

DETERMINANTS OF THE US NUCLEAR IMPERIALISM: A THEORETICAL ANALYSIS

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Abstract

The imperial nature of the US has always been dominant in all spheres of influence. To continue with this trend, it has adopted a policy similar to imperialism in the nuclear domain. The term 'Nuclear Imperialism' is a new addition in the security discourse that is defined as the domination and control extended and imposed by the US over the global nuclear regime. States are divided into the nuclear core, periphery, and semi-periphery. The US is placed in the nuclear core, while India and Israel are the nuclear semi-peripheries having close ties with the nuclear core. The nuclear core is continuously exploiting the nuclear periphery states, such as Pakistan and Iran by imposing its decision to abandon their nuclear programs and disarm unilaterally. The strategies opted for maintaining nuclear imperialism are the non-proliferation regimes, extended nuclear deterrence, and threat reduction program to keep its inspections on other states that possess nuclear weapons. This tendency of US nuclear imperialism has been explained by employing the Structural Theory of Imperialism by Johan Galtung.

Keywords: Imperialism, Nuclear Core, Nuclear Periphery, Nuclear Semi-Periphery, Nonproliferation.

Introduction

Imperialism is a policy of extending state influence beyond its territorial boundaries through economic, military, and other means. The US as a sole superpower has maintained its influence in all spheres. Keeping in view the imperial trends, the US has created a nuclear class distinction in which it is the sole proprietor of nuclear weapons and nuclear technology. This practice has led to the evolution of a new term "Nuclear Imperialism" in the field of International Relations. Nuclear Imperialism is, therefore, defined as domination, possession, and control on the use of nuclear weapons and civil nuclear technology.

The class division between the North and the South is created by the core states for their economic interests. This class distinction is not only limited to economic disparity but in the nuclear domain, it is created in the shape of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the non-proliferation regimes. The US, in the nuclear world order, acts as the "Nuclear Core or Nuclear Centre"¹ which controls the means² to use nuclear weapons and threat for its desired objectives. It also controls the civil nuclear business

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and keeps the nuclear periphery states away from developing nuclear technology and weapons.

This paper is a theoretical analysis of the term 'US Nuclear Imperialism'. Since this term is new to the field of International Relations, hence, imperialism has been studied by incorporating the philosophies of Karl Marx, Vladimir I. Lenin, Hobson, and Johan Galtung. The Structural Theory of Imperialism by Galtung has been employed specifically on the term 'Nuclear Imperialism' to explain the US imperialistic policies in the nuclear domain. The US nuclear policy in the global nuclear world order is claimed to be imperialistic and hegemonic in nature. The nonproliferation regimes, Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), threat reduction laws, such as the Nunn-Lugar Act, and the International Convention on Suppression of Act of Nuclear Terrorism are used by the US as a tool for its imperial designs. Giving a critical view on the US extended deterrence and disarmament policy, it has discussed the US policies of division towards states including Pakistan, India, Israel, and Iran for its regional and global interests and to secure its nuclear imperialism.

Theoretical Framework

Johan Galtung defines imperialism "as a way in which the Centre nation exercises its power over the Periphery to bring about disharmony of interests between them." In other words, Imperialism is defined as a relation between the Centre and the Periphery nations. It means that (a) harmony of interest is there between the center of the Centre and the Periphery's center, (b) disharmony of interest is there within the Periphery nations than within the Centre nations, (c) there is disharmony of interest between the Centre's periphery and the Periphery's periphery.³

Hobson explains imperialism by criticizing the free trade policy of the English people. He is of the view that Free Trade increases national wealth but eventually, it harms the working class.⁴ Michael Doyle has explicated imperialism as effective control of a subordinated society by an imperial society in either a formal or informal way.⁵ The definition by Cooper is more precise and covers the Roman and Chinese imperialism. He defines that the "differences between the dominated and the dominant are institutionalized and reproduced by such kind of political unit which is expansionist and large and it produces inequality and differentiation among the people it incorporates."⁶ The conception of imperialism by Classical Marxists is more succinctly covered by Lenin by unfolding imperialism as "it is neither a trans-historical political form nor a policy of the state but it is a special stage in the development of capitalism."⁷

The concept of Neo-imperialism was developed by the US, USSR and Japan during the Cold War period based on their ideologies, culture, and power influence. President Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana has defined Neo-colonialism as the highest stage of imperialism. He explained that it is the neo-colonial era and the last stage of imperialism.⁸ The core argument for neo-colonialism is that a state which is independent and free to exercise its sovereignty inside but in practice, its political parties and economy are controlled from outside. Thus, neo-colonialism is more

dangerous because an imperial power rarely garrisons its troops on the territory of the periphery state.

