

Domestic Political Fragmentation and Constraints on Indian Security Policy

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The early 1990s were a watershed in independent India's international history. Till the end of the 1980s, Indian security strategy at the regional level aimed at asserting control, sometimes aggressively, over South Asia. At the global level, its behaviour more closely resembled that of its small neighbours toward it, i.e. it adopted a defensive orientation toward the world beyond its immediate neighbourhood and sought to keep the big powers at arm's length. With the end of the Cold War, India's strategic behaviour quickly turned around in both spheres. It began to transform itself into a benign regional hegemon and a more confident power on the global stage. I have discussed this process of transformation elsewhere.¹ Here, I examine the on-going process in the post-Cold War era and some of the difficulties India has faced as a result of domestic constraints that have stunted its capacity to mobilize support for its new policies. More precisely, while a general re-orientation of policy at both the regional and global levels has not been problematic, Indian policy has gone adrift when it has sought to implement these policies through specific actions or agreements. I locate the reason for this drift in the decentralization of domestic political power, which has permitted hitherto less influential political actors to impact negatively on the making of policy despite the existence of favourable systemic conditions.

This paper examines two policy processes, the first with respect to India's security policy toward Sri Lanka, and the second with respect to the India-United States nuclear agreement of 2008. Till the 1980s, India had behaved increasingly like a big power within its neighbourhood, breaking up Pakistan, imposing a virtual blockade on Nepal that compelled it to sign an unwelcome trade and transit treaty, and intervening forcefully in Sri Lanka's civil war by sending in peacekeeping troops that neither party wanted. By the mid-1990s, India-Sri Lanka relations, which had been less than cordial during the 1980s, had begun to warm rapidly. India's interest in ensuring the stability of its small southern neighbour, which was deeply embroiled in a civil war, had not changed dramatically. What it wanted was a stable Sri Lanka in which other states would have no security footprint. But as the civil war underwent sharp fluctuations, from a sheer drop in the fortunes of the Sri Lankan Army in 1999-2000 to its drive for and achievement of a resounding military victory over the Tamil Tigers in 2009, Indian interests were challenged. On both occasions, Sri Lanka invited India to step in, yet it would not. To the contrary, it kept a distance from Sri Lankan developments owing to opposition from political parties in the state of Tamil Nadu, which today accounts for just 5.69% of the Indian population.² India's inaction caused it

¹ Rajesh Basrur, "India: A Major Power in the Making," unpublished paper.

² Calculated from Census of India, *Projected Total Population by Sex as on 1st March-2001-2026 India, States and Union Territories*

<http://www.censusindia.gov.in/Census_Data_2001/Projected_Population/Projected_Population.pdf> (accessed February 6, 2010). **NB:** Unless otherwise stated, all dates of access are the same as date of publication.

to lose influence over developments and to allow other players, including those hostile to it, to step in. Despite the high potential cost of not acting decisively, India remained relatively inactive, playing only a limited role in shaping the course of events.

In the global arena, India had long adopted a defensive posture toward the United States. As is a weak power's wont, it had been critical of American presence in South Asia and the Indian Ocean and unwilling to engage in extensive economic interaction with it. The two countries were regularly at odds over India's rejection of the US-backed nuclear nonproliferation regime. The end of the Cold War brought an all-round change and India-US relations warmed quickly despite a temporary setback when India tested nuclear weapons in 1998. The centrepiece of the emerging strategic partnership was an agreement on nuclear trade designed to override the constraints imposed by the nuclear nonproliferation regime. The George W. Bush Administration faced considerable difficulty in surmounting a wall of tough domestic opposition, but eventually succeeded. Resistance within India was still more intense as opposition parties, at first in alliance with the nuclear-scientific bureaucracy and later on their own, nearly derailed the deal. Though it finally went through, the process of approval stretched out over three years and remained in doubt till the very end. Had it failed to clear domestic hurdles, it could have seriously hampered the growth of the India-US strategic relationship and slowed down India's acceptance as a major power in world politics.

This paper shows how the fragmentation of the Indian political structure was the cause of policy drift in both cases. In the next section, I outline the analytical framework of the paper, situating my argument within the literature on the domestic politics of the foreign policies of states. More specifically, I locate it within the neoclassical realist literature, which brings together the systemic and state levels of analysis within a realist framework. I show how the state's ability to take advantage of systemic incentives is modulated by its capacity to draw adequate political resources to meet foreign policy objectives. The subsequent two sections examine the India-Sri Lanka and the India-United States cases in some detail. The final section pulls the theoretical and empirical threads together. The paper shows that decentralization and fragmentation in a political system work in different ways to cast policy adrift. In the India-Sri Lanka case, the dynamic is centred on state-level competitive politics and nationalism; in the India-US case, the process is driven by a coalescence of political and bureaucratic interests.

Systemic Incentives, Resource Extraction and Policy Drift: An Analytical Framework

The starting point for a neoclassical realist framework of analysis is the nature of the system. Standard realist accounts begin with the anarchic character of the international system, which they hold constant, then move on to examine the key variable of power distribution.³ Anarchy breeds distrust and a preference for self-interest over collective interest, and places a premium on military power for states' survival and security. For a realist, politics is at heart about power and

³ John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2001); Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1979).

its distribution – wars, alliances, arms accumulation and, of course, attempts to maintain systemic stability. An important qualification is in order: where there is a high degree of interdependence between states, the distribution of power does not count for much, as for instance between developed economies and between nuclear-armed states.⁴ Still, if states behave *as if* power matters despite the existence of interdependence, power differentials will in some ways at least continue to determine their policies, especially in taking recourse to balancing behaviour. Thus, we find states react to changes in the international system in terms of the incentives they perceive. They respond to threat perceptions by internal or external balancing, by interventions, and so on. And in multilateral settings, they seek to participate in the setting of agendas.

In the India-Sri Lanka case, power has been and still undoubtedly is a driving force. India has long viewed South Asia and the northern Indian Ocean as its own backyard and therefore as a legitimate strategic concern. With respect to Sri Lanka itself, it has two concerns. First, no outside power, and especially not one with interests inimical to those of India, should acquire a strategic foothold on the island. And second, Sri Lanka as a state should be a stable entity. If it becomes unstable, outsiders may take the opportunity to get involved and thus pose a threat to India. Moreover, should ethnic conflict between the Tamils and the majority Sinhalese cause the break-up of Sri Lanka, the implications for India are worrisome: it would encourage Indian secessionist movements generally, and, more specifically, provide an opening for a movement to unify the Tamils of both countries. For both reasons, the civil conflict in Sri Lanka was viewed with much unease when it began to assume significant proportions from the 1980s. There was concern that China and Pakistan might try to establish a close relationship with Sri Lanka, which would result in India's encirclement. And there was concern, too, that large-scale violence against Tamils in Sri Lanka would inflame passions in India.

