

SOME ISSUES IN FOREIGN POLICY OF INDIA
A Study of the Role of Leadership of Nehru and Indira Gandhi

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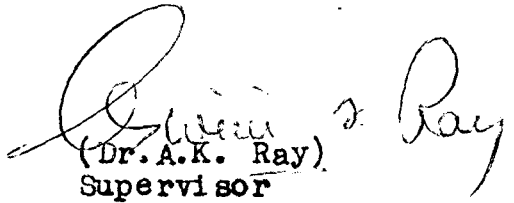
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DECLARATION

Certified that this dissertation is approved for submission to the examiner in Partial Fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Philosophy. The material in this dissertation has not been previously submitted for a degree of this or any other University.


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INTRODUCTION

The foreign policy of any country is the product of a complex interplay of history, geography, past experiences, present requirements, perceptions of the ruling elite, of national interest and ideological consensus, if one exists in the country, and if not, of the leaders of the Government. It is also shaped and moulded by the domestic balance of forces.

The various factors and forces which condition the foreign policy of a country can be characterized as:-

- (1) environmental or situational, which include the prevailing international situation, strategic considerations, economic compulsions, historical legacies, etc., and
- (2) predispositional which refers to the foreign policy outlook of the decision-maker, i.e., 'the attitudinal prism' through which the leader views the existing environment.

Foreign policy, therefore, is essentially an "incremental process" involving the interplay of a wide variety of basic determinants, political institutions, organisational pulls and pressures of a bureaucratic political nature and the personality of the decision-maker. No rational decision-maker can ignore such basic determinants as economic development, political tradition, geography, international milieu, national character and military strength which constitute the conditions of decision-making. The personality of the leader, his psychological propensities, ideological predilections and above all, his need for personal political survival and growth, inevitably condition his decisions in

foreign policy.

The result is that the actual foreign policy of a modern state, particularly a democratic state, tends to become the cumulative and product of a series of short-term decisions arrived at under various pulls and pressures, situational compulsions, environmental contingencies, rather than the result of personal wisdom, or a long-term strategy, fixed once and for all. Under such constraints both the ends and means tend to be always in a state of flux. The decision-maker, have to define constantly the specifics of a given situation, which in turn tends to overlap with the past and the future situations in the same field. The actual objectives, methods and time periods for the realization of these objectives often deviate from the original design. Thus, the choice of alternatives, with regard to ends and means, is not an absolute choice, but is limited and bound by a wide variety of constraints, many of which are largely beyond the control of those who actually formulate foreign policy.

Under any form of government except probably in the case of personal dictatorships such as those of Hitler or Mussolini, it is difficult to determine the authority actually responsible for decision-making in foreign policy. In a Cabinet form of government, the source of decision making is nebulous, although in theory the Cabinet is the ultimate decision-making authority. A Cabinet functions through conventions and political pulls and pressures as much as through well-defined rules and regulations and its decision-making role is, therefore, subject to wide variations. A

politically strong and charismatic or semi-charismatic Prime Minister may personally decide all major foreign and domestic policies and the Cabinet may simply endorse his decisions.¹ This is more or less the way in which Nehru's Cabinet functioned. On the other hand, if a Prime Minister is politically weak and has a foreign minister who is there in his own right as a political leader, foreign policy decisions may be made in most cases, personally by the latter. Though it is difficult to cite such an example in the Indian context, one could always find a similar case in the United States Government. For example, during Nixon's Presidentship, his foreign minister Henry Kissinger virtually overshadowed him in matters of foreign policy. If the foreign minister is politically and intellectually weak, when there is also a weak Prime Minister, the civil servants may play a disproportionately important role in the making of foreign policy.

Thus, the foreign minister's role is that of making a choice out of a given number of alternative policies, the choice of decisions is not absolute but circumscribed by certain conditions, institutions, processes and personalities.

A perfectly impersonal decision in foreign policy, be it a crisis or a non-crisis situation, is a theoretical abstraction since the leader is a political being operating within a political environment, his personal predilections and preferences, structural compulsions, even his personal position and prospects are likely to influence his decisions.

1. Bandhyopadhyaya, J., - The making of Foreign Policy,
New Delhi, 1980, p.283

Secondly, the growth of international law and organisation, the mutational impact of technological advances on international relations are some of the factors which impart an essentially dynamic character to the international milieu within which a state has to formulate its external policies. Foreign policy operates in this international environment which is outside the sovereign jurisdiction of the nation. The factors with which foreign policy is concerned are very volatile, unpredictable and intractable and often beyond the control of the leader. Precise calculations regarding the possible outcome of his decisions is very difficult and uncertain.

Thirdly, some value judgements are necessarily involved in most foreign policy decisions.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

On viewing the literature on foreign policy of India, one finds that the study of Indian foreign policy has so far been confined to India's relations with particular countries and areas, on her reactions to particular international crisis and development, the problems of the

making of foreign policy, political and administrative institutions, basic determinants and domestic process. A sizeable literature has been produced on Sino-Indian War of 1962 and the Indo-Pakistan War of 1971.

P.C. Chakravarthi's books "India's China Policy", (Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1962) and "India-China Relations", (Calcutta, Firma K.L. Mukhopadhyaya Publishers, 1961); Karunakar Gupta's - "Hidden-History of Sino-Indian Frontier", (Calcutta, Minerva Associates Publications, 1974); Karki Hussain's - "Sino-Indian Conflict and International Politics in the Indian - subcontinent, 1962-66", (Faridabad, Haryana, Thomson Press, 1977); Nancy Jetley's - "India-China Relations 1947-77", (New Delhi, Radiant Publishers, 1979); K.P.Karunakaran edited - "Outside the Context", (New Delhi, People's Publishing House, 1963); Neville Maxwell's - "India's China War", (Bombay, Jaico Publishing House, 1970); B.K.Palit's - "The Lightning Campaign", (New Delhi, Thomson Press, 1972) are a few of them. But most of these books deal with the historical background of the relations of the two countries, the causes and areas of differences, events leading to the war, etc. They do not refer to the effect of existing circumstances, in which the leader operated, on the role of the leader, i.e., the extent to which there were structural compulsions, and the extent to which these perso-

nalities were influenced by them in the making and implementation of foreign policy.

Similarly, on the non-aligned policy of both Nehru and Indira Gandhi, a lot of work has been done which generally shows the nonaligned policy of Nehru and its changing content in Mrs. Gandhi's period. To quote a few, there is Krishna Gopal's book - "Nonalignment and Power Politics," (New Delhi, V.I. Publications, 1983); B.N. Kaul's - "New Horizons of Nonalignment," (New Delhi, Pulse Publishers, 1981); K.P. Misra edited - "Nonalignment: Frontiers and Dynamics", (New Delhi, Vikas Publishing House, 1982); and "Nonalignment and Neutrality," (New Delhi, Indian Council for Cultural Relations, 1982); M.M. Rahman's - "The Politics of Non-alignment," (New Delhi, Associate Publishing House, 1969); G. Roy's, "The Nonaligned Diplomacy of Mrs. Gandhi," (Patna, Janaki Prakashan, 1983); Rasheedudin Khan edited - "Perspectives on Non-alignment", (New Delhi, Kalamkar Prakashan, 1981). But how far the foreign policy of non-alignment of these two leaders was affected by the national and international set up in which they operated and how far their own personalities affected the formulation and implementation of the non-aligned foreign policy has not been comparatively assessed.