The economic and monetary means have been utilized by the neo-colonialists to exercise their rule. International organizations, such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank have also contributed to support the imperial powers. IMF has generated a class division in the world economies, such as the highly industrialized states like the US, the UK, Canada, and Japan. The second class is known as the other developed areas, such as Greece, Finland, Australia, New Zealand, and Ireland. IMF has formed a third category, less developed, comprising the Middle East, Latin America, non-communist Asia, and Africa.

In the nuclear context, to keep the periphery states restraint from developing nuclear technology and weapons, international treaties, such as NPT, Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (still not entered into force), Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (still a resolution) and other non-proliferation and nuclear threat reduction pacts are being used as tools by the US. The institutions like NSG are also formed to create a class division between the highly industrialized core and the peripheries to devise control on the nuclear material export and transportation. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), which serves as the nuclear watchdog, is there to deter the spread of nuclear weapons by the early detection of the misuse of nuclear material or technology.⁹

The US Nuclear Imperialism is designed on the concept of a spillover effect. According to this concept, the US maintains its nuclear monopoly at the domestic level which has a spillover effect on the regional and systemic levels to counterbalance its adversaries. US nuclear complexes are civil nuclear companies and military-industrial complexes contribute also in the US defence and political realm. To attain its monopoly at the regional and global levels, the US concludes civil nuclear and defence agreements with the states, such as India and Saudi Arabia to counterbalance its adversaries, such as Russia and China (in South Asia and the Middle East). The US offered F-16 fighter jets to Turkey to counterbalance it with the Russian S-400 missile technology which Turkey purchased in 2019.¹⁰ Similarly, the US \$110 billion weapons sale to Saudi Arabia is to counterbalance its regional rivalry with Iran.¹¹ The above-mentioned tools are utilized to derive the criteria, mechanism, and phases of the US Nuclear Imperialism. The structure of nuclear imperialism has been explained below in this regard.

Nuclear Imperialism and the US

In the nuclear world order, there exists a Centre and Periphery; while discussing at the structural domain, the Centre continuously keeps on exploiting the Periphery by using its tactics of nuclear threat and terrorism. The Centre exercises its power on the Peripheries by using the non-proliferation regimes and disarmament policy. The Peripheries are also exploited for their nuclear raw material under the jargon of civil nuclear cooperation by the Core. The US-Kazakhstan civil nuclear deal, under

which the US is getting nuclear material from Kazakhstan for its energy needs, is an example of US Imperialism commemorating with the Nunn-Lugar Act.¹²

Nuclear Imperialism, in its other form, is that the decisions are imposed on Peripheries to join the nuclear non-proliferation regimes and to disarm their nuclear weapons. One of the examples is the South African state which was pressurized by the US administration to roll back its nuclear program under the Pelindaba Treaty,¹³ also known as the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty. It was signed by 47 out of 53 countries of the Continent. It “prohibits states from conducting research on, developing, manufacturing, stockpiling, acquiring, possessing, or having control over any kind of nuclear explosive device by any means and anywhere.”¹⁴ This type of imperialism is the result of direct relationship between the Centre and the Periphery through international treaties and organizations. Another type of imperialism explored by Johan Galtung in his Structural Theory of Imperialism as defined above, has been employed on US Nuclear Imperialism. To employ Galtung’s theory on US Nuclear Imperialism, it is essential to explain the Centre’s center and the Periphery’s center.

