

THE INDIA-PAKISTAN WAR OF 1971:

A DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

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A DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

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## PREFACE

The purpose of this thesis is to investigate the relationship between the possession of a high level of military power and the motivation of a state to use it to achieve critical political objectives. Particular attention is given to two general areas: First, the relationship between the recently acquired position of military power by India and India's subsequent high motivation to use its power against Pakistan; second, the internal political conditions during 1971 which were manipulated by India's leadership to bolster the nation's war potential to bring about a high motivation for war. The strategic perspective model for foreign policy analysis provided the general analytical frame of reference for the thesis.

I would like to thank Professor Harold Sare for stimulating my interest in the India-Pakistan war of 1971 and for providing a framework for methodological analysis and valuable research material. For criticism and suggestions, I am indebted to Dr. Clifford Rich and Dr. Raymond Habiby.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

War is one of the most serious concerns in international relations. The primacy of national self-interest and the function of military power as a factor in achieving national interests present basic problems in every nation's defense policy. The essence of a sound defense policy rests upon a well-defined set of vital national interests and the development of sufficient power, alone or in concert with others, to secure those interests. A particular defense policy at any time can be examined on this premise. In this study, the India-Pakistan war of 1971 will be examined from this standpoint.

Political conflict in East Pakistan between a revolutionary group and the recognized government of Pakistan caused several million refugees to flee to India. This was because of alleged widespread "atrocities" and "massacres" inflicted on the inhabitants of East Pakistan by government troops sent in to control the uprising. A severe strain was put on India's already embattled economy. Similarly, it caused additional problems for the central government of India in West Bengal, India's most troubled and turbulent state.

In late November, 1971, India sent troops into East Pakistan in an attempt to redress the situation. The primary reason for this action was stated by Mrs. Indira Gandhi:

How could we ignore a conflict which took place on our very border and overflowed into our own territory? Ten million destitute refugees poured into densely populated areas which were also politically sensitive owing to the activities of Marxists and the Left extremists we call Naxalites. This posed unbearable strains on our economy and on our social and administrative institutions. The terrible stories of genocide and the comings and goings of Mukti Bahini, the resistance force of Bangladesh, created a volatile situation for us also. How could we remain indifferent to these developments?<sup>1</sup>

This precipitated a war between India and Pakistan. India's preponderant military strength was quickly demonstrated and after only a few days of fighting, Indian officers were demanding a Pakistani surrender. Pakistan's military force surrendered on the war's thirteenth day, thus closing a legendary fourteen day war. As a result of the war, the refugees were returned to East Pakistan, now the new state of Bangladesh.

The overall effects of the war were wide-spread. Pakistan lost a major portion of its population and territory. It also lost its main foreign exchange earners--jute and tea. The second partition of the subcontinent increased the possibility of revolution in the area because of wide-spread economic, political, and social unrest in Pakistan and in the new state of Bangladesh.<sup>2</sup> Also, a new power alignment developed in the region--China and the United States in support of Pakistan, and the Soviet Union in support of India.

Even though the United States stopped the shipment of war material to both India<sup>3</sup> and Pakistan<sup>4</sup> there is strong evidence to support the

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<sup>1</sup>Indira Gandhi, "India and the World," Foreign Affairs (October, 1972), p. 70.

<sup>2</sup>Robert Laporte, Jr., "Pakistan in 1971: The Disintegration of a Nation," Asian Survey (February, 1972), p. 107.

<sup>3</sup>New York Times, December 2, 1971, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., November 8, 1971, p. 1.

position that there was firm backing of Pakistan by the United States. According to the text of a memorandum for a meeting of a National Security Council Committee on Indian-Pakistani hostilities, Doctor Kissinger is reported by Jack Anderson, a syndicated columnist, to have taken the following position:

Dr. Kissinger said that we are not trying to be even handed. There can be no doubt what the president wants. The president does not want to be even handed. The president believes that India is the attacker....Dr. Kissinger said that he cannot afford to ease India's state of mind....He invited anyone who objected to this approach to take his case to the president.<sup>5</sup>

Additionally, Mr. Anderson claimed possession of confidential documents which reveal that the United States sent elements of its Seventh Fleet to the Indian Ocean for a show of force in support of Pakistan rather than the announced "evacuation of American citizens."<sup>6</sup> It was also asserted that some administration officials proposed to let Jordan or Saudi Arabia "quietly transfer" American furnished arms to Pakistan.<sup>7</sup>

China openly condemned India at the United Nations<sup>8</sup> and pledged to "resolutely support the Pakistan government and people in their just struggle against foreign aggression and in defense of their state sovereignty and national independence."<sup>9</sup> This warning was interpreted to reflect a willingness to extend increased military assistance rather than to intervene directly by sending troops.

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid., January 15, 1972, p. 6.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., January 1, 1972, p. 2.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., December 31, 1971, p. 1.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., November 20, 1971, p. 1.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., November 29, 1971, p. 11.



The Soviets stood in firm support of India before and during the crisis. In August, 1971, a treaty of peace, cooperation and friendship with the Soviet Union was negotiated, which contained clauses calling for consultation in case of attack or threat thereof by a third party. Afterwards, high Soviet officials visited India and were "believed to have discussed Soviet military commitments to India in the event of an India-Pakistan war."<sup>10</sup>

Mrs. Gandhi summed up the power bloc alignment in the following statement:

On American arms for Pakistan...I don't know what the quantum is now but in the past they have been supplied to Pakistan in large quantities. They have been used only against India ....In this matter we certainly have had a far more understanding approach from the Soviet Union than we have from the United States....The point is that the Soviet Union supports us in basic things for which we have stood and for which we have fought earlier on. And it is on these issues that we have been with them at the United Nations.<sup>11</sup>

This thesis is concerned with the underlying factors leading to India's involvement in the war. Primarily, it will explore why India sent troops into East Pakistan under the guise of defensive strikes when it could have chosen to avoid a formal military involvement and have achieved the same objectives. David Bayley argues that had India waited, the independence of Bangladesh would still have taken place. He asserts that Pakistan's military machinery, administrative capacity, and financial position could not have tolerated the situation much longer.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid., October 29, 1971, p. 10.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., October 19, 1971, p. 1.

<sup>12</sup> David H. Bayley, "India: War and Political Assertion," Asian Survey, Vol. XIII (February, 1972), p. 94.

An analysis of the "cost-gain" estimates that may have contributed to India's decision to use force and how its military power was related to the motivation to use force will be made.

Military power will be treated as a vital resource of political power, as an instrument for India to achieve objectives that were ranked high in the structure of goals that were politically effective at that time. This will involve a discussion of India's forceful action as a specific response to a particular situation. The motivating factor was the expected effects of war on the goals and preferences of India. The greater the net gain which India expected to derive from fighting, the higher was its motivation for war.

Historically, political attitudes in India toward military power before the 1962 war with China corresponded with Nehru's belief that a Chinese military threat to India was distant and that India should not stimulate a provocative response from China through reckless actions. Thus, India's military preparedness was directed against her weaker neighbor, Pakistan. Its military had put great stress on traditional British ceremonies and had given little attention to the capacity of its forces to carry out successful campaigns against an enemy other than Pakistan. Its officer corps was misled by the politicians in believing that there was no serious threat from China. Prime Minister Nehru, speaking in bewilderment after the Chinese invasion, is reported to have said that: "He felt that this type of aggression was almost a thing of the past."<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup>Lorne J. Kavic, India's Quest for Security: Defense Policies 1947-1965 (Berkeley, 1967), p. 178.

The attack caught India short in every category. Vital supplies and material were in short supply and materials had to be sought from the general public to aid defenseless soldiers.<sup>14</sup> The Indian economy was disrupted and all steel products and corporate stock were frozen.<sup>15</sup> The Chinese attacks were heavy and decisive. Indian forces were beaten on fronts one thousand miles apart and were overrun in the eastern drive. Having gained all of the border regions they had claimed, the Chinese suddenly declared a unilateral cease-fire and withdrew to lines from which they could control these regions. An informal truce prevailed because the Indians had no desire to renew the war.<sup>16</sup> Although the conflict had ended, Peking continued to make political advances to the Himalayan states of Nepal and Bhutan in an attempt to erode India's influence. This added to India's problem of defending her two thousand eight hundred mile border broken only by several powerless kingdoms.

This conflict had a marked effect on Indian official circles. It showed that if vital interests are at stake, the balance of power thesis does not preclude a limited conflict in which an aggressor can initiate hostilities and terminate action after achieving the desired objectives, and then resume its pre-conflict military posture without interference. This same principle was used by India in the war with Pakistan in 1971.

The major hypothesis of this study is: India resorted to force against Pakistan in East Pakistan because it envisioned an opportunity, with the support of the Soviet Union, to become politically and

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 179.

<sup>16</sup>Ernest and Trevor Dupuy, The Encyclopedia of Military History (New York, 1970), pp. 1245, 1246.

militarily dominant in South Asia. Under the cloak of "self-defense," India desired to eliminate the long term military threat of Pakistan and to build a security system that could stand against any possible advance into the region by the People's Republic of China. Its motivation to use force was high because it had suffered a traumatic military defeat in the 1962 war with China and had subsequently committed its resources to the development of military power. The East Pakistan problem offered an opportunity to assert this power. A high level of military capability combined with expectant major net gains from fighting provided a strong motivation for war. Also, India's leadership responded forcefully in East Pakistan to prevent elements in West Bengal from joining the Bangla movement and possibly taking West Bengal out of the Indian nation.

The methodology of this study will be analytical and descriptive. Chapter II will show that India, by receiving considerable military assistance from the United States, the Soviet Union, and other commonwealth nations, attempted to revitalize her armed forces and remedy the many defects disclosed in the disastrous 1962 war with China. With this introduction, India's military power will then be compared to Pakistan's military power before the 1971 war, showing the lop-sided power position that existed at that time. If India had not been able to quickly defeat Pakistan, it may have gotten itself into a prolonged war. It becomes necessary to look at the sustaining power of both countries. War-useful resources and industries of both countries will be compared and analyzed. Klaus Knorr relates a nation's potential military output to motivation for war. He states the following:

Motivation for war in part determines the proportion of the nation's economic capacity which, in the event of war, will be available for producing military power and the efficiency

with which resources will be employed. The more economic resources are drawn from idleness into production, and the more efficiently all employed resources are put to work, the larger will be the output of military power.<sup>17</sup>

It will be shown that India's potential military output greatly exceeded that of Pakistan. Some of the factors that will be studied are population, energy production, heavy industry, and defense production. These provide an overall index of the strength that could be mobilized by the two countries.

Chapter III will discuss the overall effects of the unstable military balance in South Asia and the advantages created for India by its decisive intervention in the 1971 war. The focus of attention will be on India's "cost-gain" estimates and its attempt to build an acceptable Indo-Pakistani relationship.

By eliminating the military threat of Pakistan with Soviet assistance, India can now focus its planning and military preparations against its major opponent, the People's Republic of China. Also, by fully supporting the hard pressed New Congress government in West Bengal, the central government took long strides toward stability in the Indian union.

Having shown, in Chapters II and III, India's psychological commitment to power through the development of her war potential and that it had vital interests at stake, Chapter IV will relate these two factors as motivation for war. Three indicators from Klaus Knorr's discussion on the war potential of nations will be applied to test whether

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<sup>17</sup> Klaus Knorr, The War Potential of Nations (Princeton, 1956), p. 43.

motivation for war existed.<sup>18</sup> It will be shown that through carefully orchestrated actions and speeches, Indian officials clearly "demonstrated" that vital interests were at stake and a "benevolent" India was being forced into a war it did not want, thus justifying its subsequent actions. The following factors will be used:

It is through the political process that a motivation for war expresses itself. By means of an adroit policy of information, the government can assist citizens in gaining a picture of reality which is conducive to a high personal commitment to wage war. The way government leaders represent a war effort will in effect limit the individual's choice and guide his response.<sup>19</sup>

The Indian administration's policy of information will be appraised in terms of how it assisted its citizens in gaining a picture of the war and how it limited their choice and response to the war.

To help clarify this argument, Knorr states the following:

The power of leadership is founded on the degree to which the nation among its parts and with the government is agreed on its most cherished interests. A shift in preference and goals come about as individuals and groups identify themselves with the nation's military objectives and with those governmental leaders and groups who are representative of this cause. In that event, and to that extent, individuals want the consequences of fighting more than the consequences of not fighting.<sup>20</sup>

Mrs. Gandhi and her lieutenants asserted a strong leadership position during the crisis. It will be shown that Indian leaders began cultivating the need to redress the situation in March, 1971, by favorably responding to the hordes of destitute refugees and, at the same time, pointing to the burden that the refugees brought to India. War was made

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 310.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., pp. 64, 81, 82.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., pp. 74, 75, 85.

desirable in economic terms. The Indian public was skillfully disciplined to war in December, 1971.

A nation's potential motivation for war must be appraised relative to the scale of war effort which its government deems necessary as a means of achieving its military objectives and partly on the citizenry's appraisal of the prospects of winning. A nation will be motivated to be an aggressor when it can force a decision before the enemy has had time to mobilize his war potential, or when it can at least cripple his war potential at the outset of war.<sup>21</sup>

India's preponderant military power during the crisis will be analyzed. It will be shown that Indian leadership felt that India could achieve a "decisive" and "final" victory. The last chapter will present conclusions in response to the major hypothesis.

A search of the literature reveals that there are several articles written on the 1971 war. Most of the authors focus on the political instability in India and Pakistan as causes of the war. Articles written by David Bayley and Robert Laporte are excellent examples of the general approach selected by most writers on the subject.

David Baylay discusses the Indian forceful response to the refugee problem as premature and unwarranted. He implies that India could have achieved the same objectives through more peaceful measures. He describes the war as a major political feat for the Indian leaders during a period of intense political instability in the country. His major contribution is a brief description of the strategy played by India during the crisis.<sup>22</sup>

Robert Laporte focuses on the political instability in Pakistan

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<sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 44.