Literature on Jawaharlal Nehru and Indira Gandhi has generally concentrated on the psychological characteristics of the two leaders. The main purpose of J. Bandyopadhyaya in his book, "The Making of India's Foreign Policy," (New Delhi, Allied Publishers, 1980), which includes a chapter - 'The Personality Factor', is to make a case study of certain

aspects of Nehru's foreign policy from the point of view of what he considers the most prominent personal element in Nehru's decision-making, namely his constant endeavour to strike a balance between idealism and realism. On Indira Gandhi's period, he briefly analysed a few sample cases of decision making in foreign policy and of foreign policy administration during this period with special reference to her personality, i.e., psychological personality. Similar is the case with Surjit Mansingh's book "India's Search for Power: Indira Gandhi's Foreign Policy, 1966-1982". (New Delhi, SAGE Publications, 1984). Shashi Tharoor in his book "Reasons of State: Political Development and India's Foreign Policy under Indira Gandhi 1966-1977" (New Delhi, Vikas Publishing House, 1982), talks of Mrs Gandhi's personality, her major motivations and her policy preferences and prejudices.

OBJECTIVE OF STUDY

The purpose of the present study is to examine the conditions that existed when the two Indian Prime Ministers, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Mrs. Indira Gandhi assumed power and the respective role they played in foreign policy formulation in the context of the existing circumstances. It is also to show that decisions of the leaders are a result of not only objective reasoning but that subjective perceptions are equally important. The leader functions in a political environment, his personal assessment of the situation, the structural compulsions, his personal status influence his decisions.

AREA OF STUDY

For this purpose, I have taken some important landmarks which span over a period of time which cover the Prime-Ministership of J.L. Nehru(1947-1964) and Mrs. Indira Gandhi(1966-1977, 1979-1984), and have comparatively assessed the role of Leadership in these situations and tried to see the extent to which they were influenced by the circumstances and the role of the leader.

OUTLINE OF STUDY

The study is divided into two parts. The first part deals with the origin of Non-alignment in Nehru's Era (Chapter 1) and the Changing Content of Non-alignment in Mrs. Gandhi's Era(Chapter 2). These two chapters attempt to show the existing domestic and international environment when these two leaders came to power and their subsequent roles in the formulation and implementation of foreign policy. These two chapters also attempt to show how far these leaders were affected by situational compulsions and the existing circumstances and how far their own personalities affected their decision - making in foreign policy.

The second part deals with the role of leadership of Nehru in the Sino-Indian War(Chapter 4) and that of Mrs. Gandhi in the Bangladesh War (Chapter 5). Again these two Chapters deal with the domestic and international environment before the war, the circumstances leading to the war and the subsequent roles of the two leaders. It also shows how far these two leaders were affected by the situational compul-

sions and the existing circumstances and how far their own personalities affected the events leading to the war.

Each part is followed by a comparison of the roles of the two leaders. Thus, through a comparative assessment of the roles, a modest attempt has been made to analyse how far the decisions of these two leaders, in the formulation and implementation of foreign policy, were influenced by the political predilections and preferences, structural compulsions and even their personal positions and prospects.

METHODOLOGY OF DATA COLLECTION

For the collection of data the descriptive approach has been used. A lot of historical data has been explored for which considerable help has been taken from secondary sources like books, journals and newspaper. However, some primary sources in the form of Government White Papers, Speeches of Nehru in the Constituent Assembly and that of Mrs Gandhi in the Lok Sabha, U.N. Documents, Text of Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation and other government documents have been used.

CHAPTER I

ORIGINS OF NONALIGNMENT

The roots of India's non-alignment, as often been noticed, go deep into the Indian National Movement to Mahatma Gandhi's unique method of struggle-cum-negotiation with the occupying power, and Jawaharlal Nehru's refusal to accept black and white judgements on the policy of other nations. In fact, it was immediately after the end of the Second World War, when in the wake of the crystallisation of bi-polarity, that Jawaharlal Nehru (even before he became the Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of the Indian Republic) soon after taking up the charge of foreign affairs portfolio in the interim government of India, made a statement on 7th September, 1946, which is probably the first more or less clear enunciation of the foreign policy of India that has subsequently developed into the concept of Non-Alignment.

Nehru's distinctiveness in laying down the basic framework for non-alignment was that, before 1947, while he was fighting for the freedom of India he was not oblivious to what was happening in the world outside India. According to him the days of national isolation were over. He once said that, "The question of India's freedom is an international issue". It was because of his interests and initiatives, the Indian National Congress passed a variety of resolutions expressing its views on the problems of the world. It was in this process that the seeds of non-alignment, as a foreign policy, were sown. The

idea relating to non-alignment were given concrete shape by the country at the time of our achieving independence. Giving an outline of India's foreign policy, Nehru said:

"We shall take full part in international conference as a free nation with our own policy and not merely as a satellite of another nation. We hope to develop close direct contacts with other nations and to cooperate with them in the furtherance of world peace and freedom.

We propose, as far as possible, to keep away from the power politics of groups, aligned against one another which have led in the past to world wars and which may again lead to disasters on an even vaster scale. We seek no domination over others and we claim no privileged position

over other peoples. But we do claim equal and honourable treatment for our people wherever they may go, and we cannot accept any discrimination against them.

The world, inspite of its rivalries and hatreds and inner conflicts, moves inevitably towards closer co-operation and building up of a world commonwealth. It is for this one world that free India will work, a world in which there is the free cooperation of free peoples, and no class or group exploits another."

DOMESTIC ENVIRONMENT

Non-Alignment, as foreign policy was adopted by Nehru initially as token assertion of post-colonial India's political sovereignty. Western opposition only reinforced her determination to assert such sovereignty. Nehru was a political leader as well as the leader of the masses

and had a profound grip and influence over them. Being the leader of the National Liberation Movement, he enjoyed moral and political legitimacy with the masses. Since independence, no other Indian leader enjoyed such rapport with the masses. In the Congress also he was the chief spokesman. His position as the maker of foreign policy, was, almost, completely undisturbed, and only a few traces of tangential impact of certain individuals and institutions might be detected here and there. Michael Brecher tends to attribute the conception, formulation and implementation of the policy of non-alignment almost entirely to Nehru. Brecher writes:

"In no other state does one man dominate foreign policy as does Nehru in India. Indeed so overwhelming is his influence that India's policy has come to mean in the minds of the people everywhere the personal policy of Nehru. And justifiably so, for Nehru is the philosopher, the architect, the engineer and the voice of his country's policy towards the outside world."¹

However, this does not imply that Nehru was entirely free from the influence of individuals and institutions in India. As said earlier, traces of tangential impact of certain individuals and institutions can be detected here and there. It also does not imply that his policy was not criticized at home. Several times within India, Nehru was attacked for pursuing, what his critics called, a

1. Brecher, Michael, Nehru: A Political Biography, London; 1959, p. 564.

negative and neutral policy. But, Nehru's own mass base, built through the years of struggle for national liberation, helped him defy the domestic critics of his foreign policy, at that stage, who were advocating a more traditional approach. But the fact that Nehru was in conformity with the political culture of post-colonial nationalism in India, by asserting national sovereignty also helped him in retaining the mass base for non-alignment. In other words, Nehru had impressed his personality and his views with such overpowering effect that foreign policy could be termed a private monopoly.