- The US nuclear weapon complexes, civil nuclear industries and decision-makers act as the center of the Centre in US nuclear policy structure. The nuclear companies of the Periphery or semi-Periphery states, such as the Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL) and the Westinghouse Electric Company, based in the US, work in collaboration having the harmony of interest between them. India and the US, under the 2005-Civil Nuclear deal, negotiated to build six nuclear power plants by a joint collaboration of these two companies in Gujrat, India.¹⁵ Having the harmony of interest between these two companies, the US for civil nuclear cooperation is more inclined towards India as compared to its major non-NATO ally, Pakistan, during the War on Terror.
- The nuclear complexes and companies raise funds for the election campaigns of US politicians. There is less disharmony of interest in the Centre as compared to the Periphery. A US based company, Westinghouse lobbied for Henry J. Hyde, a Republican candidate representing the 6th District of Illinois who drafted the treaty-text, with \$180,000 to materialize the Indo-US deal.¹⁶ This lobbying effect creates a less disharmony of interest within the Centre as the center in the Centre remains aligned with each other through the lobbying effect.
- The disharmony of interest between the Centre’s peripheries and the center of Periphery creates a situation that does not support US Imperialism in the nuclear sphere. The US public wants to reduce the spending on the defence budget¹⁷ and it acts as a disharmony of interest between the decision-makers and general public opinion.

This identifies that the Periphery’s center is tied to the Centre’s center with the best possible tie of harmony of interest. The US Nuclear Imperialism is based on these given three-criteria which revolve around the harmony and disharmony of interest between the Centre and the Periphery.

Mechanisms of US Nuclear Imperialism

The US Nuclear Imperialism has four mechanisms, which are explained below:

The Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)

NPT has three key objectives: (a) to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and related technology, (b) peaceful use of nuclear energy, and (c) nuclear disarmament.¹⁸ The nuclear world order has created the Core and the Periphery within the nuclear system. This division has created by the US over a while. The US nuclear monopoly in the early years after WWII was to restrain other states from developing nuclear weapons. However, NPT has created a nuclear class division of 'haves' and 'haves not' in the global nuclear regime.¹⁹

The states, as per Article 9 Clause 3 of the treaty, having developed their nuclear weapons before January 1, 1967, are the legitimate and *dejure* nuclear-weapon states, while the other states are considered as *defacto* nuclear-weapon states. Article 1 of NPT restrains the *dejure* nuclear-weapon state to proliferate nuclear technology with the *defacto* nuclear-weapon state.²⁰ According to NPT, the nuclear haves particularly the P5 States (US, UK, USSR, France and China) fall in the domain of nuclear Core and rest of the states, who are not signatory to NPT (Pakistan, India, Israel and South Sudan), are considered as nuclear Peripheries.²¹ The nuclear Core has a special relation with respect to the nuclear Peripheries to counterbalance each other in the global nuclear regime.

Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT)

The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), the Threshold Test Ban Treaty (TTBT), and the Partial Test Ban Treaty (PTBT) were not sufficient to limit the great powers' thirst and desire for conducting nuclear tests. The Conference of Disarmament participants were of the view that nuclear weapons tests should be banned in the atmosphere, underground, under the sea and on the ground.²² However, a controversy remained that CTBT should cover the hydro nuclear tests or not because a small amount of nuclear energy is released during the hydro nuclear tests. It was argued that such tests are essential to keep the reliability and safety of nuclear weapons and should not be kept under the treaty text of the CTBT.²³

The US, on August 11, 1995, accepted to accede to CTBT and also made a similar announcement setting the goal of achieving a true yield zero CTBT. The US Director of Arms Control and Disarmament Agency announced that the US would rule out all the hydro nuclear tests even those that release a few pounds of nuclear energy. Russia also supported the CTBT in 1995 after a meeting between President Clinton and President Yelstin. In the meeting, it was announced that Russia supports the banning of nuclear explosions whatever the yield is. The implementation of the treaty was quite a difficult task because the ratification of CTBT was refused by the US Senate. After the Versailles Treaty in 1919, this was the first rejection of the US for not ratifying a treaty.²⁴