<sup>22</sup>Bayley, pp. 87-96.

before the war. He discusses the cause of the war as a response from the people of East Pakistan to the repressive order of their government. He implies that the government officials of Pakistan were responsible for the tragic dismemberment of the country. In conclusion, he offers an analysis of the increased instability in the region as a result of the war.<sup>23</sup>

This study's approach, which is essentially a power approach, puts a sense of realism into the problem, which is ignored by the other articles, or at most only implicitly mentioned.

This study will provide insights into general political concepts useful in analyzing a nation's foreign policy. First, it will provide a framework for clarifying two of the most relevant factors which influence a nation's foreign policy--capability and will to fight. Second, this study presents a model, influenced by Klaus Knorr's approach, for comparing the foreign policies of nations. Third, and most important, this study will show significant relationships among the several factors which influence the decision of a nation to go to war. Not only can the behavior of a nation in conflict with another nation be related to internal political instability and historical grievances, but it can also be related to national power, military power, psychological motivation, national unity, and the intensity of border disputes.

This paper will depend upon such sources as The New York Times, The Christian Science Monitor, political science journals, military journals, United Nations technical journals and reports, and numerous books concerning both countries.

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<sup>23</sup>LaPorte, pp. 97-108.



## CHAPTER II

### INDIA'S MILITARY BUILD-UP

After the 1962 war with China, India was faced with a grave defense problem. The war had been of great psychological consequence to the Indian leaders. Following the defeat, Indian leadership made a commitment not to let this happen again. Prime Minister Nehru said:

We can safeguard peace only when we have the strength to make aggression a costly and profitless adventure. The greater our economic and defense potential, the less will be the danger from across our borders. From now on, defense and development must be regarded as integral and related parts of the national economic plan.<sup>1</sup>

Geographically, India is separated from China by the Himalayan mountains. The mountains serve as a natural barrier except for well-defined passes that can be penetrated by the military. This defensive barrier is weakened by the existence of three small states which lie in the center of the frontier with China. These states, Nepal, Bhutan, and Sikkim, offer direct passes from Tibet into India. The easy access that China had into India through these passes forced Indian leadership to develop special military relations with each state and to assist each in strengthening its military power in addition to overhauling India's own military strength.

Before the 1947 partitioning of the subcontinent, Nepal provided a source of manpower for the British army in India. The men recruited

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<sup>1</sup>Kavic, p. 192.

from this area were well known for their military expertise and were used to form special Gurka regiments. After the subcontinent was partitioned, India entered into a security agreement with Nepal and provided arms and supplies to Nepal's 25,500 man army and air force. India also recruited one additional Gurka regiment from this area to supplement the six regiments which were retained within the Indian army after the 1947 partitioning. Even though the treaty was terminated by Nepal in 1969, India continued to provide military training for Nepal's military forces. Nepal's military forces were primarily used for internal security and border patrol.<sup>2</sup>

Sikkim, a protectorate of India, permitted the Indian government to handle all foreign affairs and defense matters for the country. Sikkim's 300 man army was reinforced by two Indian divisions which were permanently assigned to operate within that country. Indian interest in the area originated from the existence of strategic passes which began in Sikkim and passed through the Himalayan mountains into Tibet. Indian forces clashed with Chinese forces along these passes four times during the period 1963 to 1968. India built hard surface roads and an airfield within Sikkim in order to improve its strategic position in the area.<sup>3</sup>

India also provided similar military training and arms to Bhutan. A treaty signed in 1949 between India and Bhutan provided for military aid and training for Bhutan's 5,000 man army. In 1958 China renewed claims to Bhutanese territory. India, consequently, built four new roads and an airfield for the forward deployment of Indian troops in the

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<sup>2</sup>T. N. Dupuy and W. Blanchard, The Almanac of World Military Power (2nd ed., New York and London, 1972), p. 324.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 328.

event of an attack by Chinese forces in the area.<sup>4</sup>

The military assistance provided to these three countries was complemented with an internal military build-up of Indian forces. Military equipment needed to equip the increased number of active duty military personnel was received from the United States, the Soviet Union, and the United Kingdom. Indian leaders reduced the political pressure which often accompanied military and economic aid by maintaining a diversity of aid contributors. This also allowed the Indian leaders to proclaim a policy of non-alignment with the major powers. This policy was influenced by India's geographical location and the east-west cold war rivalry.

The expansion of Indian military forces called for an increase in military personnel, equipment and defense industries. The plan as outlined in early 1964 by the Indian administration provided for the following objectives.

1. Creation of an 825,000 man army and modernization of its weapons and equipment;
2. Stabilization of the air force at 45 squadrons, its re-equipment with modern aircraft, and provision of suitable ancillary facilities;
3. Maintenance of the navy at approximately its existing strength and replacement of obsolete vessels with new vessels;
4. Establishment of production facilities so as to materially reduce dependence on external sources of supply;
5. Construction and improvement of communications in border areas.

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 309.

## 6. Expansion of the research organization.<sup>5</sup>

In October, 1962, the Indian army consisted of 550,000 personnel and approximately 1,000 tanks. The tanks had been supplied by the United States, Britain, France, and West Germany. Other small arms weapons, vehicles, and artillery were of World War II vintage. Prior to 1962, tactical planning was conducted in response to the threat of Pakistan in the west and little or no attention was given to the Chinese threat in the northeast frontier area. This area was primarily defended by small outposts. There were no man-made obstacles, ammunition was in short supply, the troops were not acclimated to the 14,700 feet altitude, and warm clothing was absent. The officer corps was low in strength and morale, and it had little appreciation for logistical requirements.

After the hostilities in 1962, aid-seeking missions were dispatched to the United States, the United Kingdom, and the Soviet Union for vital military material.<sup>6</sup> The Soviet Union responded by providing various types of military hardware to include tanks, small arms, aircraft, and ships. It also provided military training for Indian military personnel within the Soviet Union and sent Soviet advisers to India to help train Indian military personnel. The United States also responded, but on a smaller scale than the Soviets. Its aid was primarily in terms of transport aircraft, air defense and control equipment and other small arms for mountain operations.<sup>7</sup>

The defense plan called for twenty-one army divisions, of which ten

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<sup>5</sup>Kavic, pp. 192, 193.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 194.

<sup>7</sup>Dupuy and Blanchard, p. 318.

were to be mountain divisions, trained and equipped to fight in the Himalayan region. Training for these mountain divisions was reoriented to emphasize tactical maneuvers peculiar to the jungles and mountains found in the Himalayan region. The officer corps' program of instruction was also reoriented in order to provide for greater knowledge in operations and logistics. The objective was to produce a professional officer with both mental and physical endurance.

By 1971 the Indian army had grown to a professional force sixty per cent larger than its 1962 force in personnel and 100 per cent stronger in battle tanks. (See Figures 1 and 2 of the Appendix). Moreover, by 1971 the Indian army trebled the Pakistani army in mobilized personnel and possessed twice as many tanks. Thus, India had a superior capability to launch an attack against Pakistan and expand its existing force with greater ease than did Pakistan. A large army has a greater capacity to expand rapidly because of the necessary equipment, personnel, training facilities and housing required to accommodate a large military force.

India's naval defense plan called for both a modernization of obsolete vessels and the construction of shipyards within India. The program was initiated with a British loan which was for the construction of shipyards capable of producing both large and small ships. The Indian government refused an offer from the British to provide obsolete British vessels but they accepted in 1965 a Soviet offer of modern frigates. These frigates were later modernized with a British produced surface-to-air missile known as the "Sea Cat." Other Soviet aid included the construction of shipyards within India which were operated by Soviet

trained personnel.<sup>8</sup>

India's naval expansion, which included the naval airforce, emphasized combatant-type ships and aircraft. Its major additions were in submarines, frigates, torpedo boats, escort destroyers and "Sea Hawk" fighter bombers. By 1971, India had increased its naval strength by twenty-six per cent over 1962 figures and possessed the capability to construct all types of ships, including escort and landing craft. Its first large frigate was completed in 1971. (See Figures 3 and 4 of the Appendix).

Prior to 1962 the Indian airforce constituted the most effective striking force in the Indian Ocean. It consisted of about one thousand aircraft of all types acquired from Great Britain, France, Soviet Union, Canada and indigenous sources. The multiplicity of aircraft, however, created serious problems for India during the 1962 war. The lack of spare parts and poor maintenance management caused the grounding of a larger percentage of aircraft during the conflict. The aircraft that were deployed were ineffective because of the ineptitude of its pilots.<sup>9</sup>

After the hostilities of 1962 and 1965 with China and Pakistan respectively, India increased the number of aircraft in its airforce. The additional aircraft were secured primarily from the Soviet Union and Great Britain. The United States stopped its military aid program to India in 1965 because of the Indian war with Pakistan. The Soviets provided the Indians with one of their latest interceptors and fighter aircraft, the Mig-21 and SU-7. The British provided the Indians with a

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<sup>8</sup>Kavic, pp. 119-123.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., pp. 113-115.

modern fighter bomber code-named the "Hunter." The Soviets also provided the Indians with the equipment and advisory personnel to build aircraft manufacturing plants in India. These plants, when completed, were capable of assembling aircraft received from the Soviet Union and of producing aircraft from raw material. India's combatant aircraft increased in number during the period 1962 to 1971 over two hundred fifty per cent. This was an increase of six hundred aircraft. (See Figure 4 of the Appendix).

India's increased emphasis on defense created a serious lopsided position of power with Pakistan, which was manifested primarily in the increase of strategic offensive weapons for the airforce and navy.

Indian combatant aircraft on the eve of the 1971 war consisted of approximately fifty per cent fighter bombers and fifty per cent interceptor type aircraft. Pakistan's airforce consisted of approximately eighty-five per cent interceptor aircraft. India, also possessed a numerical superiority of approximately four to one in all types of combatant aircraft over Pakistan.

The Indian emphasis on both offensive and defensive aircraft was influenced by its relationship with China. The size of the China mainland prevented any reliance on Indian fighter bombers as a decisive determinant in the outcome of a second war with China. The short flight time of the Mig-21, India's primary interceptor, also prevented India from providing escort aircraft for its fighter bombers and seriously limited operations into the China mainland. The combat radius of the Mig-21 is only two hundred fifty miles. Thus, the Indian airforce, in a war with China, would have to rely heavily on its defensive interceptors to prevent the Chinese from gaining and maintaining air superiority

over land contested by ground forces. On the other hand, India's fighter bombers, supported with interceptors, were within easy range of any target within east or west Pakistan. India's large airforce posed a serious offensive threat vis-a-vis Pakistan.

A similar comparison can also be made of India's naval force. China's large naval force prevented any attempt by the Indians to effect a naval blockade or compete with the Chinese at sea. However, India's increase in combatant ships and the close geographical location of Pakistan's harbors provided India with the capability to effect a naval blockade and defeat Pakistan at sea. Thus, while it is difficult to imagine a successful offensive operation against the Chinese without Soviet support, the Indian military forces possessed an unquestionable superior offensive and defensive capability vis-a-vis Pakistan in 1971.

Under the new defense plan a new directorate was established which was titled the Directorate of Combat Development. Its mission was to increase the supply of arms from within the country and to develop new weapons and corresponding tactical concepts for their employment. Under this directorate, defense production in India surged after 1965. Public and private manufacturers were mobilized to produce war material. A merger of three aircraft companies resulted in the establishment in 1964 of Hindustan Aeronautics Limited, which produced fighter aircraft. Three other aircraft factories were set up to manufacture aircraft from raw materials to include the production of support aircraft, helicopters, and jet trainers. Bharat Electronics, which began production in 1956 with three different types of equipment, produced over seventy different models and types of electronic equipment usable by the military in 1971. The capacity to produce military support equipment such as



railway, coaches and earth-moving equipment also had been expanded or developed, by 1971.<sup>10</sup> Consequently, by 1971, India was considered a secondary arms producer by the Institute of Strategic Studies, London, England. (See Figures 5 and 6 for a listing of additional equipment produced or assembled within India). Also, defense expenditures between 1967 and 1971 consumed over forty per cent of India's annual budget and doubled the expenditures of the Pakistan government.<sup>11</sup>

India's superior war potential was also reflected in other relevant elements of military strength. Its population far exceeded that of Pakistan. According to United Nation estimates, India's 1971 total population was in excess of 547.4 million, with 283.5 million males.<sup>12</sup> Pakistan's census of the same year listed a total population of 114.2 million, with male population figures unavailable.<sup>13</sup> The 1961 census for both India and Pakistan recorded India's male population in the age group of twenty to forty to be 56.3 million compared to 15 million for Pakistan.<sup>14</sup> Thus, in the age group from which military personnel and industrial workers are recruited, the Indians outnumbered the Pakistanis by more than forty-one million men in 1961.

In the area of energy production, during the year 1970, India

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<sup>10</sup>Indian Yearbook, 1960-1971 (Faridabad, India, 1971, pp. 51-61, 181-220.

<sup>11</sup>Institute of Strategic Studies, The Military Balance, 1965-1971.

<sup>12</sup>Demographic Yearbook, 1971 (New York, 1972), p. 144.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 146.

<sup>14</sup>Demographic Yearbook, 1970 (New York, 1971), pp. 275, 290.

produced 88.4 million metric tons (equivalent to tons of coal)<sup>15</sup> compared to 6.75 million metric tons in Pakistan.<sup>16</sup> Pakistan had very little coal and no coke compared to India, which had large reserves of coal and coke and produced 7,905,000 tons of steel in 1970. Pakistan produced only 15,000 tons of steel during the same year. In petroleum refining, India refined 23,290,000 metric tons compared with 5,080,000 metric tons refined by Pakistan.<sup>17</sup>

Pakistan's low industrial production caused the country to depend heavily on foreign imports for aircraft, tanks, ships, fuel, lubricants, and other related material.<sup>18</sup> India, to the contrary, produced or assembled various types of aircraft, ships, and tanks, thus maintaining a lesser degree of dependency on its allies than did Pakistan. India's war potential far exceeded that of Pakistan; India was unquestionably the superior military power in South Asia.