Justifying his stand, Nehru held that non-alignment was " a policy inherent in the circumstances of India, inherent in the whole mental outlook of India, inherent in the conditioning of the Indian mind during our struggle for freedom and inherent in the circumstances of the case today."²

Briefly, the policy of non-alignment was suited to the genius of the Indian people and was in their interest. Nehru indeed went so far as to say that there was "no other policy for this country to adopt with the slightest advantage."³

2. Lok Sabha Debates, 9th December, 1958, Vol. XXIII, Col. 3961.

3. Constituent Assembly of India (Legislative) Debates, Official Report, Vol. III, p.p. 1769-70.

INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

Nehru's policy was criticized and abused in various parts of the World as "fence-sitting", "neutralism", "refusal to distinguish between black and white, right and wrong, freedom and slavery". It was dubbed by certain commentators and practitioners of diplomacy even as "immoral", short-sighted, unrealistic and inappropriate. Some called it the result of Nehru's "casuistry", "passivism" and the lack of courage for international political involvement. Others thought it to be the result of confused thinking, an irrational cluster of view points and policies, an amalgam, as well as, aberration of foreign ideologies.⁴

Attitude of the Super Powers:

India's policy of non-alignment was frowned upon by the two super powers. According to Zhadanov's World view "the new position of the post-war political forces" led to the creation of two camps: "imperialistic and anti-democratic camp on the one side, and the anti-imperialistic and democratic camp on the other side."⁵ Both John.F.Dulles and J.V.Stalin - with all their differences - were at one in

4. Madan Gopal, India as a World Power, New Delhi, Sagar Publications, 1974, p.3.

5. Speech of Andrei Zhadanov, Secretary of Communist Party of Soviet Union reproduced in Pravda, 22nd October, 1947.

insisting that there could be only two alternative foreign policies and two alternative roads to development. For the West "those not with us are against us" and for the Soviet Union non-alignment was "alignment with the West in disguise."⁶ In June 1949, Mao Zedong declared that there was "no third road, nor could there be a foreign policy which took a sharp turn away from both the Western alliance system and Soviet bloc".

U.S. Opposition:

The United States and Western Powers had serious misgivings about the policy assumptions and diplomatic operations of India, as a major proponent of non-alignment as 'an immoral and short-sighted conception'. The U.S. policy makers held that at best non-alignment was negative deviation from the well-established norms of international relations and politics and at worst it represented a policy that was incapable of differentiating between what they called 'the free world' and the 'iron curtain countries of the Communist World'. They considered non-alignment as the process which lends itself rather easily to the influence of the Soviet Union and the Socialist countries and tends to run counter to the global interests and strategy of Western powers. The U.S.A. under Presidents Truman and Eisenhower, influenced by Dean Acheson, Joseph McCarthy and J.F. Dulles,

6. A.K. Ray, Non-alignment: Retrospect and Prospect in
 K.P. Misra ed. Non-alignment and Neutrality, New Delhi,
 1982, p.69.

saw red all over. The policy that "he who is not with me is against me," took a distorted view of every Indian action.

Soviet Opposition:

The U.S.S.R. was one of the first few countries with which independent India established relations. Despite the friendliness shown by India, Stalinist Russia did not reciprocate India's sentiments in the earlier phase. India's talk of non-alignment was dubbed as "only a cloak to cover collaboration with Anglo - U.S. Imperialism". Along with other socialist countries, Soviet Union stated that, under the guise of so-called independent foreign policy and non-alignment countries like India were tied to the apron strings of the Anglo-American bloc.⁷ The U.S.S.R., then divided the World into two camps - as Zhadanov had maintained - of the "imperialists" and the "democratic" countries (Communist bloc). If India was not the camp follower of the latter then it must be with the Imperialists. It was this apparently fallacious understanding that made Joseph Stalin and other World Communist leaders at that time to be-little and under-estimate the potentials of non-aligned foreign policy of the newly-liberated countries. The Indian policy of non-alignment was also condemned and was considered "to justify

7. Most of the Indian leaders belonged to the middle class, who were not Communists. A few no doubt were influenced by the Marxian Ideology, but even they denounced at the violent methods resorted to achieve them.

a policy of collaboration with English capitalism, a policy of establishing closer contact between the Indian bourgeoisie and English Capitalism".⁸

INDIAN POLITICAL ECONOMY

The Indian leaders had chosen a liberal democratic form of government based on the Western model, largely due to their familiarity with the Western form of Government and also because Indian Nationalist Leader's thoughts were alien to Communist ideology.

Besides, India was an under-developed country and it had to look to other countries for economic aid. The first three years of the new government saw the decision of India to join the Commonwealth. This had two major aspects. First, it was recognition on Nehru's part that India's de facto membership of the Western monetary and commercial mechanism and her decision to continue the market economy inherited from the Empire. Indian defence forces were still under British supervision, the sterling balances continued to be an important factor in our economy. Justifying India's decision to remain in the Commonwealth, Nehru said:

"If we dissociate ourselves completely from the Commonwealth, then for the moment we are completely isolated, and so inevitably by stress of circumstances, we have to incline in some direction or other."⁹

8. Translated from an article (in Russian) by Zhukov. (E. Zhukov, "K. polozheneyce Vindu", Mirovoye Khozyaisto i Mirovaya Politika, Moscow) July 1947, p. 4

9. Nehru, I., n. 12, pp. 132-46, 158-59.

Thus, seeing the structural compulsions of the Indian political economy, international environment, and history at the time of independence, alignment, i.e. alignment with the West would have been the logical choice. It required the leadership of the quality of Nehru, with a strong mass-base of political support, steeped deep in the ethos of the National Liberation Movement and deriving his political legitimacy from it, to opt for a policy of non-alignment involving political assertion of national sovereignty, often involving considerable risks. Non-alignment as Nehru succinctly summed it, often involved "ploughing a lonely furrow",¹⁰ If someone else like Patel or C. Rajagopalachari or Indira Gandhi, had enjoyed Nehru's unchallenged position, India's foreign policy was more likely to be somewhat pro-west.

In fact, in, 1928 the All India Congress Committee did set up a foreign department with Jawaharlal Nehru as its head. From that time till he breathed his last, it was he who became the chief spokesman of India's voice in world fora. With his unchallenged hold over the national movement, as the designated heir of Gandhi, he dared to spell out the basic principles of what was to become free India's foreign policy even before power was fully transferred by Britain.

