, Celeste also said that pressures within the governing coalition and outside it have slowed the reform agenda, causing investors in the US to tread cautiously when considering India as an investment destination.

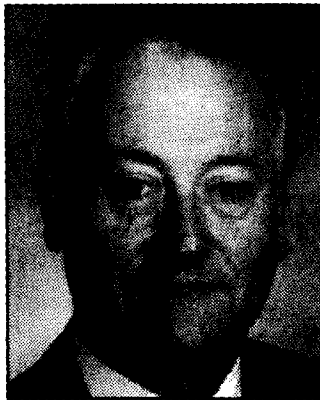
He was speaking at a meeting jointly organised by West Bengal Federation of United Nations Associations and Commonwealth Parliament Association.

Briefing on the areas of partnership between the two countries as also the problem areas, the most important being nuclear proliferation, he said that "The new administration will have to decide early on whether to maintain the current sanctions or to adopt a new approach."

Recalling mistakes of the past, he said that "For most part following

India's independence, its leaders were apt to assume that whatever was good for the US was necessarily bad for India while we on our part viewed India largely through the prism of our strategic alignment with Pakistan."

He added that things changed from mid 1997 when then Prime



Minister I.K. Gujral extended an invitation to President Clinton to visit India. The Clinton Administration also formally adopted a new policy framework for India, aimed at broadening and deepening bilateral relations.

The ambassador reflected how three years ago, when he took up ambassadorship, the mission statement was "to exercise leadership in

promoting the interests of the US and its citizens in India..." He added that in early October 2000, in the post-visits era, it was revised to read "we seek to strengthen mutual understanding and to build a dynamic partnership for the 21st century".

"Perhaps the most dramatic indicator of the positive trend in Indo-US bilateral relations is evident every day in the lines of visa applicants at each of our consulates. By 2003, the number of such applicants will reach one million," he said.

The ambassador denied that his country had ever tried to promote one political party over another. "We need to show respect towards each other's systems," he said.

The ambassador pointed out that the fruits of economic liberalization have not flowed to West Bengal. "Just last week a trade delegation came to Calcutta, but on the day of the visit, the city came to a standstill because of the bandh.

He also recalled his association with the city. During his first visit here in 1963, "I went to the Presidency College and got into a debate with the president of the left leaning students' wing.

"We are still friends, I have even hosted him at my house in US," he said.

THE HINDUSTAN TIME

13 JAN 20

An evolving U.S.-India equation

By P. S. Suryanarayana

THE CRITICAL mass for a promising dynamic on the India-U.S. diplomatic front may have been attained. This is the broad consensus among those monitoring the 'cauldron' of difficult India-U.S. interactions. However, it is not a certainty at this stage that the promise of a more accommodative bilateral relationship will be fully and quickly realised. It is a simple truism that the new course of the bilateral dialogue will be determined in the short term by the political will and diplomatic skill of the incoming Bush administration in Washington for striking a rapport with New Delhi.

The outgoing U.S. Ambassador to India, Mr. Richard Celeste, has identified a significant irony which seems to have made a positive difference to the bilateral relationship. Paraphrased, the paradox, which he outlined during the 'Abraham Lincoln Lecture' he delivered in Chennai recently, can be set out as follows. New Delhi's action in 1998 of proving its political will and technological ability to make nuclear weapons, besides the "transparency" which began to impinge on the turbulent India-U.S. ties during the Kargil crisis of 1999, helped transform the bilateral equation gradually from one of "paranoia" about each other's intentions to that of a "partnership". India's atomic-weapon testing had been frowned upon by the U.S. in 1998. But New Delhi, wary by 1999 of the perceived possibility of nuclear brinkmanship by Pakistan, was satisfied that Washington played its superpower card and persuaded Islamabad to call off its Kargil adventure.