The US was an opponent to CTBT because the US wanted to conduct a nuclear test for the safety and reliability of nuclear weapons and for the production of small low yield nuclear weapons which are used in the battleground than the strategic weapons. The US also ignored the Stockpile Stewardship Management Program (SSMP) of the US Department of Energy for the preservation of US nuclear deterrent without further nuclear testing. Also, the US Senate refused to verify CTBT on which President Clinton said that “in my judgment the treaty is verifiable.”²⁵

The US policymakers were of the view that states should sign CTBT and should stop testing new nuclear weapons.²⁶ However, since the US has huge military-industrial complexes in the conventional and nuclear domains, it cannot ratify the treaty. Also, under the Nunn-Lugar Act, the US dismantles Russian-based nuclear weapon program in the post-Soviet Union states for which underground testing is needed.²⁷ The US wants to increase and maintain its quality of nuclear weapons and for this reason, the US is reluctant to ratify CTBT.

Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG)

NSG was created soon after the nuclear tests conducted by India in 1974. The group’s main aim was to ensure the non-proliferation of nuclear technology and weapons under certain rules for nuclear and nuclear-related exports. The parties to NPT created Zangger Committee in 1971 to clarify the matters related to the export of nuclear material. In 1974, the committee established the definition and source of the fissionable material as per the IAEA statute and issued a list called the Trigger List of material and equipment for its production and processing use.²⁸

In 1976, the original members of NSG (US, USSR, UK, Germany, Japan, France and Canada) were agreed to the first version of guidelines which was accepted after being discussed with the other 8 members who joined NSG in 1976-1977.²⁹ These guidelines were to ensure the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and technology under the rules of NPT. Since NPT did not deal with the export controls of nuclear material, therefore, NSG was created. It has no legally binding credential and works as a cartel that aims to control the nuclear business within 48 nations. It also creates a class division between the nuclear Core and Periphery.

NSG was formed by the advanced nuclear-weapon states, rich in research and development. Since 2001, the NSG membership has been increased from 39 to 48.³⁰ During that period, NSG made efforts to incorporate more members to increase its outreach. In 2004, the US requested to rethink the issues and decisions concerning enrichment and export control policy. Furthermore, blocs have been created within the NSG that support their ally and membership for respective imperial designs and monopoly over the nuclear business and global nuclear regime.³¹

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

IAEA was created in the backdrop of President Eisenhower’s speech at the UN General Assembly on December 8, 1953. He called for the creation of an organization for

the peaceful use of nuclear energy to ensure that nuclear energy will not serve the military purpose. The proposal of Eisenhower led to the creation of IAEA which served for the civilian use of nuclear energy until 1978. The main purpose was to create an international agency and member states to make a joint contribution from their stockpiles of fissile material and natural uranium.³² The idea of Eisenhower did not work and it did not reduce the US and USSR nuclear stockpiles. After the demise of the USSR, the idea of stockpiling of nuclear material was revived and stock of nuclear weapons was stored under the IAEA scrutiny to ensure that it will not be utilized for military use.³³

IAEA was created to stop other states from developing nuclear weapons. However, in the post-Cold War era, IAEA was used as a tool to invade Iraq in 2003.³⁴ In the late 1980s and early 1990s, a report of IAEA concluded that Iraq was no longer near to become a nuclear-weapon state.³⁵ The threat perception from Iraq provided a legal ground for pre-emption; henceforth, the UN inspectors did not complete their report about the WMD and transfer of technology to Iraq or any other state. Even the traces of WMD were not located after invading Iraq. IAEA reports were not considered as a legal binding force by the Bush administration. The threat of nuclear weapons has provided grounds for a hegemon to invade Iraq for its imperial designs.³⁶

Nuclear Threat Reduction Laws

One of the important mechanisms in exercising US nuclear primacy is the Threat Reduction Laws. These laws are framed under the banner of the UN and are based on the threat of nuclear weapons. The key nuclear laws to be discussed here are the Nunn-Lugar Act, the Convention on Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (CPPNM), Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) and International Convention on Suppression of Act of Nuclear Terrorism.