Responding to systemic incentives, India played an interventionist role in Sri Lanka as the civil conflict began to assume serious proportions.⁵ It tried to prop up the Tamils by providing militant groups (the LTTE and others) with covert assistance by way of arms and training. By the second half of the 1980s, it became openly assertive as there were signs that other states, notably the United States and China, might be attempting to obtain a foothold. In 1987, when the Government of Sri Lanka denied Indian ships carrying relief aid for Tamil civilians access to its ports, India airdropped aid packages from transport planes escorted by Mirage fighter aircraft. Thereafter, it moved to impose a settlement between the government and the LTTE. Sri Lankan President Jayewardene was pressurized into accepting a formal accord under which Indian peacekeeping forces would supervise the laying down of arms by the LTTE and the government would set in motion a political settlement that would allow the Tamils a share in power. The

⁴ Neoliberals tend to focus on the economic aspect. See Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, Jr., *Power and Interdependence: World Politics in Transition* (Boston: Little Brown, 1978). However, the same argument can be made for nuclear-armed states as well, since the cost of war is unaffordable and therefore the value of military power is seriously diluted.

⁵ Rajesh Kadian, *India's Sri Lanka Fiasco: Peacekeepers at War* (New Delhi: Vision Books, 1990).

outcome was a disaster as the LTTE rejected the accord and armed conflict broke out between it and Indian troops. The protracted fighting took a heavy toll and well over a thousand Indian troops died before India withdrew its forces in March 1990.

While it is arguable that India consequently lost the stomach for a fight, this does not satisfactorily explain its reluctance to get involved in Sri Lanka's ethnic conflict subsequently. After the mid-1990s, there was a rapid warming of India-Sri Lanka relations. A flurry of negotiations led to the signing of a free trade agreement (FTA) in December 1998, with the agreement becoming fully operational in March 2000. Sri Lanka also requested a defence pact and urged India to play a central role in the on-going peace process with the LTTE. A formal defence agreement would have solidified the relationship and gone a significant way to assuage Indian concerns about other states gaining purchase in Sri Lanka. But India showed a marked unwillingness to go beyond economic cooperation. It engaged in defence talks, but the process led nowhere. It also stayed out of the peace process. In April-May 2000, when Sri Lankan forces were in dire straits against the LTTE in the Jaffna peninsula, the government appealed to India for help. But despite the unsavoury prospect of a defeated Sri Lankan state and the problems it could unleash for India, the Indian government remained cautious and reluctant to intervene. Not surprisingly, Colombo looked to China, Pakistan and others for assistance, which eventually helped it win a victory. Despite the growing role of its rivals, India failed to be more than offer covert (though not inconsiderable) assistance. When government forces won a decisive victory in 2009, the Indian government had little voice in the post-conflict arrangements. Why India stood aside despite powerful systemic incentives – the increased role of China and Pakistan and open Sri Lankan invitations to be involved – can only be explained by domestic politics. The next section will provide a concise account.

Since it attained independence in 1947, India's relationship with the United States had been at best a mixed one. While there was underlying warmth, especially at the societal level, between the two large democracies, divergent strategic interests pushed them apart. The United States' overriding concern was the Cold War, whereas India resisted being coopted into one or the other side and sought to stay autonomous through the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). It also adopted an autarchic economic policy that sought to avoid "dependence" on the capitalist West. Systemic incentives for India called for a typical weak power approach toward the United States. It distanced itself by avoiding extensive economic links with the US and was critical of American presence in the Indian Ocean (especially the US base at Diego Garcia) and of the US involvement in the Vietnam War. The US-led nuclear nonproliferation regime was also viewed with deep suspicion, as was the emergence of a US-China-Pakistan nexus in 1971, which drove India closer to the Soviet Union.

The post-Cold War period saw a change in the incentive structure. The rapid emergence of China as the next superpower-in-waiting brought India and the United States closer. Both adopted hedging strategies (as indeed did China) as insurance against future conflict with it, which launched rising defence cooperation and the beginnings of a strategic partnership. India's

adoption of a liberalizing economic policy contributed to a growing trade and investment relationship. The chief hurdle to its consolidation was in their uncompromising positions on nonproliferation and India's status as a nuclear weapons power. When India carried out a series of tests in 1998, the relationship stumbled amidst mutual recriminations. But it quickly regained its footing under the exigencies of practical politics. The India-US nuclear deal was at one level an agreement on civilian nuclear trade designed to help India meet its rising demand for electricity without adding to global warming. But, given the limited place of nuclear energy in India's energy plans, the agreement's real significance lay elsewhere.

For India, the political incentives were strong. The agreement effectively constituted a de facto acknowledgement of its nuclear weapons status by formally recognizing the separation of its civilian and military facilities. This meant it would no longer be treated as a near-pariah by the nonproliferation regime and its members. It could now move ahead with its quest for a place among the major powers without having to be defensive on this score. From this standpoint, India would be able to bandwagon with the United States in emerging as a major power, with the hope that it might someday obtain permanent membership of the United Nations Security Council. From the balance of power perspective, the agreement greatly enhanced the prospects of a strong India-US relationship, which in turn meant a degree of security from the China threat, a concern that had been brought to the fore by the collapse of the Soviet Union. But for all its advantages, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's Congress-led United Progressive Alliance (UPA) nearly lost the opportunity as its efforts to obtain domestic support for the agreement faltered as rising opposition almost killed the deal. How this happened is discussed below.

In both instances, domestic politics acted as a severe drag on foreign policies which the Indian governments of the day had strong incentives to carry out and which, moreover, they were inclined to pursue. Successive Indian governments certainly did give military aid to Sri Lanka, and the fact that much of it was given covertly reflects their interest in strengthening Sri Lanka's armed forces despite domestic opposition. Caught between systemic incentives and domestic pressures, Indian policy makers allowed the situation to drift and lost the opportunity to form a binding relationship with Sri Lanka. Likewise, the conflicting pressures of external incentives and domestic resistance placed the UPA's policy in the doldrums. In this case, the agreement ultimately went through, but the fact that it was a near thing makes it worth considering as an example of how major strategic incentives can capsize in turbulent domestic political waters.