This lop-sided position of power with Pakistan (see Figure 7 of the Appendix), caused the Indian leaders to seek a permanent settlement of their security problem with Pakistan. In a radio message just prior to the massive intervention by India, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi announced: "It is the united will of our people that this wanton and unprovoked aggression of Pakistan should be decisively and finally

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<sup>15</sup>Statistical Yearbook, 1971 (New York, 1972), p. 336.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 336.

<sup>17</sup>Economic Survey of Asia and the Far East, 1969 (New York, 1970), p. 237.

<sup>18</sup>Area Handbook for Pakistan (Washington, D. C., 1971), p. 582.

repelled."<sup>19</sup> One of India's leading generals echoed: "This time we will be given a chance to reach a decision."<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> New York Times, December 5, 1971, p. 1.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

### CHAPTER III

#### INDIA'S "COST-GAIN" ESTIMATES

India's course of action in this conflict reflected a rational appraisal of the various alternatives open for selection. Although David Bayley argues that India could have achieved the same results through peaceful measures, the strategy that the Indian leaders chose achieved the desired results. Other peaceful alternatives offered no guarantee of success. The gains acquired through the use of force seemed to have outweighed any possible advantages that peaceful measures could have achieved. Through the use of its military power and skillful diplomatic initiatives, India achieved an unquestionable dominance in the subcontinent by using its military power to establish Bangladesh as an independent state, India generated a relationship between itself and the new nation that would challenge any pressure that the Pakistani government might exert in the future against Bangladesh.

John Lovell advances the notion that the rationale of a nation's strategy is for the leaders to plan "to advance the interests of their nation-state while preventing other nation-states from impinging on such interests."<sup>1</sup> This requires the decision-makers to rationally develop "cost-gain" estimates which provide the framework for maximizing their

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<sup>1</sup>John Lovell, Foreign Policy in Perspective (New York, 1970), p. 66.

losses when they are determining which course of action to take in a given situation. This analysis also entails a clear calculation of the nation's basic determinants of its foreign policy.

India's foreign and domestic policies have been influenced by its relationship with other countries, notably, Pakistan, China, and the two big powers. The partition of India in 1947 left many unresolved problems. Pakistan, viewing India after the Partition as its primary threat, entered into military alliances with other nations in order to create a favorable position of power vis-a-vis India. It also entered into agreements with other nations to obtain military supplies for its forces. India reacted to this threat and diverted money and resources needed for nation-building to defense expenditures. It also entered into agreements with other nations to obtain military supplies. These agreements have had the effect of involving both countries in the cold war. In addition, India has fought three wars with Pakistan, which has strained its economic development. It is therefore understandable that J. Bandyopadhyaya would conclude the following:

The existence of Pakistan as a hostile neighbor has profoundly affected, and was bound to affect, India's security, national development and relations with other states....It ought to have been from the beginning, and ought to be in the future, one of the major objectives of our foreign policy to normalize relations with Pakistan to the maximum possible extent.<sup>2</sup>

China has been viewed primarily as a threat to India's territorial integrity. As a result of the 1962 war, India has been faced with the problem of guarding the numerous passes over the Himalayan Mountains that provide direct access to India from Tibet. This boundary with China is

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<sup>2</sup>J. Bandyopadhyaya, India's Foreign Policy (New York, 1970), p. 98.

broken by the existence of three small states which poses additional security problems for India.\* India, therefore, has had to exercise considerable caution in its relations with these states to prevent them from developing a favorable orientation toward China to the detriment of India's security. India's most important determinant in its relationship with China in terms of security is the existence of this mountainous barrier between China and the subcontinent. It is in India's vital interest to achieve more acceptable relationships with Pakistan in order to maintain an effective defensive posture against China.

India's relationship with the two big powers has been a proclaimed non-involvement in the cold war and the maintenance of a bargaining position which would enable it to acquire military and economic aid from both. To offset the political pressure that either of the two big powers may exert through foreign aid, it was essential that India maintain multiple sources of aid. The United States has been viewed, primarily as a foreign aid contributor, while the Soviet Union, because of its proximity to India, has been viewed as a foreign aid contributor and a major threat to India's security.<sup>3</sup> India, therefore, has been required to develop a sound relationship with both Moscow and Washington to enhance its bargaining position and maximize its security posture. As dependence on the two big powers declines, it will be able to assert its dominance in the region and will be able to limit foreign interference and outside security managers.<sup>4</sup> For the present, however, it is in

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\*See Chapter II.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 61.

<sup>4</sup> Ashok Kapus, "Indo-Soviet Treaty and the Emerging Asian Balance," Asian Survey (May, 1972), p. 471.

India's interest to maintain its dominance in South Asia to prevent the development of any challenging power in the region.

These factors have provided the framework in which the Indian decision-makers determined the course of action to take during the crisis, "to advance the interests of their nation-state while preventing other nation-states from impinging on such interests."<sup>5</sup>

The crisis of 1971 brought about an opportunity to achieve an acceptable relationship with Pakistan and maximize India's security posture in the region. India's preponderant military power heightened the prospects of a quick decisive action which would bring about a separation of East Pakistan from the larger state and in its place establish an autonomous state to its east, independent of its hostile neighbor in the west. This would have the advantage of reducing the possibility of a two front war and would reduce Pakistan's national power to a permanent position of inferiority that would present no challenge to India in the future.

In the 1970 Pakistani elections, the Awami League Party of East Pakistan obtained a clear majority in the constituent assembly. The leader of the party, Sheik Mujibur Rahman, who was to assume the position of Prime Minister, had proclaimed a six-point program to give East Pakistan a greater degree of autonomy within the country.<sup>6</sup> The election results and Mujibur's platform promised an easing of tensions between the two nations. These hopes on the part of the Indian leaders were thwarted by the arrest of Sheik Mujibur and the repressive measures instituted by

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<sup>5</sup> Lovell, p. 61.

<sup>6</sup> Dunbar Davis, "Pakistan: The Failure of Political Negotiations," Asian Survey (May, 1972), p. 446.

the Pakistani government against the people of East Pakistan. This came as a disappointment to Mrs. Gandhi. She had hoped to achieve better relationships with Pakistan as a result of the elections. Speaking of the developments in Pakistan in the lower house of the Indian Parliament, Mrs. Gandhi said:

This house expresses its deep anguish and grave concern at the recent developments in East Bengal....Something new had happened in East Bengal...a democratic action where an entire people has spoken with almost one voice. We have welcomed this, not because we wanted any interference in another country's affairs, but because there were the values...for which we have always spoken out. And we had hoped that this action would help us to get closer, which would help us to serve our own people better and create an entirely new situation. A wonderful opportunity for even the strengthening of Pakistan has been lost.<sup>7</sup>

The arrival of millions of refugees from East Pakistan into West Bengal caused severe political and economic problems for the Indian union. India was forced to divert money and needed resources from its development efforts to care for the refugees.<sup>8</sup> The problems of social and political instability in West Bengal were compounded by the influx of refugees and attempts by the newly elected state government to alter the violence remained ineffective. Consequently, the state was placed under President's Rule in June, 1971, by the central government in an attempt to bring about some measure of control to the area through a coordinated effort between local and national leaders.

In order to understand the plight of the Indian national and state leaders of West Bengal during the year leading up to the 1971 war, it is essential to review the history of political development within West

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<sup>7</sup>Why Bangladesh? (Bangladesh, 1971), p. 36.

<sup>8</sup>Bayley, p. 92.



Bengal, particularly the history of the state's Communist party.

Since the 1930's the Communists of West Bengal had been able to sustain a high level of violence and insurrectionist activity within the state. The West Bengal terrain, which consisted of hills and mountains, jungles, swamps and marshes, was conducive to guerrilla type activity. Many of its people, who are landless peasants and poor urban dwellers, felt alienated from the state's government and were easily mobilized into revolutionary activity by the Communists. The Communists took advantage of the existing grievances of the population over land reform, economic disparity between the rich and poor, unemployment and slum clearance. Other problems in West Bengal included the low production in its industry and agriculture, which had steadily declined over the past fifty years and consequently caused a widening of the gap between the rich and poor.

Essentially a middle class party, the Communists drew their leadership and support from respected families of the state.<sup>9</sup> These families were known as Bhadralks, a privileged minority of West Bengal known for their education and pride in Bengal history, language and unity. Their group unity had previously forced a decision from the central government in 1905 to reunite the Bengali state after a previous partition in 1901. During the 1930's, however, electoral politics brought about a decline of their dominance of the State's politics primarily because of their middle class status and the wide gap which existed between the literate rich and the illiterate poor. Their social decline caused a large number of the Bhadralks to enter the Communist party and to support guerrilla type activity advocated by the Communists against the state government.

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<sup>9</sup> Marcus F. Franda, Radical Politics in West Bengal (Cambridge, 1971), p. 251.

By 1942, the Communists had made major inroads into the student organizations, peasant organizations, and trade and labor unions of the areas in and around Calcutta. This base of support allowed them in 1946 to achieve the status of major opposition to the Congress party in the first legislative assembly in West Bengal.<sup>10</sup> The Communist party was banned, however, in 1948 by the state government because of large insurrectionist activities conducted by the party's supporters after World War II. Although many of their leaders were jailed during the period 1948 to 1951, they still continued their militant efforts to overthrow the government of West Bengal. In 1952, through a coalition formed with the Socialist Republican party Marxist left parties, headed by Sarat Bose, the Communists were able to rally the support of urban intellectuals and former terrorists and again become the major opposition to the Congress government. They took advantage of the existing situation of food shortages and inadequate relief supplies for refugees. After this election, however, serious factionalism developed within the movement, which eventually led to a split of the Communist party in 1964.<sup>11</sup>

The party suffered a general decline after the split and lost a number of respected leaders. The decline of the party also caused the militant faction, which became known as the Communists Party, Marxist (CPM)<sup>12</sup> to become more embittered and radical. In December, 1964, the Indian government took forceful measures against this faction and arrested over nine hundred of its membership.

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<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 35.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 85.

<sup>12</sup>Hereafter referred to as CPM.

This period of political disturbances within West Bengal was paralleled by similar disturbances within the state of Kerela. President's Rule had been imposed on Kerela by the central government because of widespread violence caused by Communist-led groups. The problems of food shortages, price increases, student and teacher grievances provided a fertile ground for insurrectionist activity. The imposing of President's Rule on the state and forceful police measures against the militant groups became a focal point of concern within West Bengal and caused a new wave of violent activity within the state. The West Bengal Legislative Assembly was unable to obtain a consensus on measures recommended by its members to handle the situation and stood in opposition to measures recommended by the central government. Finally, the army and police took measures to suppress the violence without specific guidance from the central government or state legislature.

During the period 1964 through 1967, the Congress Party maintained its dominance of the West Bengal state government but it suffered a decline in effectiveness. Party factionalism increased during this period, and eventually developed into a split of the party in 1966. The Communists capitalized on this split within the Congress Party and on the failure of the Congress Party's socialist program and formed an alliance in 1967 and in 1969 with other leftist parties, which brought about the United Front Coalition after these elections. The Communist Party dominated the coalition and chose to enter the ministries in order to gain a greater support base for the party. Those dissenters within the Communist Party who did not favor this political decision continued to support militant activities against the state government. They focused their efforts on the Naxalbari peasant agitation in the Darjeeling

district.

The Darjeeling district encompassed strategic territory in the northern portion of West Bengal. It consisted of one hundred square miles of territory bordered by Nepal on the west and East Pakistan on the east and south. It is located in the vicinity of Sikkim, Tibetan China, and Bhutan at a point where India's narrowest corridor is thirteen to fourteen miles wide and connects the main portions of India with all five of its northeastern states and territories. This area has had a long history of peasant agitation and discontent over land disputes. The Naxalbari movement, consisting of the lower classes led by an indigenous agrarian leadership, was typical of the revolts within West Bengal caused by overcrowded land and exploitation by money lenders and land speculators.

The peasants of this area, known as Naxalites, had become politically alienated from the state government because of an Estates Acquisition Act enacted in 1954. This act attempted to correct some of the land inequities in West Bengal but excluded the land cultivated in tea found in this area. The Communists took advantage of this alienation and became the leaders of wide-spread agitation in 1967. Two prominent agrarian leaders, Kanu Sanyal and Khotan Majumdar, both with long histories of terrorist activities were active in this area. While these two leaders were originally affiliated with the CPM; since 1964, they had operated outside of the party. Prominent leaders within the Communist Party including Pramode Das Gupta, Hare Krishna Kona and Fanesh Gosh had maintained continuous liaison with the Naxalites in an attempt to gain and maintain their support.

After the Communists had achieved political power and had entered

the ministries, they attempted to appease the Naxalites by enacting an eighteen-point program in which they agreed to "recognize the rights of workers and peasants to voice their just demands and grievances," and also "not to suppress the democratic and legitimate struggles of the people."<sup>13</sup> This appeal was expected to curtail the militant activities against the state government since the Communists were in power. The Naxalites however, ignored the appeal and launched a new terrorist campaign in 1967, drawing wide-spread support from the peasants of West Bengal. They declared that the existing system of government was not meeting their just needs and its failure to do so was a sign of the decadence and backwardness of the people in power.<sup>14</sup> There were over four thousand Communist supporters and sympathizers within the state government who attempted to maintain contact with the Naxalites during this period. Action was finally taken against the Naxalites by the United Front Government, which resulted in the imprisonment of prominent Naxalite leaders.