10. The Statesman, 5th December, 1947.

NEHRU'S VIEW OF NON-ALIGNMENT

Non-alignment as conceived by Nehru envisaged remaining outside the military alliance either of the Western or Communist bloc. Nehru felt that international politics based on military alliances attempts to create spheres of influence, promotes arms race and thus increases tension. Such a policy would not suit a newly independent nation like India, whose immediate tasks were socio-economic development and the evolution of a peaceful and cohesive national order.

Secondly, non-alignment is "acting according to our best judgement", an independent approach to foreign policy, ie; not being tied to particular line of action. In one of the speeches he remarked:

"Every country has a right to choose its own path and go along it. We have chosen our path and we propose to go along."

"A country's policy ultimately emerges from its own traditions, from its own urges, from its own objectives and more particularly, from its recent past."¹¹

Thirdly, non-alignment aims to try and maintain friendly relations with all countries. In Nehru's words:

"When we say our policy is one of non-alignment,

11. J.C. Kundra - India's Foreign Policy 1947-54, (Bombay, 1969), p.4.

obviously we mean non-alignment with military blocs. It is not a negative policy, it is a positive one, a definite one and I hope, a dynamic one. But in so far as the military blocs today and the cold war are concerned, we do not align ourselves with either bloc."¹²

Answering Adlai Stevenson's question, Nehru said,

"Non-alignment means not tying yourself with military blocs of nations or with a nation. It means trying to view things, as far as possible, not from the military point of view, though that has to come in sometimes, but independently, and trying to maintain friendly relations with all countries".¹³

To clearly understand Nehru's view of non-alignment it is important to indicate what, according to him, non-alignment is not. Firstly, non-alignment does not mean neutrality, because neutrality, as a policy, has little meaning except in times of war. If the cold war between the two blocs is taken into account, India might be said to be neutral in so far as it decided against joining either bloc. But the term "neutrality" is inapplicable to India's policy because neutrality may connote that the country which adopts such a policy has no positive opinions on the issues which divide the

12- J.L.Nehru in Lok Sabha on 9th December, 1958.

13. J.L.Nehru Speeches (September 1957-April 1963), Vol. IV, (Delhi 1964), p.381.

blocks. This cannot be held true as far as India was concerned. On important issues of war and peace in the world India spoke clearly with conviction. For example, it condemned, although belatedly, the Soviet interference in Hungary (1956), it condemned the British and French invasion of Suez as a "naked aggression" (1956), and it had earlier considered North Korean troops marching into South Korea as "aggression". (1950).

Secondly, India's Non-alignment did not imply its neutrality in case of a war. To quote Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru on this issue:

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" We have proclaimed during this past year that we will not attach ourselves to any particular group. That has nothing to do with neutrality or anything else or passivity. If there is a big war, there is no particular reason why we should jump into it. Nevertheless, it is a little difficult now-a-days in world wars to be neutral ---. We are not going to join a war if we can help it, and we are going to join the side which is to our interest when the choice comes to it." ¹⁴

On the furtherance of world peace Nehru held that from a larger point of view, not only of India, but of world peace, alignment would do harm.

14. Speech in the Constituent Assembly (Legislative), 4th December, 1947, Constituent Assembly of India (Legislative) Debates, Vol. II, no. 5, Col. 14, II 5.47/904, p. 1260.



At the rate at which both the camps were arming themselves it was feared that a third world war might break-out at any time. It was hoped that non-alignment would be in a better position to help in reducing the tension and act as a mediator if the situation so demanded.

According to Nehru, "ultimately foreign policy is the outcome of economic policy." ¹⁵ On economic development Nehru held that non-alignment ensured that you did not "put all your eggs in one basket" and therefore, "purely from the point of opportunism, if you like, straightforward, honest policy, an independent policy is best." ¹⁶ He believed in keeping his options open and was willing to accept aid from any country, whether Capitalist or Communist, which did not attach any strings to them.

QUESTIONS RAISED REGARDING NEHRU'S POLICY OF NON ALIGNMENT

Remarkably, in the many statements made by Nehru, there is no direct answer to the question whether non-alignment would be helpful in the maintenance of the nation's territorial integrity. According to Nehru, so far as national

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15. Nehru, India's Foreign Policy, Selected Speeches, September 1946, April 1961, (New Delhi: Government of India, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Publication Division, 1961) pp. 32 and 24.
 16. Lok Sabha Debates Second Series, Vol. XXIII, 1-12 December 1958, Col. 3959.

unity is an aid to the maintenance of security, non-alignment would help. But would non-alignment provide or increase the security of the nation from external invasion?. Nehru's general approach implied that non-entanglement in the affairs of the power blocs, would involve us less in wars, though he was clear that it was difficult in the World War to be neutral. But then, not being tied to a power bloc, you could "join the side which is to our interest." 17

Another important issue raised by Nehru's non-alignment was that by definition, a non-aligned country has no military allies, and if the country's own resources were inadequate to maintain its security, what is the solution? 18 Nehru's reply, somewhat less than practical was:

"We will defend ourselves with whatever arms and strength we have, and if we have no arms we will defend ourselves without arms." 19

Justifying this statement Nehru held that a non-aligned and militarily weak country can hope to maintain its territorial integrity by the Great Power's desire for maintaining international balance of power. In an article

17. Constituent Assembly of India (Legislative) Debates, Official Report, Vol. II, Part II, pp. 1260-62.

18. Question raised at Bandung Conference (1955) specially by the smaller states like Iraq, Lebanon, and the Philippines.

19. Nehru's reply to the question at Bandung Conference. (1955)

'The Defence of India' written by Nehru in 1931, he gives us an inkling into the thinking:

"If the domination of England over India ceases and India becomes free, what will be the reaction of other powers? It may be that some will covet her, but the master desire will be to prevent any other nation gaining domination over India and thus acquiring the commanding position which England occupied for so long. If any power was covetous enough to make the attempt, all the others would combine to prevent this and to trounce the intruder. This mutual rivalry would in itself be the surest guarantee against an attack on India."²⁰

Alignment with a power, Nehru was convinced, would jeopardise, the independent approach which a self-respecting nation could not give up.

NON-ALIGNMENT AND NEHRU'S ROLE

As rightly pointed out by a scholar,
 "The development of a definite Indian outlook on world affairs owed much to Jawaharlal Nehru. It was he who gradually educated his party and

20. Young India, Vol.XIII, p.275 (24th September, 1931) and p.284 (1st October, 1931). See also Bimal Prasad, The Great experience of Nonalignment and its Prospects for the Future (Belgrade, 1969), pp.24-28, for the strategic calculations of Non-aligned Nations.

his people to become increasingly conscious of international developments and view their national struggle in the context of world affairs. Nehru attempted to integrate the diverse strand of thought, emotion and aspiration of his countrymen into a coherent outlook on World affairs." 21.