I turn now to a closer understanding of how domestic politics impacts on the making of foreign policy. The body of literature on the relationship between domestic and foreign policy is far too large for a review to be possible.⁶ I narrow down my focus to neoclassical realist scholarship, which has built up a corpus of research to show how systemic policy incentives are modified by

⁶ James Fearon surveyed a single journal, *International Organization*, and found that more than a third of the 193 papers published linked domestic politics to external policy. James D. Fearon, "Domestic Politics, Foreign Policy, and Theories of International Relations," *Annual Review of Political Science*, 1 (June 1998), pp. 289-313, at p. 290.

domestic politics.⁷ Most writings on the relationship between the domestic and external politics of a state focus on why states succeed or fail in a particular endeavour vis-à-vis one or more other states. I examine a relatively neglected process: why states tend to let important policy initiatives become rudderless despite strong systemic incentives and policymakers' intentions to develop and implement them quickly. As might be expected from a body of work set within the realist tradition, most studies are concerned with power distribution issues and their relationship to policy. The most developed portion of the literature looks at some aspect of power balancing or the military expansion of a state. In the first category, for instance, Aaron Friedberg examines the domestic forces driving American grand strategies during the Cold War, while Thomas Christensen looks at the domestic bases of grand strategy in US-China relations.⁸ In the second category, Barry Posen shows how French military innovation and expansion was made possible by the domestic mobilization of nationalism.⁹ Similarly, Farid Zakaria shows how differing resource extractive capacities first restrained and later facilitated American military expansion.¹⁰ In the two cases examined below, India seeks to enhance its power at the regional and global levels, but runs afoul of domestic interests. With governments failing to extract the required political resources for going forward, policies, caught between systemic incentives and domestic opposition, are becalmed.

The ability of a state to extract the requisite resources to carry out optimal policies is critical in determining its success or failure.¹¹ The key lies in how the state converts resources potentially available to it into actual instruments for the carrying out of policy. Here, I treat resource extraction as a political phenomenon: the ability of the state to win sufficient political resources in order to undertake a preferred course of policy action. In a parliamentary democracy, this essentially boils down to obtaining majority support in the legislature, but the state also requires broader support from key interest groups affected by the policy and from public opinion. In the two issues examined in this paper, the starting point is the same. In both, the fragmentation of political power in India is the fundamental cause of the difficulty policymakers face in charting their policy courses. Since 1989, no party has been able to obtain a parliamentary majority on its

⁷ For overviews of neoclassical realist writings, see Steven E. Lobell, Norrin M. Ripsman and Jeffrey W. Taliaferro, eds. *Neoclassical Realism, the State, and Foreign Policy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Brian Rathbun, "A Rose by Any Other Name: Neoclassical Realism as the Logical and Necessary Extension of Structural Realism," *Security Studies*, 17, 2 (April 2008), pp. 294-321; Gideon Rose, "Neoclassical Realism and Theories of Foreign Policy," *World Politics*, 51, 1 (October 1998), pp. 144-77; Randall L. Schweller, "The Progressive Power of Neoclassical Realism," in Colin Elman and Miriam Fendius Feldman, eds. *Progress in International Relations Theory: Appraising the Field* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2003).

⁸ Aaron L. Friedberg, *In the Shadow of the Garrison State: America's Anti-Statism and Its Cold War Grand Strategy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000); Thomas J. Christensen, *Useful Adversaries: Grand Strategy, Domestic Mobilization and Sino-American Conflict* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996).

⁹ Barry R. Posen, "Nationalism, the Mass Army, and Military Power," *International Security*, 18, 2 (Fall 1993), pp. 82-129.

¹⁰ Farid Zakaria, *From Wealth to Power: The Unusual Origins of America's World Role* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998)

¹¹ Jeffrey W. Taliaferro, "State Building for Future Wars: Neoclassical Realism and the Resource Extractive State," *Security Studies*, 15, 3 (July-September 2006), pp. 464-95.

own, which means the vagaries of coalition politics have hindered effective policymaking. But, as will be seen below, the precise ways in which coalition politics plays out varies.

It is not a coincidence that initial reversals of policy in both cases were not hard to carry out. In the Sri Lanka case, positive moves to alter the tenor of the relationship through a free trade agreement and discussions on defence cooperation did not produce a domestic outcry. True, the assassination of former prime minister Rajiv Gandhi by the LTTE in 1991 took much of the wind out of the sails of pro-LTTE groups in India; but this in itself does not explain why Tamil nationalism remained subdued till the late 1990s, or indeed why it then began to revive rapidly. Similarly, India's new warmth toward the United States, coinciding as it did with its economic liberalization policies, caused considerable grumbling among Marxist intellectuals and political parties, but did not produce the kind of vigorous criticism that marked the assault on the India-US nuclear agreement. Cooperation on counter-terrorism and defence proceeded along with trade and investment. Early developments were relatively smooth as the distribution of political power in New Delhi produced a stable government.

Why did successive Indian governments run into serious opposition on the two issues under discussion? An important part of the answer can be found in the shifting distribution of domestic power. The Congress Party, which had dominated the political structure during the early decades after India's independence, began to decline in the late 1980s. In its place emerged an increasingly decentralized system in which regional parties became the new power holders in many states. Between 1989 and 2004, the proportion of seats held by regional parties grew from 15.5% to 24.6%.¹² Simultaneously, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), an off-shoot of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh representing the Hindu right, came to the forefront as a new party with an India-wide ambit. As a result, since 1989, no party has been able to obtain a majority by itself in Parliament. Coalition governments have often struggled to stay afloat in a sea of intense political bargaining over the terms of power sharing among the two big parties – the Congress and the BJP – and a large number of small parties. Despite the short-lived tenure (1989-91) of a coalition government stitched together by the Janata Dal, a small party with national pretensions, the Congress-led Narasimha Rao government lasted a full five-year term till 1996. Under Rao, Indian policies underwent the first phase of their post-Cold war reversals in foreign strategic and economic relations. The subsequent period from 1996 onward saw the rise and fall of several coalition governments as parties struggled with the formation of alliances and party politics became intensively competitive.