The Nunn-Lugar Act is aimed to destroy chemical, nuclear and other weapons, transporting, storing, and safeguarding weapons to be destroyed and establishing verifiable safeguards.³⁷ Ashton Carter, a prominent figure in maintaining the Nunn-Lugar Act, wrote to the congressional authorization to spend \$400 million and asked that the administration should assist in destroying the nuclear weapons of former Soviet Union states.³⁸ The program ensued in benefit for the US because it resulted in non-proliferation between Kazakhstan and the US. Kazakhstan eliminated 1,410 nuclear warheads from its territory and also destroyed and removed missiles, nuclear bombers and Semipalatinsk nuclear test site.³⁹

The US being a hegemon has started the PSI as a global effort to combat the illicit trafficking of nuclear material and its delivery system and preventing it from the non-state actors. It is an important effort to break the black markets and illicit trafficking of WMDs. If a state endorses to the PSI, it must have to accept the rules designed by the US as:⁴⁰

- Commitment to halt the indirect transfer of materials related to nuclear weapon technology to and from state and non-state actors.
- Develop procedures to share information with other countries.

- Strengthen the domestic legal authorities to facilitate interdiction.
- Take specific actions in support of interdiction efforts.

The countries which have signed the PSI are abided by the rules stated by the US.⁴¹ However, the US in this sphere acts as a watchdog over the states which have signed the PSI and keeps the information about their state affairs and issues related to the nuclear sphere.⁴²

After 9/11, the concept of terrorism emerged as a new discourse to the study of International Relations. The concept was not confined to the state-to-state level; in the nuclear domain, it was highlighted the most by the Bush-II administration. The International Convention on Suppression of Act of Nuclear Terrorism (ICSANT) was adopted on April 13, 2005. As per this act, the use and threat to use nuclear material and radioactive substance, toxic and dangerous properties along with the illicit trafficking of nuclear material and supply by a state to the other states, were prohibited.⁴³

The ICSANT was made to counter the nuclear program of Pakistan. Pakistan has not signed the ICSANT on account of its reservation in respect of the provisions relating to extradition and prosecution, the inclusion of NPT obligations in the draft convention, the number of required ratifications for the entry into force, and the legal definition of terrorism and its relationship to the anti-colonial and liberation struggles.⁴⁴ The laws are formulated by using the international organizations to counter the nuclear programs of the periphery states that are allied with the US but not in terms of the nuclear domain.

Disarmament and Extended Deterrence

The US policy of disarmament is to eliminate nuclear weapons from the world. However, the US has pressurized states like South Africa to roll back its nuclear program for its imperial objectives and monopoly on nuclear weapons. The US provided South Africa with nuclear technology for peaceful purpose but after its decision to make an atomic bomb, the international community and organizational pressure was held on South Africa to disarm and roll back its nuclear program.⁴⁵ The US lobby has contributed 30 to 60 percent to the decision to dismantle nuclear weapons once the threat has received. In 1986, the US tried to persuade South Africa to join NPT in some confidential meetings with US Ambassador Richard T Kennedy and South African Foreign Minister Pik Botha that President Regan and later Bush administration will restore the scientific and nuclear cooperation with South Africa after acceding to NPT.⁴⁶

The extended deterrence policy, under which the US provides nuclear deterrence to its allies, particularly, the NATO states, Japan, and South Korea, was applied to Israel in 1973 during the Israel-Palestine war and to Iran in 1979. This policy in the Pacific is to ensure that the US troops and its tactical nuclear missiles are there for the protection of its allies. The concept of extended deterrence jells in with the definition of neo-colonialism under which the US has indirect control and its military presence in the Pacific and Europe through its nuclear weapons. The grand bargain of disarmament remains questionable when the US extended deterrence policy comes into

play.⁴⁷ The policy of extended deterrence also supports US military imperialism through the use of nuclear weapons.