What Nehru learnt from Gandhiji and finally absorbed into his own thinking, was never to regard India as an object of historical forces only. He worked so that India which had been great in the past, should in the present also continue to be an active participant, an active agent, a creator of the world history.²²

India's foreign policy was very active during 1947-1961 and under Nehru's leadership its leading role as a non-aligned country was widely acknowledged. This was mainly due to the bold stand taken by Nehru on resolution of various international issues some of which are discussed below. This

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21. J.R.Mehrotra, "The Development of Indian Outlook on World Affairs before 1947," The Journal of Development Studies, Vol.3, April 1955.
22. See for instance Gandhi's impact on Congress attitude towards the question of participation in War, 1939. The Indian Annual Register, 1939. Vol.II, p.226-8.
See also Tendulkar, D.G., Mahatma Gandhi, Vol.7, p.35

active and independent policy of Nehru put India at the forefront of the struggle of the Third World countries for liberation from capitalist domination and also enhanced her international status.

Korean Crisis

It was during the Korean Crisis that India's independent judgement and action on an issue vitiated by the Cold War was first acknowledged. India was a member of the United Nations Temporary Commission for Korea and the task of bringing about the unification of Korea. India's suspicion of Western intentions was heightened by their attempt to cross the 38th parallel and by the American threat to use the atomic bomb in Korea. India under Nehru's leadership stuck an independent line and bent her efforts to bringing about a negotiated settlement. India voted with the West in the Security Council in declaring North Korea an aggressor,²³ but she did not send a military contingent to Korea, limiting her contribution to medical supplies and ancillary equipment. She welcomed British efforts at moderating American action in Korea, while she herself attempted to restrain China's reactions to American provocations. When the war was over, India headed the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission and provided the custodian forces to supervise the exchange of prisoners of war. This was a recognition of her independent foreign policy and non-alignment and her principled approach to the Korean Crisis.

23. Security Council Resolution of June 25th and 27th, 1950.

Japanese Peace Treaty

This independence was again demonstrated when India objected to the American terms for the Japanese Peace Treaty, signed in San Francisco on September 8th, 1951. India felt that the placing of the Ryuku and Bonin islands under United States trusteeship and the stationing of United States troops in Japan were limitations of Japanese sovereignty and national independence and hence a negation of the principles for which India stood. While Nehru declined to sign the treaty, he took simultaneous steps to end the state of war with Japan and concluded a bilateral peace treaty after separate negotiations and unilaterally gave up all claims to war reparations and indemnity.

Indo-China

Similarly in Indo China, in accordance with the policy of non-alignment, Nehru's efforts were directed towards preventing the territory becoming a cold war theatre. He looked upon the crisis in Indo-China essentially as a rationalist struggle against the revival of imperialism. Here again, India under Nehru, opposed U.S. intentions to support "plans of the French Government for the intensified prosecution of the war against "Viet-Minh". India, along with Burma, Ceylon, Indonesia and Pakistan, discussed the situation in Indo-China at a conference in Colomba in April 1954 and called for an immediate cease fire, a negotiated settlement including an irrevocable commitment by France for the independence of

the Indo-Chinese status of Vietnam , Laos and Combodia and an international agreement on non-interference. Though, India did not participate in the subsequent Geneva Conference on Indo-China, her activities behind the scene helped the negotiations. India's role in allaying the fears of the Communist powers was acknowledged by the British Government. When the Geneva Conference agreed to set up an International Control Commission, India was chosen as the chairman.

Suez Crisis:

Under Nehru's leadership, India's attitude to the Suez Crisis in 1956 helped to consolidate the solidarity of the non-aligned nations and to demonstrate their independence. To India, the Anglo-French-Israeli attack on Egypt in 1956 represented an attempt to resuscitate Western presence in West Asia which was designed to save the area from the progressive forces represented by Nasser's Egypt. Nehru, stridently resented the Anglo-French action as an attempt to solve the problem by methods of nineteenth century gun-boat diplomacy. India's efforts were directed towards a lessening of the hostility between the contending parties. The proposals made by India were incorporated in the plan submitted by the foreign ministers of Britain, France and Egypt for peaceful negotiations and settlement. India also contributed a contingent of troops to United Nations Forces for the supervision of the truce in the Gaza strip between Israel and Egypt.

Soviet Intervention in Hungary:

Hungary in fact was an interesting example of India's lower sense of priorities in a situation which was not of the classical colonial imperial equation. Throughout the discussion on Hungary, India maintained that it was a national revolution and Soviet intervention was unjustified. At the same time, India did not favour the withdrawal of forces at the time of actual crisis as also opposed the resolution condemning Soviet action on the ground that it was a negative approach to the situation which would obstruct negotiations between the United Nations and the parties concerned. India's hesitancy in condemning the Soviet action in Hungary was largely due to the fact that India had received and continued to require active support from the Soviet Union on certain questions of vital national interest to them. India had received open support on Kashmir and Goa questions from the U.S.S.R.²⁴

Thus, under Nehru's leadership, India's emphasis on the principles of non-alignment, as a response to the Cold War, its initiative in the resolution of international issues such as political crisis in Korea, armistice in Indo-China, Crisis in Formosa Straits, the Suez Conflict and the Hungarian Tragedy, and its ascetic adherence to the principles of the

24. Year Book of the U.N. 1956 (New York: Department of Public Information, U.N. 1957) p.71-2 & p.85.

United Nations Charter put her (India) at the forefront of the struggle of the Third World against the Capitalistic domination of the industrially advanced countries. Its policies and postures certainly helped India in winning some emerging nations of Africa and Asia away from the European power politics.

The success of non-alignment and the enhancement of India's prestige in international affairs was largely due to the newness of the concept of non-alignment and the persuasive role played by Nehru. Non alignment held a charm for the Third World countries which having acquired independence did not want to be the ward of either bloc. Besides, Nehru possessed not only charismatic attribute of leadership but also substantial national and international prestige.

In spite of India gaining national and international prestige and the success of non-alignment under Nehru's leadership, it also got entangled with Pakistan over boundary dispute and with Portugal over Goa.

Kashmir dispute:

The primary concern of India's foreign policy has been the security of the country, and Nehru did not hesitate to use force as and when it suited the purpose. Nothing illustrates this better than the very first major action taken by the Government of India in the field of foreign relations, to save Kashmir from falling into the hands of

Pakistan in October 1947. The popularity of the Government of India and its foreign policy in the early days of independence appears to have been based on this popular action of the Government of India.²⁵

Nehru did not refer the Kashmir issue to the U.N. as he was suspicious of the great powers unanimity in the Security Council and of the Western majority in the General Assembly. He probably felt that the great powers might act together and try to impose a solution, unfavourable to Indian interest.

On the other hand, the Indian Government seemed to be fully confident about the strength of their case legally and otherwise, for India had sent its military forces into Kashmir in the wake of Pakistan's military action. The military position also had turned in favour of India, and just when the Indian armed forces were poised for a victory, Nehru made a highly unrealistic move and referred the Kashmir issue to U.N. Seeing the international political situation at the end of 1947, it was prima facie unrealistic to expect that U.N. would be able to settle the issue to India's satisfaction. Nehru's own statement at the time indicates that it was largely due to this high idealism that Kashmir was referred to the U.N. Nehru said:

"Our making a reference of this issue to the Security Council of the United Nations was an act of faith, because we believe in the progressive realization of a world order and world government."²⁶

25. K.P.Karunakaran, Indian in World Affairs, 1950-53, (Calcutta, 1958)

26. India's Foreign policy, p.451

Goa:

In his Goa policy (as in his Kashmir policy) Nehru made a firm commitment to certain high principles at the outset, indicative of his political idealism, but eventually retreated from this position.