Coalitions became large and unwieldy, and governments unstable.¹³ Patchy coalitions often depended on support from non-members. Leaving aside outsiders, coalition governments themselves became larger and larger. The Janata Dal coalition of 1989 consisted of five parties;

¹² Bidyut Chakravarty, *Indian Politics and Society since Independence: Events, Processes and Ideologies* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2008), Table 1, p. 166.

¹³ E. Sridharan, "Coalition Politics in India: Types, Duration, Theory and Comparison," Working Paper, 50, Institute of South Asian Studies, National University of Singapore, 23 September 2008.

the coalition that formed a government in 1996, also led by the Janata Dal, had nine; the BJP-led one of 1998 had eleven; the next one (1999) also led by it twelve. The UPA's 2004 coalition topped them all with seventeen; but became relatively stable in 2009, when it formed a government with ten parties, though it still required outside support from a dozen members of the Lok Sabha (the lower house). The capacities of governments were severely challenged. One brief episode saw a coalition cobbled together by the Bharatiya Janata party (BJP) in 1996 last all of thirteen days. Between 1989 and 1999, there were as many as six general elections to a Parliament whose full term is five years. As a result, government policies became vulnerable to the vicissitudes of political uncertainty and small players began to exercise unprecedented influence in the shaping of national policies.

To some degree, domestic politics has always been intrinsic to the making of foreign policy.¹⁴ But now, the decentralization of power and the uncertainties surrounding coalition politics has profoundly affected the making of policy, often slowing down the policy process to a crawl. But there is more than one pattern to the how policy making is affected. In India-Sri Lanka relations, the key driver was the relationship between the centre (New Delhi) and the state of Tamil Nadu. The party that formed the government at the centre – whether the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) or the Congress – depended on representatives of a different party controlling the state – either the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) or the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) – to cobble together a majority and thereby came under pressure to conform to the special interests of the state-based party. The state-based parties, in turn, were driven by highly competitive and unstable electoral politics within the state to try and outbid each other in appealing to Tamil nationalism, which necessarily meant showing support for the Tamils of Sri Lanka. This competitive nationalism circumscribed policy making for a government in New Delhi that could not ignore the politics of a state on which it depended for support. In effect, parties with a very small proportion of seats in parliament and even parties with a marginal position in both the centre and the state, drove the process, thereby hampering policy.

In the India-United States relationship, the problem of extracting adequate political resources was different. Because the party in power in New Delhi, the Congress, had a small majority and depended on a host of small parties to stay in power, small parties ideologically opposed to the nuclear agreement – the Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPM) and the Communist Party of India (CPI) – enjoyed considerable leverage. Their bargaining power was strengthened by an informal alliance with a party on the political right – the BJP – and with the nuclear establishment, which saw its organizational power and political influence eroded by the terms of the proposed nuclear agreement. The technical inputs of the scientists, themselves influential because the department of Atomic Energy (DAE) comes directly under the prime minister,

¹⁴ See e.g. A. Appadorai, *The Domestic Roots of India's Foreign Policy, 1947-1972* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1981); Rob Jenkins, "How Federalism Influences India's Domestic politics of WTO Engagement (And Is Itself Affected in the Process)," *Asian Survey*, 43, 4 (July/August 2003), pp. 598-621); Kripa Sridharan, "Federalism and Foreign Relations: The Nascent Role of the Indian States," *Asian Studies Review*, 27, 4 (December 2003), pp. 463-89.

combined with the political clout of the opposition parties to generate powerful resistance to the agreement. The whole process was one in which policy formulation in India's parliamentary system began to resemble the policy formulation process in the United States' separation of powers system, i.e. a process characterized by intense bargaining among three major sets of actors – the political leadership, special interests, and the legislature.¹⁵

India and Sri Lanka: Unmasterly Inactivity

India's refusal to be actively involved in shaping the course of events in Sri Lanka was the result of a complex politics at the centre and in the state of Tamil Nadu. As observed above, India initially desired neither side in the civil war to win. Its preferred outcome was a compromise agreement accommodating the Tamils within a federal framework. After its troops became embroiled in a war with the LTTE and Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated, the Indian position changed. Rather than a balance, India wanted a decisive end to the conflict with the defeat of the LTTE. The incentives that had been at work in the 1980s had not changed. Speed was important as Indian policymakers had long feared two outcomes: an LTTE victory, which would threaten Indian national cohesion, and intervention by others on behalf of Colombo, which might give adversaries traction on its southern flank.¹⁶

The first of the two threats seemed at hand when the Sri Lankan Army began to lose ground to the LTTE in 1999-2000.¹⁷ In December 1999, government forces incurred heavy casualties and lost control of some 1,000 sq km of territory at Vanni. In April 2,000, the LTTE gained control of the army's base at Elephant Pass, leaving 30,000 troops trapped on the Jaffna Peninsula. President Chandrika Kumaratunga appealed to India for assistance and India's Air Force chief flew to Colombo for talks, but such aid as was forthcoming was limited. As one analyst remarked, the need of the hour was for Indian combat aircraft to carry out limited strikes on LTTE positions as immediate relief for the beleaguered troops.¹⁸ But New Delhi refrained. What accounts for its coy response?

A new government had been formed by the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) coalition. The BJP itself emerged as the largest party in Parliament, but with only 182 out of 543 seats.¹⁹ It depended heavily, therefore, on a large number of allies to provide the balance of seats required for a majority. In the background was harsh experience. In 1996, the BJP's coalition government had been overthrown in less than two weeks. In 1998, the BJP had formed a second

¹⁵ For the diverse ways in which different types of democratic political systems affect external policy, see Miriam Fendus Elman, "Unpacking Democracy: Presidentialism, Parliamentarism, and Theories of Democratic Peace," *Security Studies*, 9, 4 (Summer 2000), pp. 91-126.

¹⁶ J. N. Dixit, "I.P.K.F. in Sri Lanka," *USI Journal*, CXIX, 49 (July 1989), pp. 249-50.

¹⁷ Asoka Bandarage, *The Separatist Conflict in Sri Lanka: Terrorism, Ethnicity, Political Economy* (New York and Bloomington, IN: iUniverse, 2009), pp. 162-175.

¹⁸ Prem Shankar Jha, "Peril from Sri Lanka," *Outlook*, May 15, 2000
<<http://www.outlookindia.com/article.aspx?209387>> (accessed December 5, 2009).