Now, there is no need for a misperception that the U.S. may acknowledge India as a deserving member of the so-called Nuclear Club. Washington remains unimpressed that India can somehow claim to be in a league of its own and make the atom bomb while other major states such as Japan and Germany, possessing the capabilities to produce weapons of mass destruction, have observed a conspicuous restraint. Not considered relevant to this reasoning is the political factor that Japan and Germany were on the losing side in World War II, which itself was brought to a conclusion by the conscious use of two atom bombs by the U.S., the only state with such an arsenal at that time. It is an

altogether different aspect of international diplomatic discourse whether the unfolding post-Cold War realities of today may at some stage impel another round of 'nuclearisation' in one geopolitical theatre or the other around the world. Nonetheless, directly relevant to the evolving U.S.-India equation is of course the 'nuclearisation' that occurred in South Asia in the late 1990s even as Islamabad hurried to try and match New Delhi.

The official U.S. view is that its own intensive dialogue with India since 1998 on the latter's nuclear security doctrine and related issues has contributed to a certain degree of comfort level in their bilateral

down India on his radar screen as soon as possible. On current political form, Mr. Bush is not likely to wish away his dream of fabricating a 'Star Wars-style' national missile defence shield (NMD) to insulate the U.S. from the presumptive nuclear strikes by 'rogue states' or even terrorist groups in a new 'future shock' scenario. In seeking to do so, Mr. Bush will doubtless scan the entire global arena consisting of legitimate state-players, including India, with nuclear capabilities. In fact, Russia and China have already begun to suspect that the NMD-idea is the unsubtle U.S.' smokescreen to become a 'super-nuclear-power', if that be possible. These suspi-

Tokyo and New Delhi. A poser for Mr. Bush will be whether he should, in pursuit of U.S. national interests (his stated foreign policy dictum), view India as a possible friend in containing China, should the need arise. Mr. Bush has so far let an impression gain currency that he may not regard as a prime foreign policy crusade such a qualitative agenda as extending the frontiers of democracy and expanding the scope of human rights across the world. Should he stay the course on this score, India may find itself slightly marginalised in his reckoning.

However, India is apt to be conspicuous in the South Asian regional security paradigm as might be micro-studied even if Mr. Bush, for some reason, chooses a diplomacy of political remote-sensing in regard to far-flung areas of the world (although he certainly is no isolationist). As Richard W. Baker, a U.S. security forecaster, pointed out, "minilateral diplomacy" is being increasingly preferred by Washington to address some crucial regional problems. The idea is that the countries most directly concerned with security-related crises in each specific region can perhaps be left to solve these by themselves. To this extent, multilateral diplomacy or even external mediation could be considered as supplementary, if not also secondary, means to resolve regional crises. Given Mr. Bush's current foreign policy predilections, he can be expected to let India and Pakistan engage in "minilateral diplomacy" over Kashmir. Unrelated to this, Mr. Celeste, who seems to have played a role behind the scenes in the much-publicised rediscovery of India by the outgoing U.S. President, recently asserted in response to a question at a public forum in Chennai that his country was not in the business of redrawing the map in South Asia.

Strategic and political concerns will be the hard stuff of the U.S.-India engagement. However, the new avenues for bilateral economic linkages and the changing perceptions of the two on global financial and trade issues will be no less important as and when Mr. Bush decides to zero in his attention on the India-U.S. Vision Statement.

Given Mr. George Bush's current foreign policy predilections, he can be expected to let India and Pakistan engage in "minilateral diplomacy" over Kashmir.

diplomacy. The same cannot obviously be said of U.S.-Pakistan ties, if only because their initial conversations on Islamabad's nuclear profile did not produce a sustainable chain-reaction of ideas. It is indeed possible to trace the reason for that stalemate to Pakistan's consistent argument that the onus rests almost entirely with India to transform the South Asian 'tinder box' into a sanctuary of peace.