This dissident faction within the Communist organization, working from a strong base in West Bengal and with an all Indian membership of over thirty thousand, formed a new party, the Communist Party of India, Marxist-Leninist (CPIML).<sup>15</sup> The new party proclaimed that its primary objective was to "confront the state and central government with a realistic challenge for political power in West Bengal through revolutionary

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<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 160.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 165.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 167.

tactics."<sup>16</sup> Through wide-spread violence and militant activities, they managed to completely suspend all political activities within Durgapur, one of West Bengal's leading industrial cities. The United Front Government was reluctant to take forceful actions against the new party in fear of alienating many of the party's supporters who were attracted to the program of the CPIML, especially students who were the primary instruments of the violent activity. In 1970 and 1971 the new party, with support from the Naxalites, inflicted an average of ten political slayings and a number of lootings and robberies everyday within the city of Calcutta.<sup>17</sup>

As a result of this unstable political situation, many Bengalis, especially the youth, were attracted to these insurrectionist activities and looked to the Soviets and the Chinese for support. They held the existing system of government responsible for the decline of Bengal's greatness and looked forward to some type of regional identity and regional political power in conjunction with East Bengal. Franda asserts the following:

Many Bengali leftists, both in India and in Pakistan, argued that the only solution to the problem lies in the creation of a united Bengal, brought about by guerrilla warfare and supported by the Chinese. But neither the Indian nor Pakistani strategists who advocated that solution devised a means for initiating a guerrilla movement, and Chinese support was by no means assured. There were considerable factional differences among communists and marxists and leftist strategists on the question of linking a Maoist strategy with the demand for a united Bengal, since the two do not necessarily need to be linked together.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid., p. 176.

<sup>17</sup> New York Times, August 5, 1971, p. 5.

<sup>18</sup> Franda, p. 259.

After the elections of 1967 and 1969, the United Front Coalition Government was replaced by President's Rule because of widespread violence. Franda asserts that factional differences within the elected Communist-dominated United Front Government of 1967 and 1969 were a major cause of the inability of the government to satisfactorily respond to the demands of the various factions and subregions in West Bengal.<sup>19</sup>

In March, 1971, Mrs. Gandhi won a sweeping victory for her New Congress Party. Since 1966, she had been Prime Minister of India, but had not dominated the Congress Party. In 1969, she forced the resignation of the deputy Prime Minister, which resulted in the splitting of the Congress Party, and she carried her faction to victory in 1971. In West Bengal her New Congress Party achieved a similar victory.

The Indian National Congress had been able to constrain conflicts in India's pluralistic society and prevent the collapse of the parliamentary system in India. It was generally opposed to militant and revolutionary tactics. The party was able to achieve a measure of stability in West Bengal until its electoral defeat in 1967.

Mrs. Gandhi sought to extend her political power to the states, and through this, to achieve political stability for the country. Ramashray Roy viewed the objectives of the New Congress government as follows:

The basic objective of the New Congress Party was to build a unified articulated organization capable of not only successfully converting popular support into electoral victory, but also of transforming electoral victory in viable system performance.<sup>20</sup>

Mrs. Gandhi was reelected in 1971 under a slogan of eliminating

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 251.

<sup>20</sup> Ramashray Roy, "India, 1972: Fissure in the Fortress," Asian Survey (February, 1972), p. 233.

poverty. This included solving the problems of economic disparity between the rich and the poor, unemployment, rising prices, irrigation, family planning, slum clearance, and other similar programs.<sup>21</sup> She had to ask for a delay in meeting these problems while diverting funds to the refugee problem, thus putting her electoral victory in jeopardy.<sup>22</sup> The cost of supporting the refugees had cost well over \$700 million by November, 1971.

Mrs. Gandhi's victory at the polls came fifteen days before the massive influx of refugees into West Bengals. The refugees compounded the problems of domestic violence, unemployment, and rising prices within West Bengal. In view of the fact that India has had a long standing security problem with Pakistan since partition and has had to divert vital developmental resources to its military build-up, it is understandable that its leaders should view the situation in East Pakistan as latent with opportunities. A partition of Pakistan promised an opportunity to return the refugees to East Pakistan and allow the New Congress Party a chance to improve conditions causing political instability in West Bengal.

The Secretary General of the United Nations attempted to persuade India and Pakistan to accept United Nations' civilian observers on their territories and assist in bringing about a solution to the refugee problem. The proposal was accepted by Pakistan, but was rejected by India. India argued that this measure would divert attention from the basic causes of the conflict and would not bring about a politically stable

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<sup>21</sup>New York Times, March 19, 1971, p. 1.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., March 12, 1971, p. 1.



situation in the region.<sup>23</sup> Unilateral attempts by Iran, Britain, and the United States to persuade India to accept the civilian observers also failed.<sup>24</sup> Mrs. Gandhi stated that she would accept interference from the United Nations if the following conditions were met:

...(I would) welcome any action by the United Nation which would insure and guarantee, under adequate international supervision, that the refugees' lands, houses, and property will be returned to them in East Pakistan, and that conditions are created there to insure their safe return under credible international guarantees without threat of reprisal or other measures of repression from the military authorities in West Pakistan.<sup>25</sup>

If these conditions were to be met by the Pakistani government, it would have entailed a complete reversal of its policies in East Pakistan. It would have required the Pakistani government to recognize the autonomy of East Pakistan sought by Sheik Majubur and his followers, a withdrawal of West Pakistani troops from East Pakistan, the release of Sheik Mujibur and his subsequent appointment to the Prime Ministership, and the seating of the constituent assembly as elected. These conditions constituted the principal cause of the conflict.

The rejection of outside observers by India allowed the military and the inhabitants of West Bengal to provide continuous support to the East Pakistan insurgents. This support could have been internationally embarrassing for India if discovered by impartial United Nations' observers. Under these circumstances, the Indian military leadership was able to develop favorable tactical advantages needed for a possible conventional confrontation with East Pakistani forces. Moreover, by keeping

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<sup>23</sup>Ibid., August 3, 1971, p. 3.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., October 14, 1971, p. 1.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., August 3, 1971, p. 3.

the refugee issue alive within the United Nations, India was able to bring to the attention of all nations its "benevolent" response and thereby create a favorable platform and sympathy for its anticipated military actions.

The military situation along the border between India and Pakistan grew more tense during the summer of 1971. India reacted to the military developments by entering into a treaty with the Soviet Union in August of 1971. Article IX of the treaty was the most significant in terms of military assistance. It provided for the following:

Each High Contracting Party undertakes to abstain from providing any assistance to any third country that engages in armed conflict with the other Party. In the event of either Party being subjected to an attack or a threat thereof, the High Contracting Parties shall immediately enter into mutual consultations in order to remove such threat and to take appropriate effective measures to ensure peace and the security of their countries.<sup>26</sup>

Even though the Soviet Union had provided military assistance to the Indian government since 1964, this treaty legitimized future military aid, especially needed in the event of a large scale conventional confrontation with Pakistani military forces. The treaty also provided India with the psychological motivation to use force if necessary in spite of a possible alliance formed by Pakistan, China, and the United States. As stated by the Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko: "This treaty should act as a deterrent to any power that might attack India."<sup>27</sup>

In order to achieve more acceptable relations with Pakistan and to bring about a measure of stability in West Bengal, Indian leaders

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<sup>26</sup>WGCDR M. K. Chopra, "Indo-Soviet Treaty," Military Review (December, 1971), p. 24.

<sup>27</sup>New York Times, October 23, 1971, p. 2.

developed a strategy to prevent other international powers from impinging on its national interests and developed a sense of confidence in the Indian Union to take whatever course of action that might be warranted. In developing her strategy, Mrs. Gandhi ignored attempts by outside powers to bring about a solution to the crisis. In addition to ignoring recommendations for utilizing United Nations' observers from other nations, India also refused to recognize the General Assembly's call for a cease fire<sup>28</sup> and ignored a resolution submitted by the Soviet Union to the General Assembly which called for a cease fire but not a withdrawal of troops.<sup>29</sup>

In deciding which course of action to take, David Bayley had advanced the argument that other significant factors were probably under consideration by the Indian leaders. He implied that the cost of continued support for the refugees would have had a more devastating effect on the Indian economy if the situation had remained static. Politically, he asserts that not only were the refugees contributing to the existing political instability in West Bengal, but also in East Pakistan, a prolonged insurgency may have passed the leadership of the Awami League to more hostile and radical elements. He also asserted that if the crisis had continued, not only would Pakistan have been able to become militarily stronger, but also that greater international pressure may have been applied to bring about a settlement to the detriment of an independent Bangladesh.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>28</sup>Ibid., December 9, 1971, p. 1.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., December 8, 1971, p. 19.

<sup>30</sup>Bayley, p. 96.

India's preponderant military power, supported by the Soviet Union, lent motivation to the Indian leaders to use force if necessary. India was willing to risk the costs of a military action against Pakistan given the threat of a continued strain on its economy and heightened political instability in West Bengal.

India expected to emerge from the war with significant gains, and did so. Immediately after the war, the West Bengal government undertook forceful measures against the Naxalites. Mazumbar and Sanyal, along with scores of district and lower level Naxalite leaders, were captured and imprisoned. The atrocities within the state subsided and many desertions occurred within the Naxalite ranks.<sup>31</sup> Kasturi Rangan, the author of an article appearing in The New York Times, attributes this to the establishment of Bangladesh and the strength of Indira Gandhi's Congress Party in West Bengal. He asserts that the supply line from East Pakistan to the Naxalites from which they obtained their arms and supplies were cut off by the state administration. He also asserts that the new administration also was able to encourage wide-spread defections from the Naxalites and consequently to deny support for the new party in West Bengal.<sup>32</sup> Roy also commented on the conditions following the war in a similar manner. He stated:

...the birth of Bangladesh...the consolidation of the dominance of the New Congress Party under the adroit leadership of Mrs. Indira Gandhi...point to the fact that Indian policy has taken long strides towards stability and progress...the same factors

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<sup>31</sup>New York Times, August 5, 1972, p. 10.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid.

have contributed immensely to the people's feelings of buoyancy, confidence, pride, and faith in political leadership and political system.<sup>33</sup>

After the return of the refugees to East Pakistan, now Bangladesh, all Indian troops were returned to their homeland. This retreat allowed India to demonstrate Bangladesh's independence and allowed other nations to extend foreign aid, reducing the economic dependence on India's resources.

The United States began shipments of economic aid to Bangladesh on March 2, 1972.<sup>34</sup> This aid was described by officials of the United States Agency for International Development as "the most generous and flexible ever offered by the United States to any country."<sup>35</sup> This aid enabled the United States to become the major contributor to the rehabilitation of Bangladesh.<sup>36</sup> The Soviets entered into trade agreements with Bangladesh early in January, 1972.<sup>37</sup> By April some forty to fifty non-governmental organizations throughout the world were contributing assistance of all kinds. They ranged from the Red Cross to a Swedish group called Uncle Erik's Children Help.<sup>38</sup>

In addition to providing a common focus for the Indian Union, which had an obvious unifying effect on the nation, the results were politically useful for Mrs. Gandhi's party. By adding this military and

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<sup>33</sup>Roy, p. 231.

<sup>34</sup>New York Times, March 3, 1972, p. 1.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., March 20, 1972, p. 1.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid., January 10, 1972, p. 1.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., April 24, 1972, p. 1.

political victory to her election platform in 1972, she obtained a landslide political victory for her party in the state assembly elections of March, 1972. This election established the New Congress Party's dominance in the states.<sup>39</sup>

The treaty signed with the Soviet Union and the Soviet military assistance provided during the crisis promised future economic and military assistance needed by India for nation-building. The Soviets have strategic interests in the region and have achieved international gains by opposing China and the United States in a remarkable diplomatic defeat. A Soviet official at the United Nations remarked: "This is the first time that the United States and China have been defeated together."<sup>40</sup> Although the Soviet gains were high because of the prospects of extended influence in the region, India also gained by obtaining the support of a major power in developing its position of power vis-a-vis China.

The major gain by India was the establishment of an unquestionable dominance in South Asia. John Kenneth Galbraith, a former ambassador to India, summarizes this dominance as follows:

When colonialism came to an end on the North American continent it left one large country, the United States, and a surrounding coterie of small ones. This proved to a remarkably stable solution. There has been peace on this continent not because American, Canadians, Mexicans or Cubans, are morally superior to or otherwise more pacific than Frenchmen, Germans, Russians, or Englishmen, but because there was never any question of a balance of military power....

When the British departed the Indian subcontinent, the expectation should have been of the North American solution....Pakistan, Ceylon, Burma, Nepal were smaller and weaker than India; they would learn to live with their large neighbor. And India would develop the attitudes

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid., March 12, 1972, p. 1.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., December 20, 1972, p. 14.

that become a big country in relation to small states on its borders. This development was delayed, alas by the dream that Pakistan might be a military competitor of India....The Pakistani dream, in turn, had a predictable reaction in India....

Now after twenty-five years the subcontinent enters, one hopes, a new age in which something resembling the North American equilibrium will obtain. The new Pakistan, like Canada on this continent, will be economically energetic and viable. Like Canada in relation to the United States it will hardly be a military competitor of India ....And with the threat of military competition from Pakistan removed, one hopes that the military burden on the Indian people will be diminished. And one trusts that the habits which befit a powerful country in relation to smaller and weaker neighbors will develop in India. This, I venture to suppose, is already under way. It is hard to imagine that any serious Indian politician would now wish to base his political career on antipathy to Pakistan.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>41</sup>India News, August 18, 1972, p. 1.

## CHAPTER IV

### MOTIVATION FOR WAR

During October and November of 1971 public statements issued by Mrs. Gandhi exhibited a will to use military force to bring about a return of the refugees to East Pakistan and establish the exiled East Pakistan government in power. Mrs. Gandhi's use of force evolved from her initiatives, both national and international, and those of her military leaders who, since March, 1971, had served to orient the nation to a war situation.

During this period the position maintained by Mrs. Gandhi, manifested through public speeches, was that the leaders of the Pakistan government must find a solution to the political instability in East Pakistan through negotiations with the imprisoned elected official of that portion of the state before she would consider peace talks between India and Pakistan.<sup>1</sup> The elected official to whom she was referring was Sheik Mujibur, who had been charged with inciting an insurrection in East Pakistan and who had consequently been imprisoned in West Pakistan.<sup>2</sup> She also insisted that the massive Indian troop concentrations along both borders with Pakistan would not be withdrawn and that she would not

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<sup>1</sup> New York Times, October 19, 1971, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., November 5, 1971, p. 1.



accept United Nations' observers on Indian soil.<sup>3</sup>

During this period Indian government officials were demanding a more forceful response from the Indian military to Pakistani military attacks on the East Pakistani guerrillas along the Indian eastern border.<sup>4</sup> Also, Indian military leaders during this period were calculating the military strength required to achieve various possible military objectives in East Pakistan, and they were supporting the East Pakistani guerrillas in order to bring about favorable tactical advantages in case of a conventional war with Pakistan's military forces. These developments suggested a high priority for an alternative course of action that involved military force if the Pakistani government did not alter its policies in East Pakistan. By November, 1971, the strategy of the Indian political and military leaders had successfully converted the nation's military potential into an offensive military force supported by the people of the country.