From 1947 to 1960, Nehru repeatedly declared a policy of strict non-violence with regard to Goa. Yet in December 1961, Goa was freed from Portuguese rule by the Indian armed forces. He was criticized for violating his commitment to a peaceful policy in both India and abroad.

In fact, India's military action in Goa did violate her commitment to a peaceful policy made persistently over a long period of time. At no stage had Nehru stated before that India would use armed forces to free Goa, if peaceful methods failed.

EROSION OF NEHRU'S POLICY OF NON-ALIGNMENT:

The Chinese assault of India on 20th October, 1962 had a dynamic impact on the latter's policy of non-alignment. It proved the worst of all ordeals for Jawaharlal Nehru and those who ardently supported him in this country and abroad, and its foreign policy was in shambles. Following this Beijing perfidy, Nehru came under direct fire and concentrated pressure from Indian reactionaries and from the Western bloc which aimed to force India to give up non-alignment and embrace the Western Camp. They vociferously and persistently claimed that the Beijing aggression had

buried non-alignment fathoms deep, proved that India had wrongly adopted this "suicidal" policy and hence, having learned the lesson the hard way, India for its sheer survival must join the West.

Even after the unilateral ceasefire, Chinese intentions were not clear and India could no more leave its long and tortuous mountain border unprotected. India badly needed weapons to arm its mountain divisions. So, an approach for supply of these requirements was made to the United States and the Commonwealth countries. At their Nassau meeting in December 1962, President J.F.Kennedy of the U.S.A. and Prime Minister Harold Macmillan of U.K. offered India a military aid of 120 million dollars. But from the very outset strings were attached. In lieu of first shipment of arms, military information was sought from India. Some aircraft carriers were sent to Bay of Bengal although New Delhi never asked for this. The USA offered to build airfields, radar station along the border but on the condition that they would be under the U.S. control.²⁷

Besides this there began a game of deception to force India to abandon non-alignment, apparently "on its own". While both U.S.A. and U.K. said that the military aid was without strings, the special U.S.A. and U.K. missions

27. B.N.Kaul, New Horizons of Non-alignment, New Delhi, Pulse Publishers, 1981, pp.128.129.

headed respectively by Averell Harriman and Duncan Sandys who visited Delhi to finalise agreement on arms supplies (which ultimately never materialised in full) put up constant pressure on the Indian Government to change its foreign policy.

Simultaneously, the Rightist reaction in India, on possible external inspiration, launched a frontal attack on Nehru's Government with a view to force it to give up non-alignment. A crescendo was raised in and outside Parliament and in the press for renouncing non-alignment, "which had failed India at the critical time". People like Rajagopalachari, Acharya Kriplani, M.R.Masani, A.B.Vajpayee and even some Congress leaders like K.Hanumanthiya and some others demanded change in foreign policy.

The border incident of 1962, coerced the course of India's foreign policy, ended its pretension as a global power, shrunk its area of operation, compelled it to play a more passive role and put in doubt, its role as a regional power. There was a sense of isolation and rejection all around. India's role as a mediator and a peace setter in international politics was relegated into the background. Nehru had to rethink his line of action and the policy of non-alignment was to be compromised even if Nehru was reluctant to admit it. India was forced to accept military aid from the West.

Nehru sticks to non-alignment:

Inspite of the setbacks to his foreign policy, Nehru stuck to the policy of non-alignment. He was self-

confident even at a moment of dubious prospects and anxious demands for a reassessment of the country's domestic and external policies from various quarters, lobbies and interests both in India and abroad.²⁸ Even in those very last days Nehru kept before himself and before the nation the principle of non-alignment, the ideology of independence and strategy of negotiation, conciliation and refusal to give up trying in the face of discouraging and negative responses. During the last two-three weeks of his life, in May 1964, Nehru took new initiatives and suggested new accommodations in India's disputes with both China and Pakistan.

28. See, for example, Nehru's nationwide broadcast on 22nd October, 1962, Times of India (Delhi), 23rd October, 1962. He repeated it in a public meeting in Delhi on 11th November 1962. The Statesman(Delhi), 12th November, 1962.

CHAPTER II

CHANGING CONTENT OF NONALIGNMENT

Against the background of general decline in non-alignment, isolation of India in the international sphere, discontent of the Afro-Asian nations with India, period of detente, defeat in the China War, Mrs. Indira Gandhi came to power.

DOMESTIC SCENARIO:

Unlike Nehru, Mrs. Gandhi did not emerge as a political leader of the Congress. She had a strong competitor in Morarji Desai. Nor did she enjoy the legitimacy of the masses which Nehru did. She did not have the political stature to resist domestic and international compulsions. The strident assertion, seen in foreign policy in the early years of Nehru, was becoming weak.

The political atmosphere was no less disturbing. There was the food agitation in Kerala and West Bengal, adivasi disturbances in Bastar in Madhya Pradesh, famine in Orissa, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, mass action in Uttar Pradesh, eruption of Mysore, Maharashtra border dispute, Government employees' agitation in Uttar Pradesh, bundhs in Gujarat and Bombay, student upheaval in Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Calcutta, Andhra Steel Plant agitation, anti-cow slaughter agitation spread in the entire Gangetic belt.

Besides this very formidable list of agitation, spread over the length and breadth of the country, and in the political life of a person, who apart from her being the daughter of Nehru had no experience of running the state affairs beyond sixteen months job in an insignificant ministry as a junior cabinet member. Worse still, the 1967 General Elections in India gave the impression that the nation was about to lose its most important asset - political stability.¹ Corruption was large scale, scandalous defections and frequent fall of governments in a number of states further reduced India's weight in the world affairs.

Apart from all this, a belief had set in that the policy of non-alignment by itself could provide no adequate deterrent to aggression from the predatory neighbours. It was painfully discovered that the invocation of the concept of non-alignment and the "spirit of Bandung" could not by themselves safeguard national security. The radicals were calling for a change in foreign policy.

INDIAN POLITICAL ECONOMY

When Mrs Gandhi assumed office she faced acute food shortage and serious economic problems. Consumer price index rose from 100 to 140 from 1949 to 1964; food production had declined; industrial output was on the decline; defence

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1. Surendra Chopra (ed.), Studies in Indian Foreign Policy. For the election results revealed that the Congress Party had lost power in 6 out of 17 states to splinter groups and in most cases to reactionary elements.

expenditure had increased; sharp increase in net credit to government, export had declined. It was to this state of health that the nation's economy had been reduced when Mrs. Gandhi took charge of the affairs of state. The remedy suggested was devaluation.

INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

Following the humiliation suffered at the hands of the Chinese in 1962, it began to be pointed out that the foreign policy had failed to ensure the security of the country and that the policy of non-alignment, advocated by Nehru though based on noble idealism was no substitute for realism. Yet another shock came three years later when the nation's much smaller neighbour Pakistan considered itself strong enough to mount an attack on India.

