

When war came again only six years later, it was even more serious. This time India backed the break-up of Pakistan, the latter country losing what was to become Bangladesh to separatist forces determined on independence from Karachi. The rump of Pakistan now had only a fraction of India's population, gross national product, scientific and technical skills, territorial space, and potential. It felt much more exposed and insecure in the post-1971 world than before. These feelings were not helped by having neighbours, especially Iran and Afghanistan, who were often to make the region a hotbed for international intrigue.

Indian legitimacy as a state for a number of years was rarely seriously questioned in any very dangerous sense even though separatist movements of various kinds existed. It may well have been, as optimistic observers in the past asserted, that the very number and variety of groupings making up the union acts as a break on the excessive assertiveness of some. But this is clearly not perceived as such by Indians struggling to maintain national cohesion in the midst of growing ethnic nationalism. And Pakistan has suffered from even greater questioning of the state leading not only to the 1971 collapse of the two-section union between East and West Pakistan but to continuing separatist pressures since in what was the West and is now Pakistan *tout court*.

### **The Nuclear Dimension of the Rivalry**

At the time of Hiroshima there was of course neither the Indian state which we know today nor Pakistan. There was one British India although, it must be said, an India waiting for the long awaited promise of independence to be fulfilled. The thorny issue of partition was soon upon the country although many hoped that it would not be as painful a process as it eventually proved to be. Be that as it may, the impact of the advent of the atomic era was perhaps understandably less in societies not yet independent or in charge of their own foreign and defence policy than it was in South America with its long tradition of independence and domestic control over policy decisions.

While this may in some senses be accurate, it is easy to understate the early interest of India in nuclear matters. In fact, through the influential scientist Homi Bhabha, the Tata Institute for Fundamental Research, already in existence in 1945, became fundamental for the development of Indian nuclear power. Faced with what would otherwise be a dependence on unacceptable foreign sources for specialists and fuel (India had little uranium), New Delhi opted virtually from independence for control of the nuclear fuel cycle as a national objective essential for effective national control of a technology deemed crucial for the future of the new state. And bureaucracies most closely linked to development strategies helped ensure this point of view remained to the fore.

Such a nationalist view fitted in perfectly with Nehru's non-alignment policies in foreign affairs as well as what was to be known as the "developmentalist" school of state planners. As Michel Fortmann has shown, India's early leaders wanted no dependence on foreign powers, priority to economic and technical development, autonomy in foreign policy, and active roles as a leader of the Third World, and in support of international peace.