Through carefully orchestrated speeches and actions, Indian political leaders had "demonstrated" that vital Indian interests were at stake and a benevolent India was being forced into a war it did not want. The Indian leaders began cultivating within the Indian public the need to redress the situation in March, 1971, by favorably responding to the hordes of destitute East Pakistani refugees, while, at the same time emphasizing the economic burden created by the refugees on the Indian economy. The Indian leaders successfully directed their citizens to form an image of the Indian nation's predicament which was highly conducive to the use of force in resolving the conflict with Pakistan. In an

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., October 20, 1971, p. 8.

address to the nation at the height of the conflict, Mrs. Gandhi skillfully reiterated the strategy which brought about this common will to fight:

Since last March we have borne the heaviest burdens and withstood the greatest of pressure and a tremendous effort to urge the world to help in bringing about a peaceful solution in preventing annihilation of an entire people whose only crime was to vote democratically. But the world ignored the basic causes and concerned itself only with certain repercussions. I have no doubt that it is the united will of our people that this wanton and unprovoked aggression of Pakistan should be decisively and finally repelled. In this resolve, the government is assured of the full and unflinching support of all political parties and every Indian citizen.<sup>5</sup>

The tension between India and Pakistan received international recognition during the last days of March, 1971. The Pakistani army moved into East Pakistan and began to use force to stop demonstrations and insurrectionist activities directed against the Pakistani government. The force used by the Pakistani military was legitimized by the announcement of new martial law regulations. Within a few days, the Indian press was printing articles which reflected how the situation in East Pakistan was perceived by the Indian government leaders. India's initial public attention was directed toward the suffering of the oppressed people in East Pakistan and the refugees who fled into West Bengal. The Prime Minister described the Pakistani military action on March 27, 1971, as a movement "meeting unarmed people with tanks."<sup>6</sup> The Indian Minister of External Affairs reportedly made the following statement:

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid., December 4, 1971, p. 10.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., March 28, 1971, p. 3.

We are prepared to make our contribution once again, in concert with the members of the international community or international humanitarian organizations, concerned with bringing relief to innocent victims of conflict.<sup>7</sup>

In Calcutta, the newspapers were reporting incidents of butchery, massacres, rapes, and looting by West Pakistani soldiers. These reports caused demonstrations in West Bengal in support of the inhabitants of East Pakistan. Many students went to East Pakistan to assist the East Pakistanis. A general strike by labor unions and leftist political leaders was called in support of the people of East Pakistan. According to a correspondent for The New York Times, the atrocities inflicted on the East Pakistani inhabitants by West Pakistani soldiers and the support rendered by the people of West Bengal to the refugees and inhabitants of East Pakistan repressed the historical hatred between the Hindus of West Bengal and Moslems of East Pakistan. The correspondent reported the following:

The West Pakistanis were appealing to the East Pakistanis to remember the common element of their religion in an effort to keep the nation from pulling apart; but the inhabitants of East Pakistan were saying, 'Hindu, Moslem, that does not count anymore. We are all Bengalis; the enemy is now Punjabi.'<sup>8</sup>

Internationally, The London Times called the crisis "senseless murder, hysterical cruelty, and what must be a creeping fear run like a current throughout this packed mass of human beings."<sup>9</sup> Similar articles which centered on the atrocities to unarmed civilians and the refugee problem in India appeared in Chilean, Swiss, Austrian, Japanese, Turkish,

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<sup>7</sup> Why Bangladesh?, p. 36.

<sup>8</sup> New York Times, April 11, 1971, p. 3.

<sup>9</sup> quoted in Why Bangladesh?, p. 27.

and other countries' newspapers. The international relief organization of the Roman Catholic Church appealed to the United Nations to bring about a solution to the crisis in support of the oppressed people of East Pakistan.<sup>10</sup> In the United States, even though United States leadership remained silent in the initial days of the conflict, similar editorials appeared in The New York Times, The Christian Science Monitor, The Chicago Tribune, and The Washington Post. The United States Agency for International Development supplied rice, bulgar wheat, and vegetable oil to the refugees. This aid grew to one-third of the total world contribution by January, 1972.<sup>11</sup>

On April 10, 1971, the Indian government established a national committee called the Bangladesh Assistance Committee, which was given the mission to appeal to private sources for money, medicine, food, and clothing for the refugees. Refugee assistance had already cost the Indian government over \$550 million. India met the crisis by cutting 1971 governmental expenditures by five per cent, enacting various emergency excise levies, establishing an income surtax on all companies, and increasing some import duties. Assistance from abroad had come to Rs. 137.2 crores (\$167 million) by mid-November, 1971. The United States' share of the total pledge was \$70 million.<sup>12</sup>

Mrs. Gandhi took advantage of the sympathetic and humane response from the international community to request the foreign governments to bring pressure on the Pakistani government and hasten a solution to the

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<sup>10</sup> New York Times, September 23, 1971, p. 11.

<sup>11</sup> Bayley, p. 92.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

crisis which would guarantee the rights of the East Pakistan inhabitants. She declared on June 15, 1971, that "India would never acquiesce in a political settlement at the cost of democracy and the rights of people fighting there."<sup>13</sup> Perhaps this statement does not reflect a willingness to use military force at this time, but it does exhibit a determination to prevent the Pakistani government from establishing a government over its eastern wing which did not include the popularly elected officials of that portion of the state.

During this same period Mrs. Gandhi was also making statements indicating that the political, economic and social pressures created by the refugees in West Bengal were detrimental to Indian unity. She insisted that the relief for the refugees was only a palliative and that the root cause of the conflict had to be tackled.<sup>14</sup> As early as April, 1971, most of the leading newspapers of India had advocated that the only alternative to the crisis was military intervention with the purpose of establishing the elected government of East Pakistan in power.<sup>15</sup>

Also during this period the Indian military was assisting the guerrillas in East Pakistan with training and logistical support. There were also sympathy parades in Calcutta for the liberation forces and Indian guerrilla warfare personnel crossed the border with homemade grenades, bombs, and other weapons to aid the guerrillas of East Pakistan.<sup>16</sup> Additionally, there were reports that India's military was supporting the

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<sup>13</sup> New York Times, June 16, 1971, p. 12.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., June 19, 1971, p. 3.

<sup>15</sup> M. Rashiduzzaman, "Leadership, Organization, Strategies, and Tactics of the Bangladesh Movement," Asian Survey (March, 1972), p. 198.

<sup>16</sup> New York Times, March 31, 1971, p. 3.

rebels with mines, ammunition, and freshly trained Bengali reinforcements.<sup>17</sup>

This elementary type of guerrilla tactics grew and emerged into more sophisticated activity. Later, the tactics used required the guerrillas to make a push into Pakistan to engage Pakistani troops then withdraw across the border. When the Pakistani troops crossed the border in pursuit, the Indian conventional troops would open fire and drive them back into Pakistan. By doing this, territory was seized in East Pakistan and guerrilla enclaves were established.<sup>18</sup> By November 21, 1971, the guerrillas were boldly operating as far inland as Dacca and Indian assistance had increased to the point that President Yahya Khan of Pakistan warned that if the guerrillas seized a large part of East Pakistan, he would consider that an act of war by India and would declare war on India.<sup>19</sup>

India signed a treaty of peace, friendship, and cooperation with the Soviet Union on August 12, 1971. This treaty had been under discussion for two years with the Indian leadership displaying reluctance to sign the treaty. When asked why the treaty was signed at this time, the Indian Defense Minister replied: "Sire, the world is representing a rapidly changing and dynamic picture. There is a change in the configuration of various world forces."<sup>20</sup> This particular statement could be directed to many things, but the most obvious was the rapidly

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., August 8, 1971, p. 2.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., November 21, 1971, pp. 1, 5.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>20</sup> WGCDR M. K. Chopra, "Indo-Soviet Treaty," Military Review (December, 1971), p. 26.

changing border conflict between India and Pakistan and the possibility of collusion on the part of Pakistan, the United States, and China against India.

The signing of the treaty was immediately followed by a personal visit to India of the Soviet Foreign Minister, Gromyko,<sup>21</sup> and visits of several high level Soviet military officials.<sup>22</sup> Since the Soviet Union was India's largest military supplier and had contributed heavily during the past few years, it was no surprise that Indian officials admitted that "India's defense requirements would probably be discussed during the talks."<sup>23</sup> Western sources reported after the war that aircraft lost in the war were resupplied on a one-for-one basis.<sup>24</sup> Whether or not there was actual military assistance during the war is unimportant. The fact is that India, in a forceful strategic move, used the Soviet Union to balance a possible collusion on the part of the United States, China, Pakistan. As stated by Foreign Minister Gromyko: "This should act as a deterrent to any powers that might attack India."<sup>25</sup> India's preponderant military strength could defeat Pakistan's military forces if there was no outside interference.

Early in November there were reports of considerable military aid from the Soviet Union.<sup>26</sup> After the war officials in Moscow believed

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<sup>21</sup>New York Times, August 13, 1971, p. 1.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., p. 9.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., p. 4.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., March 31, 1972, p. 10.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., October 23, 1971, p. 2.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., November 9, 1971, p. 1.

that Soviet aid was the deciding factor in the war.<sup>27</sup> There is no doubt that the Indians did regard their relationship with the Soviets as a shield from the United States. When told of the news of a possible United States nuclear powered aircraft carrier patrolling in the Indian Ocean, an Indian official spokesman replied: "It must be part of some psychological pressure."<sup>28</sup> A correspondent for The New York Times reported that the Indian leaders regarded the carrier as a "crude and unacceptable pressure by the United States."<sup>29</sup>

In response to reports that the Chinese were making advances in two places along the border between India and China, the Foreign Minister replied that the Indian Government was aware of certain moves by the Chinese.<sup>30</sup> Whether this was regarded as a formidable threat or not, the movement of Chinese military forces had little or no effect on the operations of the Indian military.

Late in October, India mobilized its state militia and military reserves and levied new taxes. While India was making these military preparations, Mrs. Gandhi was traveling about the world reasserting her country's economic needs and the social and political pressures caused by the refugees on her country. In her visits she also requested cooperation from the foreign governments in bringing about a solution to the hostilities in favor of the East Pakistani inhabitants.<sup>31</sup> While she

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid., p. 1.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., December 20, 1971, p. 1.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., December 16, 1971, p. 1.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., November 6, 1971, p. 10.



was away her military forces were deployed on both borders with Pakistan and major conventional confrontations were occurring. Mrs. Gandhi returned to India and asked a hawkish Parliament to support a solution short of war. However, on November 24, her troops spearheaded a major attack across the Pakistani eastern border, which brought the two countries into open conflict.<sup>32</sup>

The Indian political and military leaders knew full well that India could achieve a decisive victory in a conventional war with Pakistan. Indian military leaders had sufficient time to plan their military strategy and to calculate the forces to be used in order to achieve decisive tactical and strategic results before Pakistani officials in West Pakistan could mobilize their country's full war potential.

On the eve of the war, India's military strength was far superior to that of Pakistan, especially on the border of East Pakistan, where Pakistan's troops numbered only 80,000 men. These troops not only faced India's conventional forces, but confronted the guerrillas of East Pakistan and a hostile population. By late November, 1971, the insurgents constituted a formidable opposition to the Pakistani troops. They were demonstrating the capability of launching full-scale conventional attacks and inflicting severe losses on Pakistan's conventional forces. In reports by the Indian government, it was stated that the guerrillas had knocked out several Pakistani tanks and pushed Pakistani forces back for the first time on November 22. The insurgents' objectives were to take major strongholds centered in and around major cities of East Pakistan.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>32</sup>Ibid., November 24, 1971, p. 1.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., November 22, 1971, p. 11.

By November 25, the fighting was so fierce that Pakistani leaders were claiming intervention by India's conventional forces. Foreign military observers believed that this was not the case. They believed that penetrations would have been deeper if the Indian army had been involved.<sup>34</sup> However, it was later admitted that Indian troops had made minor incursions across the border.<sup>35</sup>

By November 25, Indian officials were so optimistic, they were willing to apply military force to achieve their objectives in East Pakistan. One Indian official perceived the coordinated threat from the insurgents and the Indian military forces over the eight month period as having left Pakistan's military leaders with only a bitter choice between a politically humiliating or militarily devastating path to partition of their country.<sup>36</sup> The Indian government had already prepared the groundwork necessary for a formal declaration of war. Their forward planning was to take major cities by a quick, decisive and highly mobile military tactic. Western diplomats in India were echoing, "The United Nations may be able to stop the fighting in the West...but no one on this side is going to stop and listen to the United Nations' Bray. They're going to push right in."<sup>37</sup> On the same day, Mrs. Gandhi was conditioning the masses for an eventual war with Pakistan. At a political rally in Calcutta before the crisis broke, she spoke to a crowd of over 500,000 commenting: "We do not want to fight. I hope they will not follow up their

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid., November 25, 1971, p. 8.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., November 24, 1971, p. 1.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., November 26, 1971, p. 1.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., December 4, 1971, p. 1.

talk; but if they do, we are prepared."<sup>38</sup> That same night after a Pakistani air attack, she broadcasted that Pakistan had launched a full-scale war, and she took the opportunity to declare a state of national emergency, leaving her country, as she stated, with "no other option but to go on a war footing."<sup>39</sup> In an address to Parliament the following morning, she stated that she commanded the full support of her party and the opposition parties and appealed to Parliament to unite and support the fight to safeguard the territorial integrity and national honor of India. Above all, she stated, "we are fighting for the cause of human freedom."<sup>40</sup> In a public statement that evening, she made similar appeals to the Indian public:

The business community has a special responsibility to resist the temptation to hoard or to charge higher profit. Artists and writers, teachers and students, the nation looks to you to defend our ideals, to keep high our morale. To the women of our country, I make a special appeal to save every possible grain and rupee, to avoid waste. The sacrifice of each of us will build the nation's strength and enduring power...it is your responsibility to be prepared for a long struggle....the courage and fighting capability of the soldiers have to be backed by the dedication of the farmer, the worker, the technician, and the trader.<sup>41</sup>

Through this message, Mrs. Gandhi was conditioning the masses for a long sustained war, if necessary. The war, however, did not require a sustained effort. The decisive actions taken by the Indian military reflected the aggressive spirit to achieve a decision on the battlefield before Pakistan had a chance to mobilize its war potential.