In any case, the U.S. is no less cognisant of China's perceivable role in Pakistan's 'nuclearisation' as also its ballistic missile development programmes. Viewed in this perspective, the China factor in the Indian nuclear security calculus is central to the strategic dialogue between Washington and New Delhi. It is not clear at this moment whether the next U.S. President, Mr. George Bush, will be inclined to scale down or sustain or perhaps enlarge the outgoing Clinton administration's conversations with New Delhi on the nuclear and other collateral issues of inevitable concern to Washington.

Despite being counselled by two experts with no previously intimate knowledge of the southern and eastern flanks of Asia, namely Gen. Colin Powell and Ms. Condoleezza Rice, Mr. Bush is expected to track

China and Russia to the initial U.S. proposals about a possible canopy of hypertechnology protection against intercontinental missiles. It is therefore logical that a move by Mr. Bush to build the NMD might provoke Russia and China, and this in turn will set a Beijing-wary India thinking. It is in this sense that New Delhi can figure in Mr. Bush's strategic thought-capsule. The reasoning holds good even if his prospective administration were to move cautiously in regard to the unfinished American ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). The conventional wisdom is that a soft treading by Mr. Bush in this terrain should suit India in the short term. It is possible that Mr. Bush will consider it necessary to engage India over the present American policy, which may not be easy to reverse, concerning the stated need to bring about a global moratorium on the production of weapons-grade fissile materials.

China and Pakistan have often been cited by India in its quest for nuclear security. In many ways, China had moved to the centre-stage of America's strategic and conventional diplomacy in recent years, causing qualitatively differing concerns in

THE HINDU

12 JAN 2001

US hopes for Indo-Pak dialogue: Celeste

BY R. BHAGWAN SINGH

Chennai, Jan. 5: The US ambassador to India, Mr Richard F. Celeste, on Friday cautioned that the tension between India and Pakistan had been "especially high" since the Kargil war and expressed hope that conditions would improve permitting India to resume a dialogue with Pakistan as per the Lahore Declaration.

Reiterating the US stand that India and Pakistan should sort out their differences mutually and without outside interference, Mr Celeste pointed out that US President Bill Clinton, during his visit to the subcontinent, had pleaded for respect for the Line of Control, reduced violence and renewed dialogue.

"That is why we applaud Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee's Ramzan ceasefire offer and its extension announced last month. That is why we are encouraged by steps taken on both sides to reduce violence. That is why we respect the government's efforts to engage in substantive talks with a wide range of leaders in Kashmir. That is why we hope that conditions will permit India to resume a dialogue with Pakistan that was envisioned in the Lahore Declaration," the US ambassador said, during the Abraham Lincoln Memorial Lecture for the Indo-American Chamber of Commerce here.

Denying the suggestion that the US failed to acknowledge Kashmir as an integral part of India, Mr Celeste said the Indian government should hold direct talks with the people

of Kashmir on all issues relating to them. Similarly, a direct dialogue must be attempted with Pakistan on Indo-Pakistan issues. "It is not our business to draw new boundaries for India."

The US ambassador added: "For most of the first 50 years following India's Independence, India's leaders were correct to assume that whatever was good for the US was necessarily bad for India. For our part, we viewed India largely through the prism of our strategic alignment with Pakistan."