¹⁹ Election Commission of India, *Statistical Report on General Elections 1999 to the 13th Lok Sabha*
<http://eci.nic.in/eci_main/StatisticalReports/LS_1999/Vol_I_LS_99.pdf> (accessed February 7, 2010).

coalition government, but this was brought down in 1999 by the AIADMK, which walked out of the coalition. The AIADMK's exit was occasioned not by any policy issue, but by New Delhi's refusal to dismiss the AIADMK's rival in Chennai (the capital of Tamil Nadu), the DMK, which held power in the state.²⁰ The BJP's policies in its third coalition government (1999) were thus conditioned by bitter experience and Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee was careful not to anger regional parties. Following the AIADMK's exit, the DMK joined the NDA (it switched to the UPA in 2004) in a classic case of political opportunism. But the DMK's tally of seats was relatively small – 12 of the 39 seats from Tamil Nadu.

Tamil Nadu itself had a history of see saw power shifts between the two regional parties. The distribution of seats between the DMK and the AIADMK in the state assembly swung sharply: 24:133 in 1984, 151:27 in 1989, 2:164 in 1991 and 173:4 in 1996.²¹ In the meantime, small parties such as the Pattali Makkal Katchi (PMK) and the Marumalarchi Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (MDMK) were trying to carve out political space for themselves by, among other things, vociferous appeals to Tamil nationalist sentiment. The DMK, trying to retain its position in Chennai, was caught between the BJP's pro-Colombo leanings and the shrill pro-LTTE rhetoric of the small regional parties.²² DMK chief M. Karunanidhi expressed conflicting sentiments in quick succession, at times pro-LTTE and at times "sympathetic" to the Government of India's position.²³ In effect, the PMK and the MDMK, which held 5 and 4 seats respectively in Parliament and which were even weaker at the state level with 4 and 0 seats respectively, were able to sharply circumscribe the scope of action for Vajpayee's government. The symbolic power of Tamil nationalism, combined with the unpredictability of coalition politics in Chennai and New Delhi, prevented the Indian government from taking more decisive action, which would have turned the military tide and strengthened Indian influence with Colombo.

The Government of India was similarly constrained in the subsequent period as Colombo sought to augment its military sinews and make a concerted effort to win the war, which it did in 2009. In 2004, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh of the Congress headed a multi-party UPA coalition with the DMK as a partner. Once again, the main party was weak: the Congress had only 145 seats in a house of 543. The DMK had 16, while two other allies were pro-LTTE parties: the PMK with 6 seats and the MDMK with 4. In the Tamil Nadu assembly, the DMK was in power with 173 seats, the PMK had 20 seats, and the MDMK none from the 2001 state elections. Another small party, the Viduthalai Chiruthaigal Katchi (VCK) that was allied with the DMK

²⁰ On the fractious coalition politics of the day, see Venkitesh Ramakrishnan, "Pulls and Pressures," *Frontline*, June 20-July 3, 1998 <<http://www.flonnet.com/fl1513/15130340.htm>> (accessed December 5, 2009).

²¹ Jean-Luc Racine, "Caste and Beyond in Tamil Nadu Politics," in Christophe Jaffrelot and Sanjay Kumar, eds. *Rise of the Plebeians? The Changing Face of Indian Legislative Assemblies* (New Delhi: Routledge, 2009), table 16.2, p. 454.

²² S. Viswanathan, "The Doublespeak in Tamil Nadu," *Frontline*, June 24-July 7, 2000 <<http://www.flonnet.com/fl1713/17130330.htm>> (accessed December 5, 2009).

²³ A.A. Panneerselvan, "Metamorphosis of Belief," *Outlook*, May 29, 2000 <http://www.outlookindia.com/article.aspx?209464>

favoured an independent Tamil Eelam (nation). Once again, New Delhi's options were circumscribed by its precarious alliance and the presence in it of parties that were themselves caught up in the uncertainties of state politics in Tamil Nadu. The MDMK walked out of the DMK coalition and joined hands with the AIADMK for the next round of state elections in 2006. The PMK, which had quit the DMK fold for the AIADMK's in 2001 only to return six months later, remained unreliable. Both began stepping up their criticism of national policy on Sri Lanka and calling for intervention on behalf of the Tamils there.

For Indian policymakers, the systemic incentives to intervene were strong. China's role in Sri Lanka was growing. In October 2007, Colombo signed a deal with Exim Bank of China to fund 85% of the cost of constructing of Hambantota harbour to the tune of US\$ 307 million.²⁴ A March 2008 press report said that Chinese aid to Sri Lanka, encompassing port, highway and electric power development, had jumped to US\$1 billion.²⁵ Chinese military aid was also substantial, encompassing Jian-7 jet fighters, armoured personnel carriers and a host of other weapons.²⁶ Pakistan, too, was providing considerable military aid and in August 2008 proposed a defence pact with Sri Lanka.²⁷ India did provide military aid – rather more than is known, it turns out – but was still cautious in doing so, which permitted its regional rivals to enhance their profiles in Sri Lanka.²⁸

The indecisiveness of the Singh government affected other policies as well, notably on economic liberalization.²⁹ In this particular instance, the tune was clearly called by the political swings in Tamil Nadu. The DMK was in power, but with a coalition, its own seats numbering 96, well below the level required for a majority on its own in the 239-seat house. In March 2007, the MDMK abandoned the DMK and in March 2009, the PMK followed suit. Both joined hands with the AIADMK, which – in the run-up to the next round of general elections in 2009 – became aggressively Tamil-nationalist as well. The DMK could do no less. When LTTE leader S.P. Tamilselvan was killed in November 2007, the DMK publicly mourned his death and

²⁴ “Sri Lanka and China Signs [sic] Agreement on Hambantota Port Development,” *ColomboPage*, October 30, 2007 <http://www.colombopage.com/archive_07/October30143529CH.html>.

²⁵ “China Woos Lanka with \$1b in Aid,” *Times of India*, March 11, 2008 <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/China_woos_Lanka_with_1b_in_aid/articleshow/2853174.cms>.

²⁶ Rajat Pandit, “India to Expand Military Ties with Sri Lanka,” *Times of India*, June 23, 2008 <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/India_to_expand_military_ties_with_Lanka/articleshow/3154497.cms>.