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<sup>38</sup>Ibid.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., December 5, 1971, p. 1.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid.

An important factor which enabled the Indians to act decisively was the role which Mrs. Gandhi played during the conflict. She personally set the goals and made all major decisions. She held daily meetings with her top civilian and military officials and mapped out her tactics daily.<sup>42</sup> This gave her leaders the direction and confidence needed for forceful implementation. The battlefield military decisions were left to the generals.<sup>43</sup>

On the same day of Mrs. Gandhi's message to the public, India's airforce launched retaliatory strikes in East Pakistan.<sup>44</sup> These raids were reported to have been made hourly. On the ground, India's tanks spearheaded attacks from four major directions against East Pakistan.<sup>45</sup> India obtained air and sea superiority in the initial days of fighting which prevented Pakistan from resupplying its forces in the east. The entire military effort was decisive and forceful. When asked if he was pleased with how the operation was going, the commanding officer of the eastern forces replied:

A soldier is always pleased to get a chance to exercise his professional skill....My mission is to force the surrender of the Pakistani troops in East Pakistan as quickly as possible....My aim is not to take a particular town but to get the surrender of the Pakistani forces...the only limitation the government has placed on the offensive is not to cause unnecessary damage to the infrastructure of Bangladesh, which I think is quite right.<sup>46</sup>

Indian officials were at the same time stating their objectives.

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<sup>42</sup>Ibid., December 14, 1971, p. 1.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid., December 4, 1971, p. 24.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid.

They stated in public and in private that they would not honor a cease-fire call by the United Nations until they had taken East Pakistan. They also stated that they had no designs on West Pakistan. They quickly passed a Defense of India bill in the Indian Parliament and repeatedly applauded Mrs. Gandhi when she gave accounts of success on the battlefield. According to a correspondent for The New York Times, the minority parties in Parliament are in normal times against government moves for emergency powers; however, the only thing the minority parties asked for this time was a promise that the power would be retained only as long as necessary.<sup>47</sup> This reflected strong support for Mrs. Gandhi's policies within the Parliament and an identity with the military objectives of the government.

On the third day of conventional fighting, India inflicted damages to fifty-two airplanes and eighty-nine tanks in East Pakistan. Some Pakistani troops were reported to be in retreat to West Pakistan because of heavy losses. India also claimed to have achieved complete air superiority by virtually eliminating the Pakistani airforce and sinking two of five Pakistani ships.<sup>48</sup>

Mrs. Gandhi was repeatedly applauded when she announced diplomatic recognition of the rebel government in East Pakistan. According to a New York Times correspondent, this was viewed by Indians as a symbolic step toward the goal of establishing a friendly government in Dacca and the end of a united and therefore dangerous Pakistan.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., December 6, 1971, p. 1.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., December 8, 1971, p. 1.

By December 6, the Indian leadership was fully committed to a separate state of Bangladesh. When the United States attempted to introduce a cease-fire resolution in the United Nations, a great anger arose in India. The Indians felt that this action supported the old United States stand of equating India with Pakistan.<sup>50</sup> They argued that Pakistan was to blame for repressing the autonomy movement in East Pakistan. Editorials in India forcefully warned that the feelings of Indians would only be made stronger if the United States cut off aid. One editor commented, "Washington can shove its aid where it wants to."<sup>51</sup>

White House officials in the United States realized by early December that India was seeking to dismember Pakistan. United States' officials who declined to be quoted directly or identified reportedly asserted the following:

The United States had wrung general concessions from the Pakistani government and had conveyed this information to New Delhi before the outbreak of hostilities....The United States in private discussions with Pakistan had won agreement for serious consideration of substantial autonomy for East Pakistan....This was conveyed to the Indian Ambassador, Laksmi Kan Jha, on November 19,....Mr. Jha was told that the Pakistanis were prepared to discuss a precise time table for political autonomy for East Pakistan....But on November 21, the Indians launched their first attack....After the fighting began on November 21, the United States withheld assigning blame because it was reluctant to believe that India had come to a naked recourse to force....India had expanded into an all-out war, what was essentially an internal Pakistani matter.<sup>52</sup>

Another indication that India sought to dismember Pakistan was offered by Charles W. Bray, spokesman for the United States Department of

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<sup>50</sup>Ibid.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid.

State. He stated the following:

Specifically, India had rejected a concerted American effort to reduce tensions along the borders with Pakistan...when Mrs. Gandhi was here early last month, Mr. Nixon told her that the Pakistanis were willing to withdraw their troops from the border areas, but she refused to make any commitment on behalf of India.<sup>53</sup>

On December 8, Bhutan had recognized Bangladesh.<sup>54</sup> Thirty members of the Indian Parliament demonstrated outside the American Embassy because of the United States' support for a cease-fire to be instituted by the United Nations. This indicated a strong support for the independence of East Pakistan and continued military action.<sup>55</sup>

By December 7, India controlled over half of East Pakistan. Its forces were closing in from all sides and were demanding surrender of Pakistani forces in major strongholds.<sup>56</sup> By December 9, most of East Pakistan's cities were taken or neutralized and the Pakistani military within East Pakistan was in massive retreat.<sup>57</sup> Arrangements were being made by Indian officials to remove neutrals from Dacca, the capital of East Pakistan. The Indian generals were demanding a surrender of all Pakistani forces and warned that if they did not, they would meet certain death.<sup>58</sup>

By this time, the only Pakistani force that was a military threat to Indian advances was located in Dacca. The Pakistani air force had

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid., December 7, 1971, p. 1.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., December 8, 1971, p. 1.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., December 9, 1971, p. 1.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., December 8, 1971, p. 1.

lost twenty-five per cent of all its combat aircraft, and tank losses were reported at 164. By December 10, the Indian generals were noting only light resistance from the Pakistanis and one stated: "They are not fighting like the Pakistanis of 1965."<sup>59</sup> On the Indian side, morale was extremely high and the Indian troops were well-received by the inhabitants of East Pakistan.

After seven days of fighting, India's military had achieved complete air, sea, and ground superiority. Foreigners were evacuating Dacca, and the drive to the capital city had begun by the Indian military. There were reports that Pakistani soldiers were attempting to change into civilian clothes to escape from confrontations with the Indian military. The situation was so grave for Pakistan that it accepted a United States' plea in the United Nations for a cease-fire, but India continued to reject it.<sup>60</sup> By December 11, reports were coming from West Pakistan that East Pakistan would fall to India in a few days. A correspondent for The New York Times reported that the Pakistani officials believed that India would stop short of nothing but a complete, unconditional surrender, and they had become resigned to the loss of East Pakistan.<sup>61</sup>

Up to this point, the Indians had not only seriously crippled Pakistani military forces in East Pakistan, but had also indicated serious damage in West Pakistan. The port of Karachi was blockaded by Indian ships, fuel supplies were getting low, and oil depots were bombed. Because of the selected bombing, some Western experts believed that India

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid., December 9, 1971, p. 1.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., December 11, 1971, p. 1.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., December 12, 1971, p. 1.



was capable of destroying Pakistan's economic potential.<sup>62</sup>

On December 12, India initiated a three-pronged attack on Dacca, the Pakistanis' only stronghold. They ran into stiff resistance for the first time in the war. The Indian generals demanded a surrender of Pakistani forces in an attempt to avoid a pitched battle for Dacca.<sup>63</sup> By December 15, the Indian drive to Dacca forced the commander of Pakistani forces in Dacca to ask for a cease-fire, a face-saving condition short of surrender. Indian generals, however, were demanding a complete surrender and then a repatriation to follow a final peace settlement with Pakistan.<sup>64</sup> On the last days of the fighting, India launched an amphibious operation on the city of Dacca, the first of its kind in the war. This was an extension of India's professional tactics in launching coordinated attacks of helicopter assaults, drops of paratroopers, and naval blockades. On the following day, the Pakistan Eastern Command surrendered to the Indian commander of the eastern forces.<sup>65</sup> India also set a time for the cease-fire in the western zone without any agreement from Pakistan.<sup>66</sup>

The Indian Parliament rejoiced over the surrender when it was announced by Mrs. Gandhi. She ordered a cease-fire on the western front and took advantage of the emotional response to announce the political objectives of her military strategy. She stated: "We have...no

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., December 14, 1971, p. 1.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., December 15, 1971, p. 1.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., December 17, 1971, p. 1.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., December 16, 1971, p. 1.

territorial ambitions...now that Bangladesh is free...it is pointless... to continue the present conflict."<sup>67</sup>

With this success on the battlefield, India went about its plan to force other agreements. A senior Indian official stated: "There are many matters to be negotiated between the Bengali movement and Pakistan."<sup>68</sup> One important matter to be negotiated was the release of Sheikh Mujibur, the only man that could bring order to the devastated posture of East Pakistan. Mujibur was released in early January, 1972, and he took control of the "friendly" state of Bangladesh.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>67</sup>Ibid.

<sup>68</sup>Ibid.

<sup>69</sup>Ibid., January 9, 1972, p. 1.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSIONS

In an attempt to understand the relationship between the possession of a high level of military power and the motivation of a state to use it to achieve critical political objectives, this thesis was undertaken to analyze India's decision to use force in the Indo-Pakistani crisis of 1971. This study proposed to clarify the threefold relationship between a nation's war potential, its political objectives, and its motivation to use force in achieving its political objectives. Particular attention was given to two general areas which have not received adequate attention by other writers who have written about the war. First, is the relationship between the recently acquired position of military power by India and India's subsequent high motivation to use its power against Pakistan. Secondly, are the internal political conditions during 1971 which were manipulated by India's leadership to bolster the nation's war potential to bring about a high motivation for war.

From the standpoint of methodology Lovell's strategic perspective model for foreign policy analysis provided the general analytical frame of reference for the thesis. It was necessary to assume that the Indian leaders had reacted rationally to the Chinese threat since 1962 and during the course of the conflict in 1971. The term rational as used in this investigation is defined as follows: "An action is rational to the extent that it is correctly designed to maximize goal achievements given

the goal in question and the real world as it exists."<sup>1</sup> More specifically, it was assumed that during this period the Indian leaders developed diplomatic and military strategies that required an analysis of various alternative courses of action.

The principal hypothesis of this study was that a high level of military capability combined with expectant major net gains from fighting provide a strong motivation for war. The methodology used in testing this hypothesis consisted of, first, illustrating India's high level of military capability and then relating it to India's political objectives and subsequent motivation to use force in 1971.

The first sub-hypothesis used in this investigation related India's rapid increase in war potential to a subsequent motivation to use force in the 1971 war. India's motivation to use force was high because it had suffered a traumatic military defeat in the 1962 war with China and had subsequently committed its resources to the development of military power. The East Pakistan problem offered an opportunity to assert this power.

In clarifying the first sub-hypothesis, particular attention was given to the rapid change in power contingents of India since the 1962 war with China. Standard categories were used to account for resources useful for war which would yield similar results to anyone who might wish to repeat the study. Standard categories were also used in comparing the war potential of both India and Pakistan. Others may wish to use a more definitive list and go into greater detail in an effort to more precisely determine the total war potential of the two countries.

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<sup>1</sup>Alan C. Issak, Scope and Methods of Political Science (Illinois, 1969), p. 120.

The study also put emphasis on mobilized military force rather than potential military strength because sustained military capability is more important in long sustained wars and plays a small part in quick decisive wars. Also, there was no great attempt to distinguish between capabilities of the different types of military equipment. For the most part, only broad categories were used such as tanks, aircraft, and ships. A more detailed analysis would produce greater clarification of the war potential of the two countries. Later in the analysis other relevant elements of the war potential were emphasized such as diplomacy and propaganda. Mrs. Gandhi demonstrated skill in forming an alliance with the Soviet Union and in neutralizing the alliances of Pakistan.

This study produced three significant findings which provided insight into how a state can combine various elements of power at the disposal of the leadership and increase its war potential. First, India possessed an unquestionable superiority in terms of military hardware and was militarily more powerful because of its capacity to adapt its strategy and military strength to the specific conditions of the war in 1971. Second, the Soviet-Indian treaty enhanced India's position of power by allowing the Indian leaders to make a rational estimate of the scale of the war effort needed for a quick decisive victory over Pakistan without including the possibility of a major intervention by the United States or China. Third, the subsequent effect of the rapid change in Indian mobilized strength was the capability of the Indian military to initiate hostilities in East Pakistan and terminate action after achieving the desired results and then resume its pre-conflict military posture without interference. The limited military effort required by India in achieving its military objectives in East Pakistan provided a

strong motivation for war. Specifically, the strategy of the Indian military throughout the fourteen day war attested to high motivation and confidence in achieving its military objectives.

These findings coincide with the general comments of other writers on the capability of India prior to the 1971 war. Mehrunnisa Hatim Iqbal attributes India's military success to Indian superiority in equipment, personnel, intelligence, and strategy.<sup>2</sup> Robert H. Donaldson attributes the success to the Indian-Soviet treaty.<sup>3</sup> Both authors, however, fail to explain how the conversion of India's war potential into fighting power came about which is central to the hypothesis of this study.

The second sub-hypothesis of this study related India's political objectives to a motivation to use force. India resorted to force against Pakistan in East Pakistan because it envisioned an opportunity, with the support of the Soviet Union, to become politically and militarily dominant in South Asia. Under the cloak of "self-defense" India desired to eliminate the long-term military threat of Pakistan and to build a security system that could stand against any possible advance into the region by the People's Republic of China.

