

Thus early on India saw nuclear power as a central element in a policy aimed at putting the country squarely in the lead among Third World countries where new technologies, independence, and activism were concerned. In the early years there was little idea of the military use of such technologies. When opening the first reactor in 1957, the prime minister made clear that such energy would never be used for what he termed "reprehensible" purposes. Such words convinced the major powers and without them Canadian and others' aid in the nuclear field would have been impossible to imagine.

Fortmann argues convincingly that the changes in Indian views on nuclear weapons, while certainly affected greatly by external factors, were by no means simply caused by them. He places the beginning of the elite and the bureaucracy's debate about the nuclear weapons option in 1959, well before the 1962 border conflict with China, that country's nuclear test of 1964, or the 1965 war with Pakistan. India was not certain how to react to these events and was hardly united as to the best policy to adopt. And while nationalist opinion frequently supported the weapons option, it was not united. For example, armed forces headquarters feared a programme that would hurt their budget for conventional armament. The government of the time was also sensitive to international opinion and feared great power negative reaction to a nuclear weapons programme.¹²

It is also worth noting, says Fortmann, that China was the main *point de repère* for the Indian debate on nuclear weapons, while Pakistan was totally absent from it during this period. Scientists' opinions were valued greatly and they had more influence than those worried about any sort of Pakistani threat. Indira Gandhi also had electoral matters in mind in yielding to the scientists and others asking for a peaceful nuclear explosive test even though she was conscious of the risks of a regional nuclear arms race.

In these early years Pakistan was much farther still from priority given to nuclear issues. This country, lacking the democratic experience and traditions of India, is of course also much more difficult to analyse. Few sources exist and discussions of the Pakistani nuclear programme usually bring out more heat than light. What is clear is that in the 1940s and fifties there was no scientific and developmental reason, as in India, behind the interest in nuclear energy. Nor did it have any significant priority or access to funds. In these early years Pakistan looked to its alliances for security, not to spectacular, and costly, weapons. Even in the early sixties, when there was greater interest, the programme took a distinct civilian twist.

It was the 1965 war with India that changed things. The debate on nuclear weapons was one of the results. And it was in diplomatic and political circles that support for that option was strongest. Even then little was done until 1971 added fuel to the fire. Having discovered the slight value of its defence links with the United States and China, Pakistan realised perhaps for the first time that it must look to its own defence. The Bhutto government, argues Fortmann again

¹² See Michel Fortmann, "Le duo indo-pakistanaïse: l'ambiguïté et la solitude," in Legault and Fortmann (eds), *op.cit.*, pp. 307-66, especially pp. 314-17.