Thus, when Mrs. Gandhi assumed office on January 24th, 1966, she not only faced serious economic crisis and shortage of foodgrain but also the fact that both Washington and Moscow considered India a power of little consequence, a "play thing of circumstances" which could be controlled by the big powers and "harassed by the smaller countries."²

Soviet attitude:

The Soviet Union's determined effort to neutralize India and Pakistan coloured Soviet attitude towards Indo-Pakistan dispute. The seemingly categorical

2. Vijay Sen Budhraj, "The Indian Foreign Policy: The Indira Gandhi Era". (Surendra Chopra (ed.) Studies in Indian Foreign Policy) p.166.

support given to India in the earlier years was diluted and a change was obvious in the Soviet position of neutrality during the 1965 Indo-Pakistan war and at the Tashkent Conference of January 1966. The Soviet role during the war and at the Tashkent Conference, January 1966, made it clear that India no longer enjoyed a privileged position in Moscow's South Asia policy. In fact, since 1963, the Soviet leaders had been working towards achieving a balance in their policy between India and Pakistan and had achieved some success in improving their relations with Pakistan.

U.S. attitude:

The attitude of the other super power was not favourable either. The two wars (1962 War with China and 1965 War with Pakistan) had weakened India considerably and had thus increased its dependence on others. The major source of foreign aid had dried up when the United States and Britain suspended both military and civilian aid as soon as the 1965 War began.

Mrs. Gandhi had come on the scene at a period when because of obvious imbecility of 'socialist powers' now busy in fighting their internecine war, had given the Imperialists and their stooges a field day in Asia, Africa and Latin America. They were now fearlessly running havoc in Vietnam. On 24th February, K.Nkrumah, the Ghanaian President was overthrown in a coup-d-etat and a pro-imperialist military take-over announced. Earlier a ghastlier scene had been enacted, with obvious connivance of the Imperialist masters, by the Indonesian military leaders, heavily equipped with

Soviet made arms. In a space of a few months, about half a million local communists were massacred. These were definite pointers to new ferocious offensive, from the imperialist camp against which the non-aligned found that the divided socialist camp offered hardly any security.

In the world context of growing insecurity and also an insecure national set up, Mrs.Gandhi demonstrated a sounder instinct for survival by choosing to go first to America.

STRENGTHENING HER POSITION:

To enable India to find a rightful place in the family of nations, Mrs.Gandhi first addressed herself to the task of bringing about internal cohesion, political stability and self-reliance, which are essential to a sound foreign policy. She took steps like 'garibi-hatao' in 1969-70, to bring about the needed socio-economic changes which won her the support of the people.

In the international sphere also Mrs.Gandhi demonstrating a sound instinct of survival, chose to visit U.S.A. from March 27th to 31st March. Enroute to Washington, she paid a three-day private visit to Paris. Thus, she cared to emphasize the new stances in Indian diplomacy of ignoring and down-grading Britain in the list of Patrons of India's ruling classes.³ The courtesy call on President De Gaulle was

3. Writing on the event of Mr.Heath's visit the other day an Indian Newspaper would comment as follows, "The visit of a British Prime Minister to India ceased many years ago to be a major political event, with the changed positions, stature and interest of both countries. The Hindustan Times, 2nd January 1971.

meant to be more than a non-aligned gimmick; it was probably a sort of fraternal gesture towards a kindred soul, a rebel in the Western Camp.

Mrs. Gandhi's visit to the U.S.A. was a resounding success as she not only procured financial aid and shipment of American foodgrain but also entered into an agreement with the American International Oil Company for the construction at Madras of India's largest Fertilizer Plant. However, all this she achieved at the price of devaluation of the Rupee.⁴ During her stay in Washington President Johnson and his advisers believed to have extracted from the Indian Prime Minister a promise to devalue the rupee in the near future.⁵ Some two months later the rupee was devalued by 36.5%, obviously under foreign pressure. Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi frankly told her cabinet colleagues that if India did not devalue the rupee it could not get aid.

On the Vietnam problem, when President Johnson explained, "the policies of the United States is pursuing to help the people of Vietnam to defend their freedom and to reconstruct their war torn society", all she did was to keep quiet and give a respectful hearing and then "to explain the

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4. "Like a faithful Texan Johnson is reported to have said at a party that he would see to it that, "no harm comes to this girl." He thought that the Bell Mission recommendation, including devaluation, provided India with the best remedy for its economic ills. And when he found Mrs. Gandhi coming round to accept these, Johnson was all out for aid to India. Kuldeep Nayar, "Between the Lines", p.114.
 5. Zaheer Masani, "Indira Gandhi : A Biography", Delhi, 1975 ,p.158.

continuing interests and efforts of her country in bringing about a just and peaceful solution of the problem."

This acquiring of financial aid from a bloc with political strings tied to it. Mrs. Gandhi demonstrated a shift in foreign policy from that of Nehru who was not willing to give in to the demands of the bloc for personal political gains.

These achievements at that time and under those circumstances became quite meaningful in her own battle for political survival. They have survived many a strain internally, as well as externally, on Indo-U.S. mutual understanding and appreciation of each others position such as the scuttling of Indo-U.S. Foundation,⁶ poor performance of Congress under her leadership at the Fourth General Elections and the great Congress split, her strong stand in West Asian crisis and in Vietnam, etc.

Now for the first time, it appeared that the policy of India was unsuccessfully pleading with the West may be finally adopted by the latter which in essence means accepting India as the biggest bulwork of "democracy" against Communism. It looked as if Nehru's daughter may ultimately

6. It was semi-officially confirmed in New Delhi and Washington on July 27th that by mutual consent the United States Government had set aside President Johnson's proposal.

succeed where he had so pitifully failed. Indian American reapproachment looked like a very auspicious beginning promising security both to her leadership of the political system and the system itself.

The Soviet support was no less necessary for the health and longevity of the Indian political system as it was for insuring her own political leadership against the formal Left parties. Thus when after 'devaluation' the promised gifts from the White House did not arrive inspite of the heavy concessions made by the World Bank⁷ and the after-effects, political as well as economic and financial, started straining the system, she visited Soviet Union , for her own political survival mainly.

Enroute Moscow, she visited the two non-aligned countries, United Arab Republic and Yugoslavia, where, although, she could not win approval for her Vietnam proposal, it was decided to hold a tripartite summit in Delhi on 21st October, and to consolidate further the expanding co-operation and friendly relations between the three non-aligned countries.

However, Mrs. Gandhi drew a blank, as far as her six-point Vietnam proposal was concerned in Moscow. The

7. Even the old trick of nonaligned diplomacy of sending to the respective camps for "aid" and other business only those colleagues who are known to be pros of the Camp concerned was tried when S.K.Patil was sent to the United States of America in June without any tangible result.