From the standpoint of methodology particular attention was given to India's cost-gain estimates in the war, which were based on identifiable patterns in past Indian foreign and domestic policy. The investigation into India's defense policy since 1962 clarified the determination

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<sup>2</sup> Mehrunnisa Hatim Iqbal, "India and the 1971 War with Pakistan," Pakistan Horizon (First Quarter, 1972), p. 28.

<sup>3</sup> Robert H. Donaldson, "India: The Soviet Stake in Stability," Asian Survey (June, 1972), p. 486.

of the Indian leaders to initiate a new defense program which would ultimately pose a credible deterrent to China. The study found that since 1962 the Indian nation had consistently maintained a high level of defense spending, had expanded its military forces to almost twice its 1962 figures, had converted major civilian industries into companies which subsequently produced military equipment, and had received large quantities of military aid from other states. These developments, in effect, reflected the Indian government's willingness to endure the cost to the Indian economy and to build a security system that could quickly convert war potential into fighting power.

With respect to Pakistan, the study identified particular Indian objectives in the war and emphasized how these objectives were related to the long-term domestic goals of India. This condition allowed the Indian leadership to maximize India's war potential, which included the motivation to use force. The objectives, as stated by both political and military leaders, were the liquidation of the Pakistani Eastern Command and the establishment of the exiled Bangla government in power over East Pakistan.

These objectives suggested the possibility that the Indian leaders knew to what extent Pakistan would be crippled by the division of the state. A calculated effort by the Indian government to use military force to achieve the division of Pakistan promised the reduction of Pakistan's military and economic power to a permanent position of inferiority vis-a-vis India. Moreover, a quick military victory offered the specific opportunity to correct a serious economic problem created by the refugees and to build a more acceptable Indo-Pakistani relationship-- a relationship based on Indian regional dominance, which would increase

the strength of the Indian government to face the problems of economic recovery and effect an immediate repatriation of the refugees back to East Pakistan. Immediate post-war initiatives, which included the withdrawal of all Indian forces, the repatriation of the refugees, and the establishment of the exiled Bangla government in power, suggest that these conditions were considered in the planning stages of the war.

In pinning down the relationship between India's recently acquired position of power vis-a-vis Pakistan and its cost-gain estimates in planning the war to motivation to use force the first problem was defining motivation and, secondly, measuring India's motivation during the war.

Motivation for purposes of this investigation was defined as the will to fight. Even though emphasis was initially put on capability, it was never assumed that capability and motivation were synonymous, although it is realized that they are mutually supportive. The methodology used in this analysis treated Indian motivation to use force as an expression revealed through governmental policies leading up to and during the 1971 war. The three factors mentioned in the introduction provided the framework for analysis. The methodology required primarily, a two-fold premise that action results from motivation and that motivation determined the behavior of the Indian leaders in 1971. This facilitated the investigation and allowed the study to focus on the degree, manner, and speed of the Indian war mobilization from March, 1971, through the end of the conflict in December, 1971. Particular attention was given to the political leadership of Mrs. Gandhi and her military leaders in demonstrating the skill with which they brought about the mobilization of the Indian nation. Emphasis was given to the manner in which they



enhanced their military capability and skillfully developed a strategy which maximized India's war potential.

With respect to the principal hypothesis, it was through the political process that the three-fold relationship between military capability, political objectives, and motivation to use force was realized. The study found that the behavior of the Indian political and military leaders and inhabitants of West Bengal was highly conducive to a war situation during the months leading up to the war. It was also found that, while much of the behavior of the inhabitants in West Bengal and elements within the military in support of the refugees and insurgents was beyond the control of the Indian central government, it was through governmental decisions that these intense developments were eventually related to a war situation. This was accomplished by substituting a common goal for both the inhabitants of West Bengal and the military, which brought about an increased motivation to use force and facilitated the mobilization of the country for conventional war. The political and military objectives, the defeat of the East Pakistan Command, and the establishment in power of the exiled Bangla government provided a set of common goals for both groups.

Motivation was also created within the Indian public, the broader military establishment, and the administration by strategic shifts in Indian policy from caring for the refugees and protesting Pakistan's behavior in East Pakistan to using military force to divide Pakistan, during the months leading up to the war. This strategy was realized by Mrs. Gandhi's use of diplomacy, propaganda, and military power. One of the findings of the study was the skill with which Mrs. Gandhi brought about an identity of military objectives with political objectives. Within

only fourteen days of fighting and with a precise calculation of military forces required, she achieved the destruction of Pakistan's position in East Pakistan and established a "friendly" government to her east.

With regard to West Bengal, the strong regional identity among the inhabitants of East and West Bengal, which resurfaced in 1971, and the "unselfish" support rendered by the inhabitants of West Bengal to the refugees and guerrillas of East Pakistan provided a basis for concern by the Indian leaders that a successionist movement within West Bengal might take place. However, additional research is needed to test the contention that the crisis of 1971 brought about collusion between political leaders of East and West Bengal that would support that portion of the hypothesis that states that the Indian leadership responded forcefully in East Pakistan to prevent elements in West Bengal from joining the Bangla movement and possibly taking West Bengal out of the Indian nation. The problem of political instability in West Bengal studied by Marcus Franda and an updating of his factual material by recent articles from The New York Times provided evidence that Indian leaders sought major political and economic gains in West Bengal in bringing a hasty conclusion to the crisis. The New Congress government in West Bengal, which already faced serious problems of economic and political instability, was further strained by heightened revolutionary tactics from the Naxalites, disruptions caused by the inhabitants of West Bengal in support of the refugees and insurgents, and the existing economic problems aggravated by the refugees. It was in the Indian national interest to assist the newly established West Bengal government in solving problems which threatened the stability and cohesiveness of the Indian nation.

The methodology used involved searching through books written about

the area and reading recent newspapers to detect whether statements had been made which were sympathetic to a successionist movement. Marcus Franda was the only writer who implied that Indian and East Pakistani "strategists" did exist who believed that the only solution to the political instability in the region was the creation of a united Bengal. On the other hand, according to the Institute of Conflict based in London, the Naxalites, West Bengal's primary revolutionary group are politically divided and are not advocates of such a policy.<sup>4</sup> M. Rashiduzzman asserts that the younger leaders of the Awami League, the majority political party in East Pakistan at the time of the conflict, did not want to become too dependent on popular Indian support in West Bengal and did not support the ideas of the older leaders who took refuge in West Bengal during the conflict.<sup>5</sup> The fact that the people of West Bengal and East Pakistan belong to the same Bengali community promises greater cultural cooperation between the two areas, but this will not necessarily lead to a demand for political unification of the two entities.

The methodology used in demonstrating a motivation to use force within India also depended partly on post-war results. Even though post-war results were suggestive, the conditions found within India which attest to a high motivation were independent of post-war results. A similar analysis using a different model would perhaps use similar facts but might produce different interpretations. This study of

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<sup>4</sup> Brian Crozier, Annual of Power in Conflict 1971 (London, 1972), p. 53.

<sup>5</sup> M. Rashiduzzman, "Leadership, Organization, Strategies, and Tactics of the Bangladesh Movement," Asian Survey (March, 1972), p. 189.

motivation to use force is the major contribution of this paper to the existing literature written on the war. Other writers, such as Ashok Kapur<sup>6</sup> and Ramashray Roy,<sup>7</sup> assert or imply the conditions which existed before the war without providing proof of their existence. Also, it appears that they assumed, without factual evidence, India's superior position of power and its motivation to use force in the conflict. A quick historical scanning of the war potential of India and Pakistan would attest to the dilemmas that even though India has always possessed a military edge over Pakistan, it has not enjoyed a decisive military success over its opponent. This perhaps demonstrates the importance of morale and timing in the war potential of a nation.

Another contribution of this thesis is some clarification of the role of the Indian military in the exercise of Indian policy. India's military prior to 1971 provided a defensive function vis-a-vis Pakistan and China. The defensive function vis-a-vis Pakistan was replaced by an aggressive function in the war of 1971. A calculated military effort allowed India to achieve foreign policy objectives long sought by Indian leaders. India gained in its position of power vis-a-vis China by demonstrating its capability in converting its war potential into fighting power and exhibiting the nation's willingness to use force under certain conditions.

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<sup>6</sup> Ashok Kapur, "Indo-Soviet Treaty and the Emerging Asian Balance," Asian Survey (June, 1972), pp. 463-474.

<sup>7</sup> Ramashray Roy, "India 1972: Fissure in the Fortress," Asian Survey (February, 1973), pp. 242-243.

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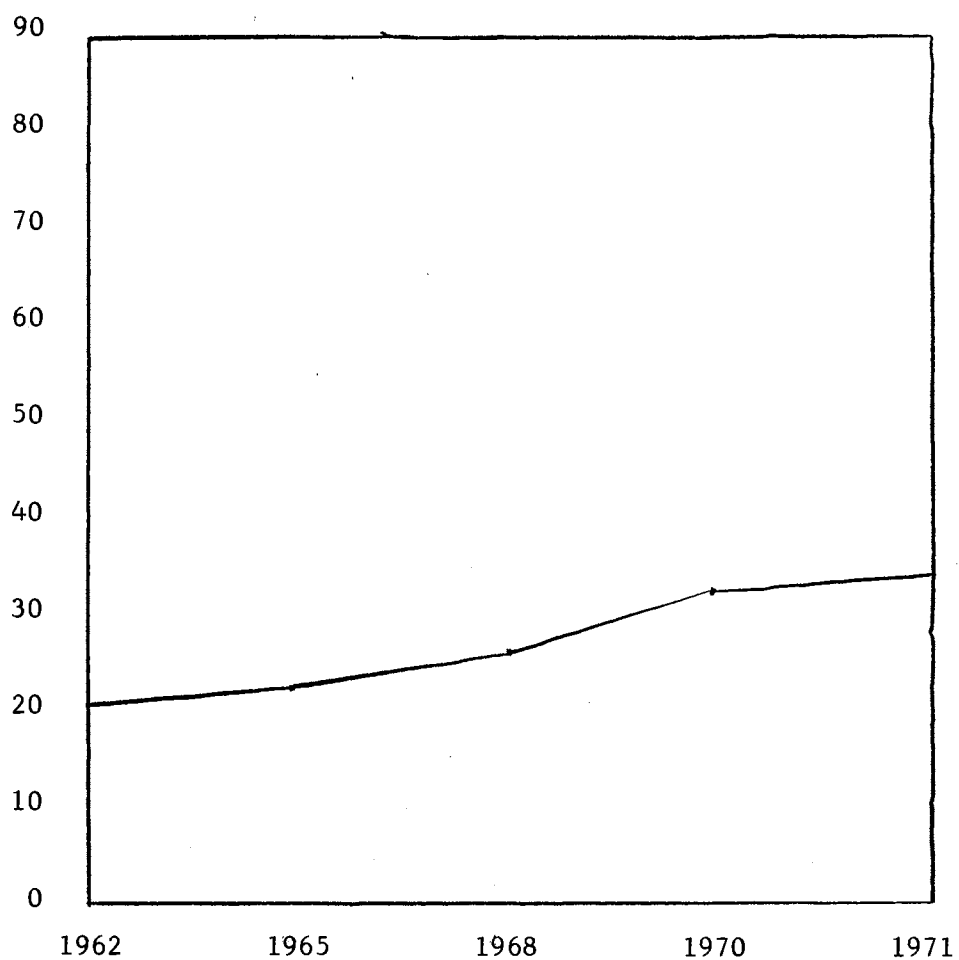
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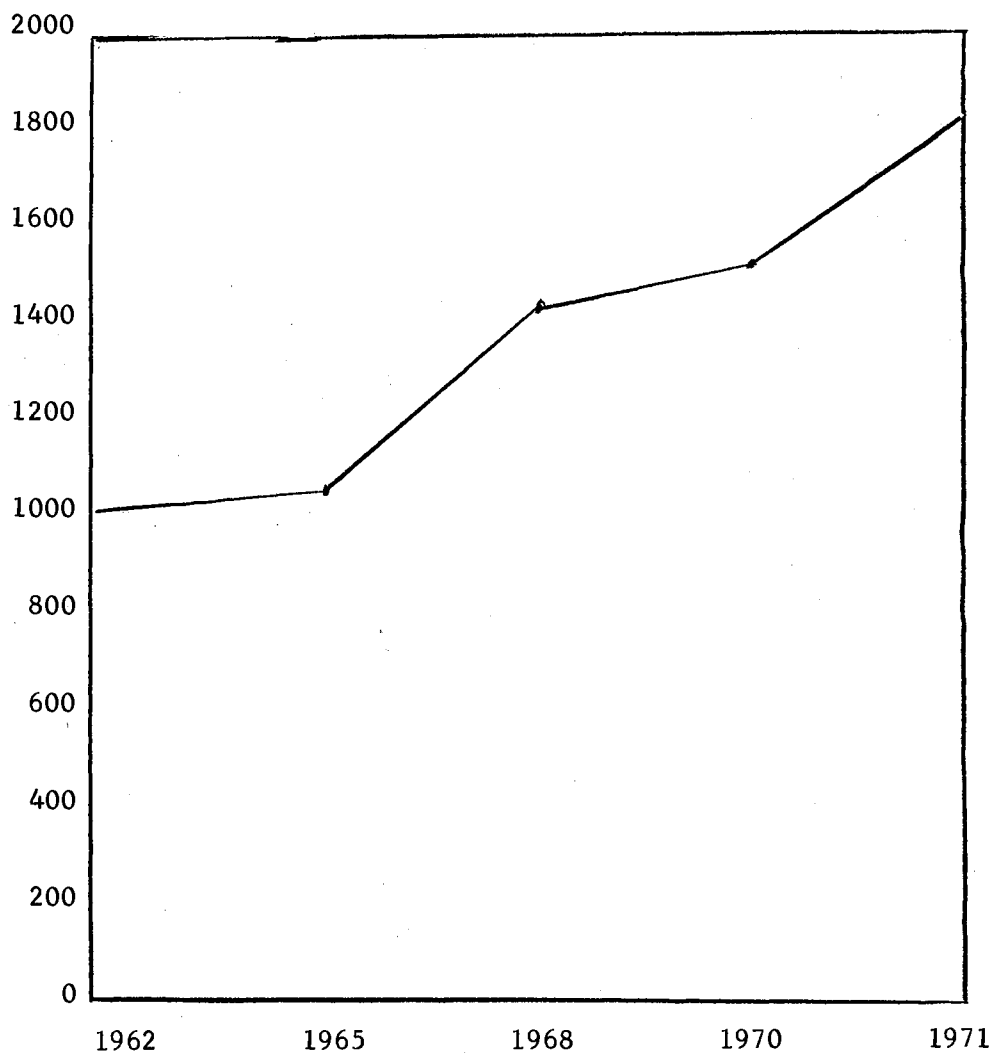
## APPENDIX



Source: Kavic, p. 242. (For the year 1962). For all other years, The Institute of Strategic Studies, The Military Balance, 1965-66 to 1971-72.