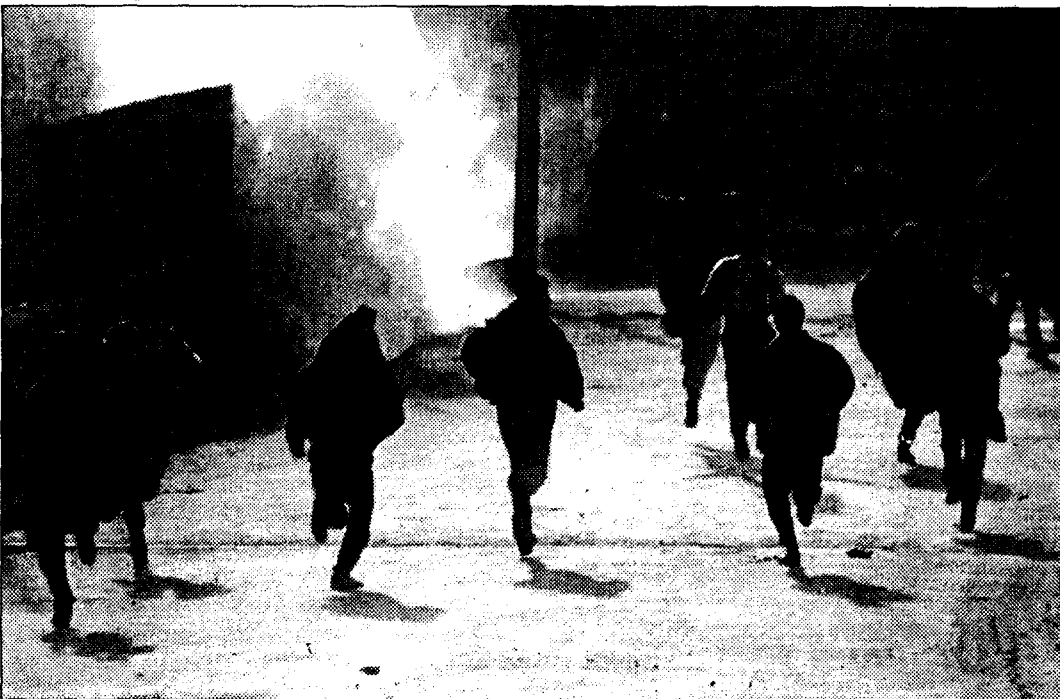
The end of the Cold War and the near simultaneous opening up of India's economy began to change perceptions on both sides. But it was not until mid-1997 that the Clinton administration finally adopted a new policy framework for India, "aimed at

broadening and deepening our bilateral relationship."

The most dramatic indicator of the positive trend in the Indo-US bilateral relationship, the ambassador noted, was the galloping rise in the number of successful visa applicants from India to visit his country. From 265,000 applicants in 1997, the number had nearly doubled in 2000. By 2003, the number will double again to 1 million visa applicants every year.

The US consulate in Chennai has issued more H1-B software visas than any US post anywhere in the world.

"When Indian-Americans succeed, India can, and does, take pride. This is the palpable aspect of the partnership," ambassador Celeste said.



PROTEST: Kashmiri protesters run for cover amid teargas smoke fired by the police during a protest demonstration outside Jamia Masjid in Srinagar on Friday. (Reuters)

Top J&K official accused of fraud

BY OUR CORRESPONDENT

New Delhi, Jan. 5: Jammu and Kashmir government's principal secretary and former Kandla Port Trust chairman H.K.L. Kadlabju and deputy chairman of Kandla Port Trust Vipul Mitra allegedly abused official authority and showed undue favour to Dharati Dredging and Construction Company in Hyderabad in terms of awarding a contract for dredging work at Kandla Port in Gujarat during 1998-99, according to the CBI sources.

The contract was allegedly given at an exorbitant rate causing a loss of Rs 56.95 lakhs to Kandla Port Trust and a corresponding gain to the accused.

Meanwhile, Mr Mitra has said that he was not involved in the process of decision-making at any stage in case pertaining to awarding of a dredging task to a Hyderabad-based firm. The case is being investigated by the Central Bureau of Investigation and Mr Kadlabju has been arrested in the matter.

Mr Mitra, in a fax message to *The Asian Age*, claimed that as it is evident from the notings, the file meant for issuing tender papers to the dredging company had not gone through him. He has added that even in the second stage when the tender committee was being formed, the file did not come to him.