Regional Dynamics of US Nuclear Imperialism

The US Nuclear Imperialism is not only confined to states only. It has implications on the regional level as well. Since the atom for peace speech by President Eisenhower more than 2000 bilateral civil nuclear cooperation agreements have been signed between the states.⁴⁸ In most cases, the US transfer of civilian technology has resulted in the proliferation of nuclear-weapon technology, particularly, in the case of India, South Africa and Israel. India built its first nuclear reactor with the help of British supplied designs in 1955.⁴⁹ In April 1956, Canada supplied India 40-megawatt research reactor (CIRUS). The US provided heavy water to moderate CIRUS reactor to be operational in 1960. The Indian nuclear program was facilitated by the US under the pretext of peaceful nuclear cooperation. However, the temptation of the US for Pakistan's nuclear program was somewhat different from the Indian nuclear program.⁵⁰

South Asia (1974-2006)

Pakistan and India in the South Asian region are the nuclear-weapon states. After the 1998-nuclear tests, the US did not accept India and Pakistan as nuclear-weapon states, resultantly, economic sanctions were imposed on both states. These sanctions were forced under the Glen Amendment (section 102 of the larger Arms Control Act of 1994). The legislation, authored by Senator John Glen, specified that "when a non-nuclear-weapon state tests a nuclear explosive device, the US administration must impose sanctions on the offending country."⁵¹ The nuclear tests by India and Pakistan allowed the US to impose these sanctions for the first time. President Clinton reported to Congress that the US will impose sanctions on Pakistan and India as imposed by the law.⁵²

These sanctions were made to send a strong message to the South Asian countries for damaging the US interests, to have maximum influence on both states and to target their governments. The demands or the goals behind the sanctions included the cessation of nuclear tests in the future and signing CTBT without any conditions. Both states would not deploy nuclear weapons and cut off the fissile material production. Cooperation in FMCT was also required along with maintaining and formalizing restraint on sharing the sensitive goods and technology.⁵³

The US suspended foreign aid under the Foreign Assistance Act and the foreign military services were also unsuccessful under the Arms Export Control Act. The Executive Order was used to prohibit the US banks for providing loans and credit to India and Pakistan.⁵⁴ However, Pakistan was affected the most not only because of the 1998-sanctions but also by the US sanctions under the Pressler Amendment since 1985. As per this law, US aid and government-to-government military assistance to Pakistan would be cut off unless it was clarified by US President that "Pakistan did not have any nuclear weapon and the proposed US assistance will help in reducing the risk that

Pakistan possesses a nuclear weapon.”⁵⁵ During the Bush administration in 1990, the sanctions were placed on Pakistan declining the Pressler Amendment certification.

The 2005-civil nuclear deal between the US and India brought a new dimension to South Asian nuclear politics. The US proposed sanctions on India and Pakistan but the US Nuclear Imperialism was more dominant in bringing restraint to Pakistan’s nuclear program as compared to India. As mentioned earlier, India is not a member of NPT, therefore, the US amended its Non-proliferation Act of 1978 for its own interest. In this regard, section 2 of the Non-proliferation Act was amended.⁵⁶

It is in the interest of the US to agree on nuclear cooperation, as said in section 123 of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, with a country that has never remained an NPT member with respect to civil nuclear technology. The requirements for such a non-NPT state are that it should never be involved in the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and nuclear technology. It must have a democratic system. India meets the criteria as identified in the paragraph of the Henry J, Hyde’s US and India Nuclear Cooperation Promotion Act 2006.⁵⁷ Pakistan, however, meets the criteria proposed in Paragraph 6 of the Act⁵⁸ but Pakistan is considered as a rogue nation by the US in the proliferation of nuclear technology.⁵⁹ Although India was the first to proliferate the civil nuclear technology for weapon production, that was not noticed by the US.⁶⁰ In the South Asian region, the US is trying to counterbalance China by supporting India and delineating Pakistan from the nuclear mainstream. In the case of NSG membership, the US is more supportive to India by providing a special waiver, while China supports Pakistan for its NSG bid.⁶¹ The US Nuclear Imperialism in the South Asian is for two reasons; first, to counter-balance China in the region; second, to intervene in the Indian Ocean and to control the nuclear business of this region while using India as a Periphery of the region.