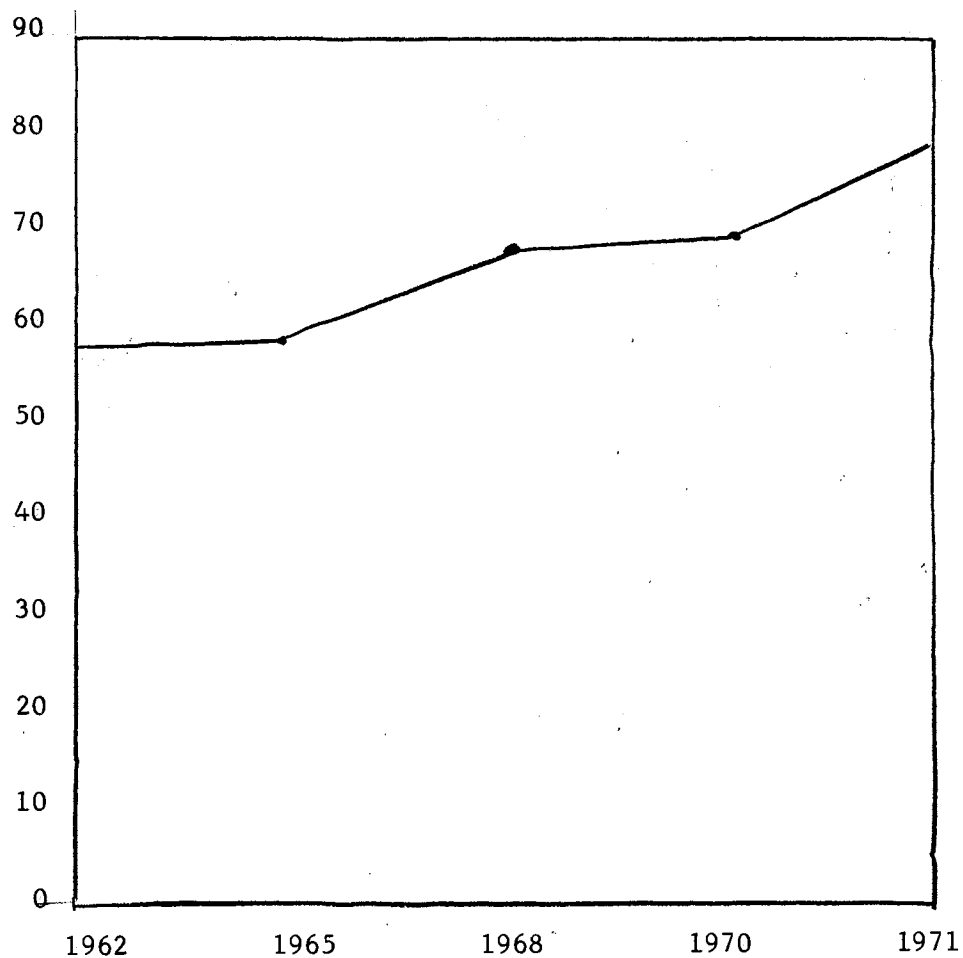
Figure 1. Army Divisions





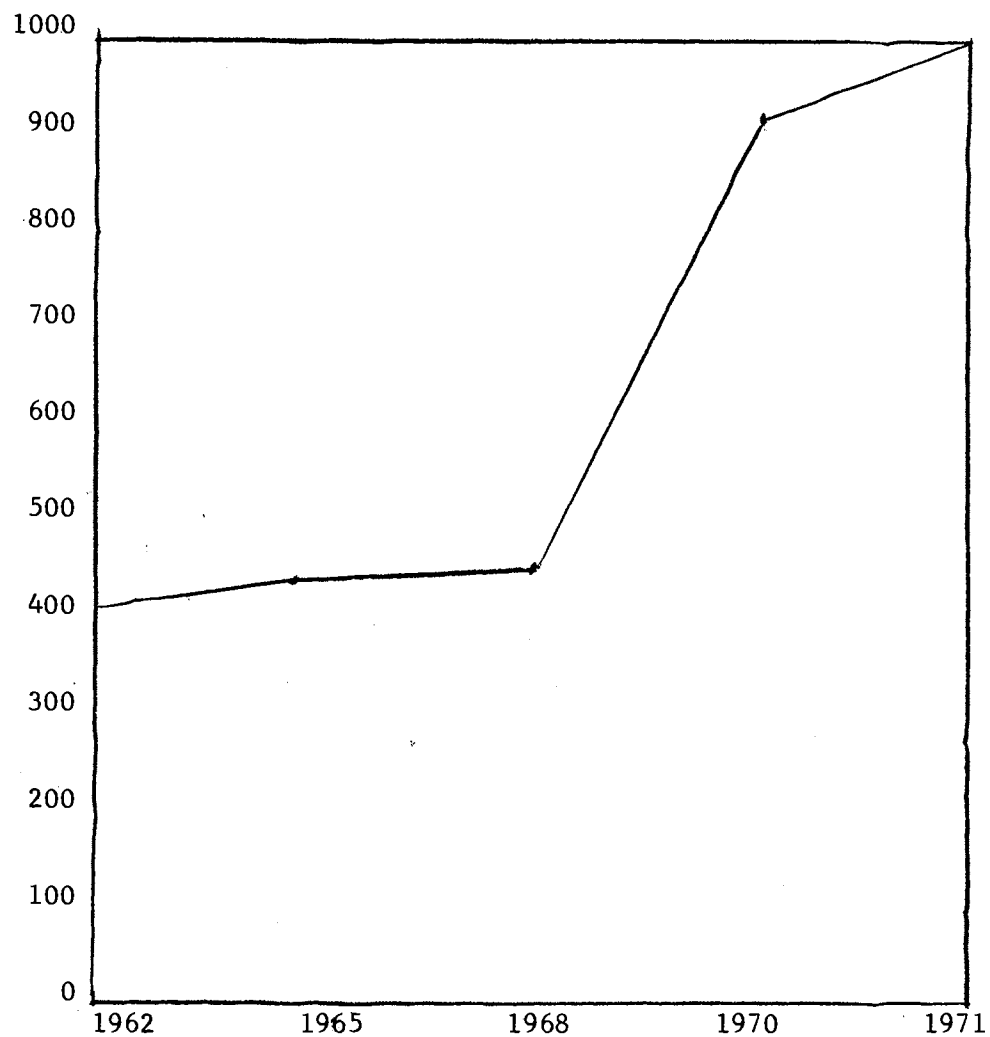
Source: Kavic, p. 242. (For the year 1962). For all other years, The Institute of Strategic Studies, The Military Balance, 1965-66 to 1971-72.

Figure 2. Army Tanks



Source: Kavic, p. 242. (For the year 1962). For all other years, The Institute of Strategic Studies, The Military Balance, 1965-66 to 1971-72.

Figure 3. Navy Ships



Source: Kavic, p. 242. (For the year 1962). For all other years, The Institute of Strategic Studies, The Military Balance, 1965-66 to 1971-72.

Figure 4. Combat Aircraft

		<u>Aircraft</u>					<u>Missiles</u>			ASM/ AAM
Country		SS fighters	Subsonic <sup>a</sup>	Trainers	Transports	Helicopters	SAM	SSM <sup>b</sup>	ATGW	
Asia	Australia	L	L	L	-	-	-	P	-	-
	China	P	L <sup>f</sup>	L	L	L	L	P	-	?
	India	L	L	L	L	L	-	-	L	-
	Japan	L	L <sup>g</sup>	P	L	L	L	-	P	PL

Notes:

\*Countries other than the United States, the Soviet Union, Britain and France which are considered to be primary producers.

+SS = Supersonic.

P = Arms of producer country's own design.

L = Arms produced or assembled, not of own design.

Most aircraft come in this category because the engines are licensed.

<sup>a</sup>All fighter, bomber or COIN aircraft except where indicated.

<sup>b</sup>Includes ASW missiles.

<sup>c</sup>Includes MCM and landing ships

<sup>d</sup>Includes landing craft.

<sup>e</sup>Includes armoured car, scout car and APC.

<sup>f</sup>Includes Tu-16 medium bomber.

<sup>g</sup>Includes Japanese designed MR aircraft.

Source: Institute of Strategic Studies, The Military Balance, 1970 and 1971, p. 96.

Figure 5. Secondary Arms Producers\*

Country	Submarines	<u>Ships</u>		PB <sup>d</sup>	<u>Artillery</u>		<u>Tanks</u>	
		Escorts <sup>e</sup>			SP	Towed	Medium	Light <sup>e</sup>
Asia	Australia	-	L	P	-	-	-	-
	China	P	L	P	-	P	L	P
	India	-	L	L	-	P	L	-
	Japan	P	P	P	P	P	P	P

Notes:

\*Countries other than the United States, the Soviet Union, Britain and France which are considered to be primary producers.

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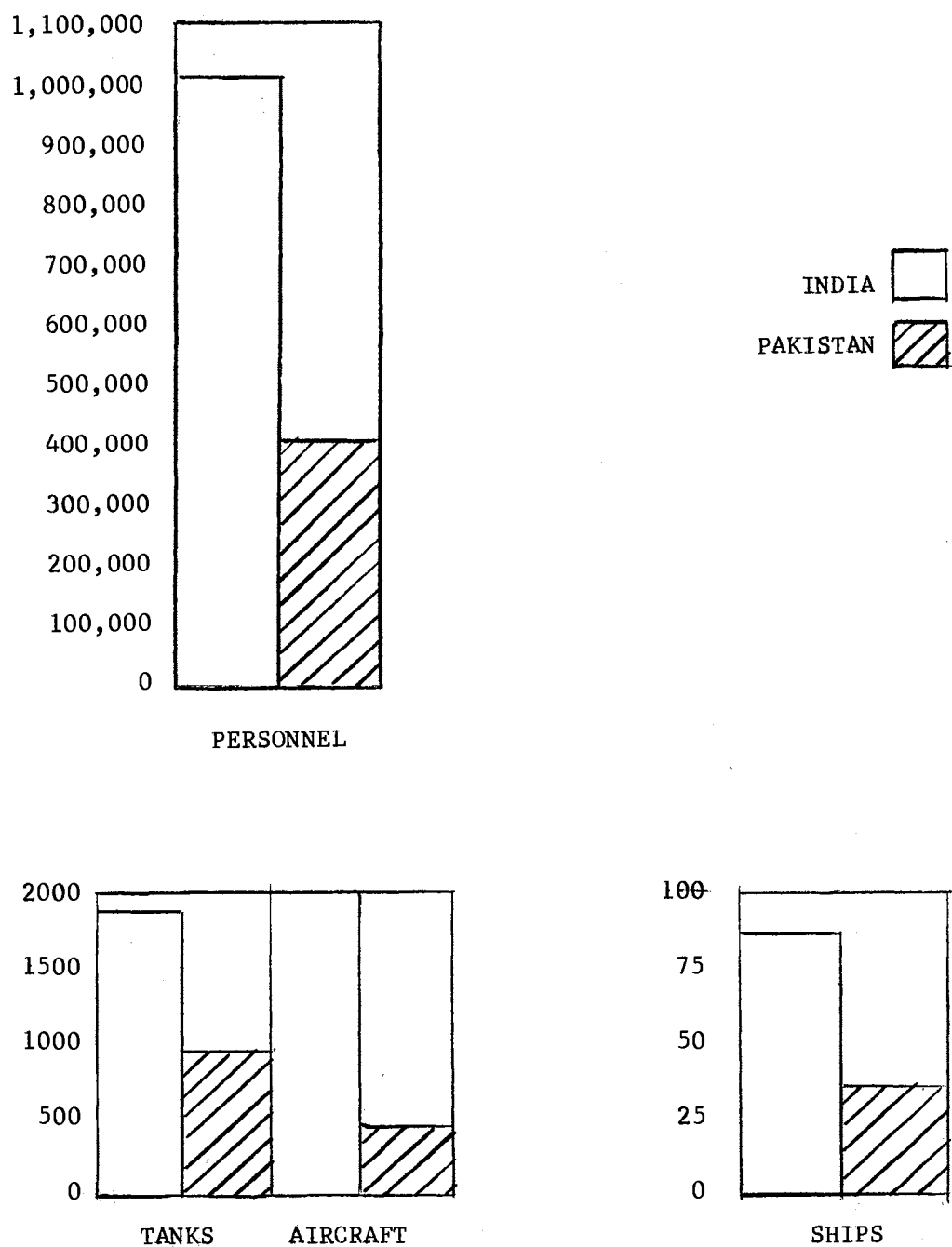
<sup>e</sup>Includes armoured car, scout car and APC.

<sup>f</sup>Includes Tu-16 medium bomber.

<sup>g</sup>Includes Japanese designed MR aircraft.

Source: Institute of Strategic Studies, The Military Balance, 1970 and 1971, p. 96.

Figure 6. Secondary Arms Producers\*



Source: Supuy, pp. 318, 319, 327.

Figure 7. Comparative Military Strength of the Two Countries in November, 1971.

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