

a greater role in policing the Indian Ocean²⁰; India is expanding its economic ties throughout the Indian Ocean as part of its interest in South-South cooperation under the rubric of the G-15 summits, as well as bilaterally; and concern for the well-being of the majority population of Indian origin in Fiji following the coup by the Fijian army in 1987 led to an Indian diplomatic campaign against the regime that culminated in the expulsion of Indian diplomats from Fiji in June 1990.²¹

The situation with respect to Pakistan has moved dramatically from political efforts to resolve the Siachin dispute towards the end of Gandhi's administration, to a near-war situation over Kashmir with the advent of the V.P. Singh government. The situation remains highly unstable following the election of new governments in Pakistan and India.²² The consistent rhetoric coming out of New Delhi indicates that neutralization of the Pakistani threat to India is a prime objective of the government.²³ These developments do suggest that India has an evolving, albeit unstated, foreign policy goal of achieving undisputed dominance of the Indian Ocean region. However, any such inference must consider that India also has legitimate security interests in the Indian Ocean.

²⁰ The Iraqi invasion of Kuwait has, of course, reversed the trend towards a reduction in extra-regional naval forces in the Indian Ocean. Only time will tell if this is a permanent reversal but reductions seem likely to continue after the crisis is over.

²¹ The Indian Navy has also reportedly prepared staff papers discussing the logistics of sending a naval force to Fiji. *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 28 June, 1990.

²² Nawaz Sharif replaced Benazir Bhutto as Prime Minister of Pakistan in October 1990, following Bhutto's unceremonious removal from office the previous August. Chandra Shekar replaced V.P. Singh in November 1990, following a vote of no-confidence against Singh in the Indian parliament.

²³ The same is true from the Pakistani side and the crisis between the two countries may yet lead to a war which neither side really wants or can afford. From Islamabad's perspective, the conflict hinges on the fact that Pakistan is the only South Asian state capable of resisting India's hegemonic ambitions. In New Delhi, Pakistan's resistance to Indian dominance is seen as a security threat.