Dukhtaran revolts against Hurriyat's agenda

BY YUSUF JAMEEL

Jammu, Jan. 5: Kashmir's most vociferous rightwing women's organisation, the Dukhtaran-e-Millat (Daughters of the Faith), once a constituent of the Hurriyat Conference, has risen in revolt against the amalgam accusing the outfit of allowing itself to become a tool in the hands of New Delhi.

"India is using them to push its agenda in Kashmir," the firebrand leader of the outfit, Syeda Aasiya Andrabi, said in Srinagar on Thursday. The veiled Dukhtaran chief told reporters that the Hurriyat Conference leaders had not formulated its own agenda for the proposed Pakistan trip, "but would carry with them the Indian agenda." She said the amalgam leaders had become the favourites

of the Centre as well as the Indian media overnight because they were furthering their cause.

"They are simply being used by New Delhi for its so-called peace initiative in Jammu and Kashmir. The sole aim of their visit to Pakistan is to make the mujahideen leaders respond positively to the Indian ceasefire declaration," she said.

Ms Andrabi was sceptical about the Centre's sincerity behind the truce and said: "They are not sincere in resolving the Kashmir issue. They only want to undo the pressure the mujahideen have built on the security forces by carrying out daredevil attacks deep inside their entrenchments," she asserted.

Even if the Hurriyat Conference succeeded

furthering the Indian agenda, the amalgam would not be given any credit for that and would not be accepted as the sole representatives of the Kashmiri people, she cautioned.

The Centre had already made it clear that it would be holding discussions with various pro-India organisations, such as the National Conference, simultaneously. "If that happens, it would just be seen as the worst sell-out on the part of the Hurriyat Conference," she said.

She also took a dig at Hizbul Mujahideen chief commander (operations) Abdul Majeed Dar, accusing him of having sold his conscience to India.

"Majeed Dar, it seems, has sold his self to the Indian government," she alleged in refer-

ence to the man who had in July last year declared a unilateral ceasefire. The truce, however, broke within a fortnight when the Centre refused to accept the Hizb condition that Pakistan too should be involved in the peace talks.

The Dukhtaran chief felt that only the Lashkar-e-Tayyaba, Jaish-e-Muhammad and Al-Badr were contributing "positively" towards the ongoing *jihad* in the state.

"In the coming days, the *jihad* would only be intensified and these groups would declare that *jihad* alone can lead to a lasting solution to the Kashmir issue," she said.

The Hizb leadership, on the other hand, was dishing out conflicting statements and creating confusion in the minds of the people, she complained.

Bush regime concerned over Christian security

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Jan. 3. — The George W Bush administration is deeply concerned with the frequent attacks on Christians in India.

Mr Arlen Specter, a senior US Republican Senator and the first Republican leader to visit India after Mr Bush was voted to power, today expressed concern over such attacks.

He said the Indian government had told him that the attacks were limited in number and the Prime Minister had condemned the attacks. He was also told about the various steps taken by the government to curb these incidents. The Senator, however, said the information he gathered from the government was not satisfactory enough and he would look into it further.

The matter also came up for discussion during his meeting with the foreign secretary, Mr Lalit Mansingh, who will take over as ambassador to Washington. Mr Specter and Mr Mansingh held talks on the state of Indo-US relations,

Afghanistan and South Asia.

The Senator also met the former finance minister, Mr Manmohan Singh, and another Congress leader, Mr Natwar Singh.

Mr Specter, who is the legislative leader on terrorists, crime and drugs, expressed hope that the Bush government would appoint an ambassador on religious freedom to ensure religious rights of minorities across the world.

He said though South Asia was very much a priority with Mr Bush, the new administration would be initially busy with budget and other domestic issues before turning to international ones like West Asia.

Mr Specter, who will soon visit Islamabad, said there wouldn't be any deviation in the new regime's policy vis-a-vis India and Pakistan and that it was seriously concerned about the relationship between the two. "We need a strong India .. and a democratic Pakistan".

On sanctions, he said he personally held that these should have been imposed on China too for aiding Pakistan.

THE STATESMAN

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