Middle East

In the Middle East, the US Nuclear Imperialism is also active. The US counter-proliferation policy in the region is to invade in the shape of direct intervention in Iraq. The case of Israel is quite interesting, though Israel keeps its nuclear program clandestine. The US supports Israel’s nuclear program and is not in favour of making the Middle East a nuclear-weapon-free zone to protect its ally – Israel.⁶² However, Iran officially declared that its nuclear program is for peaceful purposes and it is not making any nuclear weapon.⁶³ Despite all this, the US imposed sanctions on Iran until the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) signed between Iran and the US, Russia, France, China and Germany, i.e., P5+1 states.⁶⁴

The US and France are fundamentally responsible for the development of Israel’s nuclear weapon program. Both remained the significant contractors in this regard. The US provided Israel with much of the heavy water and technical and financial assistance while France supported Israel with nuclear reactors.⁶⁵ The US was in favour of the division of Palestine and creation of Israel during the President Truman era. Israel was more inclined to build a nuclear weapon to secure their identity in the

Middle Eastern region. In the year 1960, it was made public that Israel's nuclear program was for peaceful purposes.⁶⁶ The inspectors from the US, Eugene Winger and I. I. Rabi, were invited by Israel. During the period 1962-69, these inspectors visited Dimona building but they were not allowed to go underground to investigate. However, according to their report, Dimona was being used only for peaceful purposes.⁶⁷ On the other hand, the report presented by the head of Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) Science and Technology Branch, Carl Duckett in 1968, confirmed that Israel had a nuclear program and it was producing nuclear weapons.

The US as a superpower was to check the proliferation issues in the international system after being convinced by the CIA report of Israel having a nuclear bomb. The Symington Amendment of 1976 was also not applied to Israel. Although the Symington Amendment curtailed the US from supporting a state economically and militarily that has developed nuclear weapons, on the contrary, in 1962, a \$25 million deal of military expenditure was concluded between the US and Israel. The US justified this deal as a result of creating an imbalance by the USSR.⁶⁸

The Symington Amendment of 1976 was applicable to Pakistan and India after their nuclear tests but US interest did not uphold this law to Israel. Israel is protecting the US interests in the Middle East; hence, the US Nuclear Imperialism is for the states like Iraq and Iran. Iran has remained under the US unilateral economic sanctions from 1979 till 2005. However, after the year 2005, international sanctions were also imposed on Iran to curtail its economic position in the region.⁶⁹ The UN sanctions were imposed on Iran under the impression of building an atomic bomb which Iran has rejected over time.⁷⁰ Iran is also a member of NPT and a democratic state but the US has supported the Israel program in the Middle East, contrary to Iran. Israel considers Iran's nuclear program as a threat. However, Israel is more of the view to take preventive strikes against Iran and its nuclear ambitions. The preventive strike which Israel took against Iraq on June 7, 1981, destroyed the Osirak reactor.⁷¹

The US imperial policies in the Middle East are interest-based. The US supports Israel's nuclear-weapon program being a non-member to NPT while declined its support to Iran's nuclear program, which is an NPT member state. Israel is a key ally of the US in protecting its interests in the Middle Eastern region. The US, as a nuclear hegemon, utilizes the international treaties, non-proliferation acts and the global nuclear regime to protect its interests and its nuclear imperialism. In the Middle East, the US supports Israel to counterbalance Russia. On the other hand, Russia and Iran have close ties and Russia supports Iran's nuclear program. Therefore, the US plays alliance politics at the regional level to secure its dominance and nuclear imperialism.

Conclusion

In the global nuclear world order, the US strategy is to curtail the development of nuclear weapons by other states while keeping its eye on the nuclear business as well through its military-industrial and nuclear complexes. The international non-proliferation regime is created to intensify the US Nuclear Imperialism and nuclear monopoly on the technologically advanced states. The counter-proliferation policy is

adopted by the US to pre-empt and roll back nuclear weapon programs of other states under its threat reduction laws and treaties. In the comparison of Democrats and Republicans, the Democrats maintain their nuclear imperialism by imposing economic sanctions on the Periphery states while the Republicans impose nuclear imperialism through pre-emption, counter-proliferation, civil nuclear deals and through the military-industrial complexes. The role of alliance politics in the US Nuclear Imperialism is more active at the regional level to counterbalance its rivals systematically. These strategies are determining the influential role of the US as the sole nuclear Core and its Nuclear Imperialism around the globe.

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