²⁷ Pranab Dhal Samanta, “Surge in Pak Arms Sale to Sri Lanka Worries India,” *Indian Express*, May 11, 2008 <<http://www.indianexpress.com/iep/sunday/story/307986.html>>; “Pakistan Proposes Defence Deal with Sri Lanka,” *Daily Times*, August 2, 2008 <http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2008\08\02\story_2-8-2008_pg1_6>.

²⁸ India's quiet aid included at least two patrol vessels for the Sri Lankan Navy, M-17 helicopters and radar systems. See Sandeep Unnithan, “Sri Lanka: A Call to Arms,” *India Today*, September 28, 2007 <<http://indiatoday.intoday.in/site/Story/1439/International/Sri+Lanka:+A+call+for+arms.html>> (accessed December 5, 2009); “India behind SL's Victory over LTTE,” *India Today*, August 23, 2009 <<http://indiatoday.intoday.in/site/Story/58102/LATEST%20HEADLINES/India+behind+Lanka>> (accessed December 5, 2009). For detailed account of India's covert aid to Sri Lanka, see Nitin A. Gokhale, *Sri Lanka: From War to Peace* (New Delhi: Har-Anand, 2009).

²⁹ Krishna K. Tummala, “Coalition Politics in India, 2004-2009,” *Asian Journal of Political Science*, 17, 3 (December 2009), pp. 323-48.

Karunanidhi himself penned a eulogy for him.³⁰ In October 2008, Karunanidhi orchestrated a threat of mass resignation by his party's Members of Parliament if the government did not, among other things, compel Sri Lanka to order a ceasefire.³¹ Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee dashed to Chennai to persuade Karunanidhi to change his mind, which he duly did, while Finance Minister P. Chidambaram (who hails from Tamil Nadu) kept up the fiction that India was not providing Sri Lanka with military aid.³² In January 2009, Karunanidhi threatened to resign and had to be "persuaded" to relent. In May 2009, as the LTTE seemed on the verge of defeat, both AIADMK leader Jayalalitha and Karunanidhi called for the establishment of Tamil Eelam.³³ Both also went on fast during the campaign for the 2009 elections, making the Sri Lanka issue central to their poll planks.³⁴ All this made for a policy of "hyperpragmatism" that was forced rather than planned.³⁵ With the government constantly worrying about its survival the domestic balance of power trumped external balance-of-power policy.

The brief review above makes it plain that domestic politics set the agenda and made it politically impossible for New Delhi to carry out a policy congruent with systemic incentives. India's position improved somewhat as it backed Colombo when the latter was faced with strong international criticism over the plight of civilians caught in the turbulent denouement. But it had little or no control over events and no certainty over the future vis-à-vis Chinese and Pakistani penetration of what had been its area of influence. I now turn to the India-US relationship and a similar but far from identical pattern of policy drift.

India and the United States: A Deal Nearly Undone

In July 2005, India and the United States came to an initial agreement that envisaged a special arrangement under which India would be made an exception to restrictions on civilian nuclear trade required by US law. Simultaneously, the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) would agree on all its members permitting a similar change if they wished to. Both governments struggled to plough through strong opposition at home. After amendments were made to the terms of the agreement to satisfy critics, the Bush Administration was able to obtain Congressional approval

³⁰ Gopu Mohan, "Lanka Battle Gives New Ammo to Parties in TN," *Indian Express*, October 17, 2008
<<http://www.indianexpress.com/news/lanka-battle-gives-new-ammo-to-parties-in-tn/374395/>>

³¹ "Tamil Cause: Ally DMK Steps on Gas, 14 MPs 'Put In' Papers," *Indian Express*, October 18, 2008
<<http://www.indianexpress.com/news/tamil-cause-ally-dmk-steps-on-gas-14-mps-put-in-papers/374802/>>.

³² M.R. Venkatesh, "Karuna Calls Off DMK Threat to Pullout [sic] after Pranab Dashes to TN," *Hindustan Times*, October 26, 2008

<<http://www.hindustantimes.com/StoryPage/StoryPage.aspx?sectionName=HomePage&id=44a4753b-ea07-4de9-a612-9c17c9cc47fe&&Headline=Karunanidhi+calls+off+DMK+threat+to+pullout>>; "Centre Not Extending Military Help to Sri Lanka: FM," *Hindu*, October 26, 2008

<<http://www.hindu.com/thehindu/holnus/001200810262150.htm>>.

³³ "Now, Karunanidhi joins 'Eelam' Bandwagon," *MSN India*, May 7, 2009

<http://news.in.msn.com/national/indiaelections2009/article.aspx?cp-documentid=3006943>

³⁴ Sunil Raman, "'Sri Lanka Factor' in Tamil Nadu Poll," *BBC News*, May 11, 2009

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/south_asia/8043588.stm> (accessed May13, 2009).

³⁵ P. Sahadevan, "India and the Peace Process in Sri Lanka," in V.R. Raghavan, ed. *Peace Process in Sri Lanka: Challenges and Opportunities* (Chennai: EastWest Books, 2007), p. 35.

without too much difficulty. In contrast, though Indian law – unlike US law – does not require legislative ratification for an international treaty, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh managed by a bare whisker to survive a trial of strength in Parliament that could not only have unravelled the deal, but brought down the government itself. Within India, the process went through two stages. In the first, there was protracted domestic bargaining between the government on one side and opposition parties as well as the nuclear-scientific bureaucracy on the other. The second stage was a straight political contest in which the relatively small Left Front coalition, led by the Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPM), threatened to bring down the Singh government, which depended on it to muster a majority in Parliament.

Dinshaw Mistry's analysis of the first stage effectively uses a two-level game analysis to show how the process was fraught with difficulty.³⁶ The nub of the agreement was a plan to separate India's civilian and military nuclear facilities and establish international safeguards on the former, which could then receive nuclear materials to expand India's electricity supply. This drew tremendous opposition from the nonproliferation lobby in the United States. As a result, the Henry J Hyde Act passed by Congress in 2006 mandated termination of the agreement in case India carried out tests and called for Indian support on American nonproliferation objectives vis-à-vis Iran. This in turn was unacceptable to Indian critics, who were also concerned about assured supply of nuclear fuel and the right to reprocess spent fuel. In short, the "win-sets" of the two countries – i.e. the set of agreed provisions that each required for domestic approval – did not match. This, Mistry concluded in his early assessment, which was made some two years prior to the conclusion of the main negotiating process, could be problematic. It was.

In the first stage, opposition in India came from three sides. On the political right, the BJP complained that the agreement, by in effect forbidding India from testing, curtailed India's strategic autonomy and weakened its deterrent.³⁷ The Left Front, ideologically opposed to a close India-US relationship, complained that India was becoming a "subordinate" ally of the US.³⁸ It was particularly incensed by India's decision to vote with the US against Iran in the International

³⁶ Dinshaw Mistry, "Diplomacy, Domestic Politics, and the U.S.-India Nuclear Agreement," *Asian Survey*, 46, 5 (September/October 2006), pp. 675-98. The paper draws its theoretical perspective from Robert D. Putnam, "Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games," *International Organization*, 42, 3 (Summer 1988), pp. 429-60.

³⁷ "Pokhran's PM Slams Deal: Not On," *Indian Express*, July 21, 2005 <http://www.indianexpress.com/full_story.php?content_id=74780>; Murli Manohar Joshi, "The U.S.-India Agreement: Victory for Whom?" *Hindu*, October 22, 2005 <<http://www.thehindu.com/2005/10/22/stories/2005102202701000.htm>>; "Reject U.S. Act on Nuclear Deal: BJP," *Hindu*, December 11, 2006 <<http://www.hindu.com/2006/12/11/stories/2006121105280100.htm>>.

³⁸ "India Made A Junior Partner of the U.S.," *Hindu*, August 4, 2005 <<http://www.thehindu.com/2005/08/04/stories/2005080414611200.htm>>; "Karat Hits Out at Foreign Policy," *Hindu*, December 2, 2005 <<http://www.thehindu.com/2005/12/02/stories/2005120207911200.htm>>; Prakash Karat, "Why the CPI (M) and the Left Oppose the Nuclear Deal," *Hindu*, August 20, 2007 <<http://www.thehindu.com/2007/08/20/stories/2007082058071400.htm>>.

Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in September 2005 and February 2006.³⁹ The nuclear scientists, while regularly evoking both of these perspectives, were intent on defending their turf, protesting against the loss of autonomy.⁴⁰ The link between the scientists and the left parties was a leading newspaper, the *Hindu*, widely known to be sympathetic to the CPM. The *Hindu* led the charge, airing the objections of both the CPM and the nuclear scientists and adding its editorial weight to the case against the agreement.⁴¹

As a result of the pressures imposed by domestic actors in both countries, the negotiations went through a long and tortuous process. Eventually, the so-called “123 Agreement,” the actual India-US agreement signed in August 2007, was carefully worded to give something to the critics on both sides. India made no commitment on testing. The agreement provided for a “right of return” of all materials in the event either party decided to terminate the agreement. But it also required that a year’s notice be given and consultations held. On assurance of fuel supply, it incorporated a political rather than a legally binding legal commitment by the US to “support” India in the establishment of a “strategic fuel reserve.” And it made a commitment in principle to permit India to reprocess spent fuel of US origin.⁴² Gradually, the scientists’ opposition receded. Indeed, several scientists from within the nuclear establishment spoke out in favour of the agreement.⁴³ Thereafter, the battle became a purely political one.

The Left Front’s resolve stiffened. Shortly after the signing of the 123 agreement, the CPI hinted that the Front was ready to bring down the government.⁴⁴ This was feasible because the support of the Left Front, with 59 members, was critical to the survival of the UPA alliance, which did not have a majority in the Lok Sabha (the lower house). The following month, the threat was made explicit and in October, the CPM’s Central Committee directed its Politburo to take “whatever measures necessary” to stop the agreement from being operationalized.⁴⁵ In the

39 Amit Baruah, “Monkey Business,” *Hindustan Times*, December 5, 2007

<http://www.hindustantimes.com/StoryPage/FullcoverageStoryPage.aspx?id=c056d388-8606-45af-995a-a36b8840c368Nucleardealmbroglio_Special&&Headline=Monkey+business

40 “Kakodkar Surprised,” *Hindu*, November 25, 2006

<<http://www.thehindu.com/2006/11/25/stories/2006112502021300.htm>>; “Nuke Czars Harp on Unequal Deal,” *Times of India*, December 18, 2006

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/NEWS/India/Nuke_czars_harp_on_unequal_deal/articleshow/828250.cms>.

41 Siddharth Varadarajan, “Nuclear Bargain May Prove Costly in Long Run,” *Hindu*, July 20, 2005

<<http://www.thehindu.com/2005/07/20/stories/2005072007791500.htm>>; Siddharth Varadarajan, “Safeguards for Breeder Reactor A Key Obstacle,” *Hindu*, January 21, 2006

<<http://www.thehindu.com/2006/01/21/stories/2006012120610100.htm>>.

42 Maria Sultan and Mian Behzad Adil, *Henry Hyde Act and the 123 Agreement: An Analysis*, SASSI Policy Brief, 11, South Asian Strategic Stability Institute, London, September 2008.

43 Ashish Sinha, “Nuclear Scientists Defend Deal, Stand by PM,” *Times of India*, August 29, 2007

http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/N-scientists_defend_deal_stand_by_PM/articleshow/2318091.cms

44 “Left Will Not Save Government at the Cost of India’s Freedom,” *Hindu*, August 20, 2009

<<http://www.thehindu.com/2007/08/20/stories/2007082059281600.htm>>.

45 “Brinda Karat Takes on UPA over Indo-US Nuclear deal,” *Times of India*, September 8, 2009

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/India/Brinda_Karat_takes_on_UPA_over_Indo-US_nuke_deal/articleshow/2350628.cms>; Tanmay Chatterjee, “Politburo Told to Go All Out to Stop N-deal,”

Hindustan Times, October 2, 2007 <<http://www.hindustantimes.com/storypage/storypage.aspx?id=c5ba6604-e751->

meantime, other opposition parties had begun to speak up. The AIADMK, the Shiv Sena (both allied to the BJP) and the newly emerging “Third Front,” shortly renamed the United National Progressive Alliance (UNPA), sought to break the deal. The UNPA was a new player – a conglomeration of several small parties trying to carve out political space between the Congress/UPA and the BJP/NDA groupings. The Third Front began a dalliance with the Left Front in the hope of overthrowing the government.⁴⁶ The writing on the wall was troubling, and several allies of the Congress, not wanting another election, had already begun to pressure it to step back.⁴⁷ The fragmented character of the system seemed about to kill both the agreement and the ruling government. One could be forgiven for concluding that the opposition was more interested in the latter.

However, at the last moment, a key member of the UNPA, the Samajwadi Party (SP) switched sides and cast its lot with the UPA. The SP’s calculus had nothing to do with the India-US agreement, but plenty to do with the politics of the state of Uttar Pradesh (UP). UP politics had for some years witnessed an all-out confrontation between the SP and the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), a relatively new major actor in the state. In 2002, the SP established a coalition government and in 2003, strengthened its seat position by enticing 33 BSP legislators over to its side. Nonetheless, the BSP romped home on its own in the 2007 elections. The crisis over the nuclear deal gave the SP and the Congress, which had no love lost between them, an opportunity to strike a deal.⁴⁸ As Amar Singh, an SP leader put it frankly, referring to the BSP’s leader, “We have to deal with a common enemy – Mayawati,” and she, along with the BJP, was an enemy “more lethal than Bush.”⁴⁹ The Left Front quickly forged an alliance with the BSP, but it was not clear whether their numbers were enough. In the end, the confidence vote in Parliament was won by the UPA government on July 22, 2008 with 275 votes in its favour and 256 against. But even this involved a number of “defections” from the BJP (5) and other parties (5), plus some abstentions. One Congress member voted against his party.⁵⁰

The vote could easily have gone the other way. The CPM’s ideological drive, coupled with the interests of its allies, was not enough to overcome the opportunistic Congress-SP alliance. But

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&Headline=Politburo+told+to+go+all+out+to+stop+N-deal>.

⁴⁶ Srinand Jha and Saroj Nagi, “Third Front Cosies up to Left on Deal,” *Hindustan Times*, June 24, 2008
<http://www.hindustantimes.com/StoryPage/FullcoverageStoryPage.aspx?id=278bce99-851f-4227-b384-298c86617072Nucleardealimbroglio_Special&&Headline=Third+front+cosies+up+to+Left+on+deal>.

⁴⁷ “PM Ready for N-gamble, But Allies Balk at Polls,” *Times of India*, June 20, 2008
<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/India/Dont_rush_with_N-deal_UPA_allies/articleshow/3146630.cms>.

⁴⁸ Prabhu Chawla, “The Day of the Dealmaker,” *India Today*, July 17, 2008
<<http://indiatoday.intoday.in/site/Story/11527/Cover%20Story/The+day+of+the+dealmaker.html>> (accessed February 9, 2010).

⁴⁹ Prabhu Chawla, “Mayawati, Modi, Advani More Lethal than Bush,” *India Today*, July 17, 2008
<<http://indiatoday.intoday.in/site/Story/11529/Interview/'Mayawati,+Modi,+Advani+more+lethal+than+Bush'.html>> (accessed February 9, 2010).

⁵⁰ Javed M. Ansari, “How U-turns and No-shows Helped,” *Daily News and Analysis*, July 23, 2008
<<http://www.dnaindia.com/report.asp?newsid=1179258>>.

the twists in the tale, and the fact that it ended the way it did because one side was better at engineering defections than the other, tell us something about the relative importance of national security strategy and national and state politics. The final phase of politicking had little to do with the size of the win-set. It was more a zero sum game of electoral chicken in which the focus had shifted largely to the political arithmetic of the next round of elections. Almost a year had passed since the 123 agreement had been signed – a year of drift wrought by the weakness of a fragmented political system. “Hyperpragmatism” of an altogether different kind had won the day. No one was surprised when, in the prelude to the next elections in 2009, the BJP, which had railed against India’s subordination under the agreement, promised to abide by it in the event it was elected to power.⁵¹

Conclusion

The neoclassical realist approach has played a valuable role in linking the state and systemic levels of analysis. Systemic conditions provide incentives for states to maximize their security. Whether they actually do so or not depends on the nature of politics at the state level since policymakers need to extract sufficient political and economic resources to carry out policies congruent with those incentives. This paper has shown how the domestic distribution of power affects the making of Indian foreign policy. More precisely, it shows how the decentralization of political power in India’s parliamentary system has weakened the centre and prevented decisive policy action appropriate to changing systemic conditions. The political dynamics in the two cases studied are not the same. In the India-Sri Lanka case, the story is one of small parties exploiting the symbolic appeal of Tamil nationalism to act as a brake on New Delhi’s efforts to determine the end of the civil war in Sri Lanka. The India-US case involves two tales: first, the coalescence of the main opposition parties’ political interests with the organizational interests of the nuclear-scientific bureaucracy; and second, a complex game of electoral politics played by the big as well as the small parties in which the original issue – the acceptability of the nuclear agreement – becomes secondary.

Whether Indian policy will become less dilatory and unpredictable over time will depend either on the consolidation of power by one or more major players, which will make politics more stable, or on the game theoretic lesson that players learn the value of cooperation and stability in a relationship when games are iterated. At present, it is too early to hazard a prediction either way. But what is certainly clear is that the key to effective foreign policy making lies within the realm of national and local politics rather than outside it.

⁵¹ Shekhar Iyer, “If Voted to Power, BJP Will Honour Nuke Deal with US: Advani,” *Hindustan Times*, April 21, 2009 <http://www.hindustantimes.com/election09/storypage.aspx?id=ea157395-057a-4631-b459-2f6fc8e5dea8&category=Chunk-HT-UI-Elections-SectionPage-TopStories>

Originally Answered: How domestic political environment influences the foreign policy of a state? Foreign policy is an endless dialogue between the powers of continuity and the powers of change. It begins at frontiers. The domestic constraints and challenges add much more complexity and unpredictability to the foreign policy process. Problems or constraints and challenges come out when a single i. Continue Reading. Indian political parties have low level of internal party democracy and therefore, in Indian elections, both at the state or national level, party candidates are typically selected by the party elites, more commonly called the party high command. The party elites use a number of criteria for selecting candidates. These include the ability of the candidates to finance their own election, their educational attainment, and the level of organization the candidates have in their respective constituencies.[11] Quite often the last criterion is associated with candidate criminality.[12]. Local govern National Security is an appropriate and aggressive blend of political resilience and maturity, human resources, economic structure and. capacity; technological competence, industrial base and availability of natural resources and finally the military might ! A definition propagated by the National Defence College, New Delhi, India. Foreign Policies are designed with the aim of achieving complex domestic and international agendas. It usually involves an elaborate series of steps, in which domestic politics plays an important role. Additionally, the head of the government in most cases is not an individual actor. Foreign Policy decisions are usually collective and/or influenced by others in the political system.