Soviets, on the other hand got from her confirmations of India's already pronounced policy regarding such questions as the recognition of the reality of two German States, and other aspects of European Security, Tashkent spirit and the high appreciation of Soviet's positive and peaceful role towards it and the importance of an early agreement on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. She did not forget to reiterate India's China policy here also. Without mentioning China by name Mrs. Gandhi said at a Kremlin banquet on July, 15th, that "a major Asian power" had rejected peaceful co-existence and sought to weaken, if not overthrow, non-alignment. India got massive and decisive help in its industrialization program in the initial stages. In India also, it was the Soviet decision to help India with MIG factory, submarine and other military help that marked the deepening of Indo-Soviet relations.⁸ India needed these to secure itself against China. This marked the beginning of the tilting of nonalignment toward the Soviet Union.

With these assets and liabilities, derived from her foreign policy moves, she faced the Fourth General Elections in 1967, which ushered in new times for her party and her leadership. The Congress Party's humiliation at the polls combined with the debacle suffered by the bosses of the Congress at the hands of the electorate helped Mrs. Gandhi to retain her leadership of the Congress Parliamentary Party. Once elected Mrs. Gandhi did not lose time in asserting and demonstrating her independence of the deflated

8. Soviet Union was following a policy of considering India and Pakistan on equal footing and was thus arming Pakistan.

party bosses by immediately bringing in her list of ministers without consulting them at any stage.

A SHIFT IN POLICY:

When Mrs. Gandhi came to power, non-alignment had lost its initial lustre. There was a gradual thaw in Soviet-American relations during the period of detente. From the status of a nation trying to be a bridge between the two contending blocs, India's role underwent a change. She became a sort of cementing link between the United States and the Soviet Union. The content of non-alignment was undergoing a change. Though Mrs. Gandhi was apt to quote Nehru on appropriate occasions - especially at the conference of the non-aligned nations - she followed a policy in foreign relations which was different from his. Where Nehru had articulated India's national interests in flowing phrases of world-peace and cooperation, Indira Gandhi stressed security, territorial integrity and prestige, as integral parts of national interest.

This general shift in non-alignment is evident from the role she played in some international events.

Soviet-Pakistan arms deal:

The Soviet-Pakistan arms deal provoked a public outburst and brought to the fore the strong anti-Soviet lobby inside and outside her party. The opposition parties initiated adjournment motions in Parliament. They sought to censure the government for its failure in foreign

policy. A public demonstration took place in Delhi.

Mrs. Gandhi had a hard time defending the Indo-Soviet traditional friendly relation. Neither she nor her ministers thought fit to denounce the Soviet Union. Official explanations of the Soviet arms deal with Pakistan were restrained. Defending the traditionally friendly relations between India and Soviet Union, she could not conceal her embarrassment. Explaining in the famous Nehru style she said:

"The old divisions are no longer so sharp. Antagonism between the different blocs are giving way to a situation where the Soviet Union is trying to multiply bridges regardless of ideological differences ---- I was not surprised by the Russo-Pak deal not because I had any prior information but because speculation had been rife that the Soviet Union wanted closer relations with Pakistan without affecting friendship with India. We have no reason to believe that they would want to injure in anyway. Friendship is not exclusive. If you are friends with one you cannot prevent that person from having other friends."

Soviet Intervention of Czechoslovakia:

In the month following the Soviet-Pakistan arms deal, the Warsaw Pact power's armies headed by the Soviet Union "invaded" the territory of one of their own

members, the Communist Czechoslovakia in August, 1968.

Mrs. Gandhi expressed "profound concern and anguish, but added: "A government cannot be swept away by emotions."⁹ In the U.N. Security Council, the Indian representative voiced all the proper sentiments in favour of self-determination and the withdrawal of foreign troops, and against the violation of the territorial integrity and political independence of Czechoslovakia. But India abstained from voting in the Security Council when a resolution condemning Soviet action was put. On August, 23, Mrs. Gandhi explaining her course of action in the Rajya Sabha said that India would have voted for the resolution if a milder word such as 'deplore' had been used instead of 'condemn'.¹⁰ Ashok Mehta resigned from Mrs. Gandhi's Cabinet on this issue.

Mrs. Gandhi's timidity in dealing with Soviet Union and the obvious tilting of Indian nonalignment towards the Soviet Union marked a change in the content of non-alignment. Whereas Nehru was open and strong in his criticism of any country's act of aggression on any other country, even if it involved considerable economic sacrifice, Mrs. Gandhi curbed her extravagant reactions to India's advantage. The abscission of American military assistance to India and Pakistan from 1967 to 1971 and the intensification of U.S.S.R. and Pakistan relationship alerted India to carve out a special relationship with the U.S.S.R.

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9. Indira Gandhi's statement in the Rajya Sabha 13th August, 1968. Foreign Affairs Record, August 1968.
 10. India's stance was similar to the one adopted in 1956 on the occasion of the Hungarian Uprising. For a full account, see, Surjit Mansingh's, "India and the Hungarian Revolution", India Quarterly, New Delhi, Vol. 21, no. 2, June 1965.

Nuclear Policy

The nuclear policy of Mrs. Gandhi was also different from that of Nehru. Whereas, Nehru had enthusiastically endorsed the Partial Test Ban Treaty in 1963, Mrs. Gandhi stoutly resisted pressure for signing the United States' and Soviet Union's jointly sponsored 'Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty' in 1968. She stated, on 6th May, 1967, that:

"We for our part may find ourselves having to take a nuclear decision any moment, and it is therefore not possible for us to tie our hands."

It was agreed that the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty had ignored the Security interest of India in view of the fact that China was not a member of the nuclear club. Mrs. Gandhi, thus consistently interpreted non-alignment to mean independent decision-making in the national interest.

On the question of nuclear weapons, Nehru had categorically declared that India would never manufacture nuclear weapons. In theory, Mrs. Gandhi was committed to the same policy, but in practice her attitude became ambivalent. The impression created by her various utterances was that she wanted to keep her options open with regard to nuclear weapons. Perhaps, she felt that the prestige value if not the deterrent value, of a nuclear explosion might be useful at a strategic moment either for domestic or for international purposes. Mrs. Gandhi's personality traits and her ambivalence with regard to India's nuclear programme left many with the impression, both in India and abroad that she would not desist from making military use of India's nuclear capability as and when the situation

demanded. When India exploded her first nuclear device in May 1974, many people saw this a justification and fulfilment of their earlier apprehension.

Although Mrs. Gandhi claimed that the explosion was a part of the process of developing nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, and as a peaceful "device" rather than a military "weapon", it was widely known, and pointed out by many foreign governments, that the distinction between a nuclear device and a nuclear weapon was semantic rather than technical. However, what is certain is that the Indian explosion further consolidated India's position as the dominant power in South Asia. After all, the super powers respected nuclear capability more than anything else; which is evident from the declaration made by Kissinger and the U.S. administration, soon after the Indian explosion, that the U.S. respected India as a major power in South Asia and that a "more mature and equal relationship" could now be constructed between the two countries.

The years since the Bangladesh war had witnessed the growth of factionalism within the Congress, a deterioration of the economic situation in the country, and a slow but steady erosion of Mrs. Gandhi's popularity. The nuclear explosion was a great image-booster for Indira Gandhi and the Congress in this situation.

Thus while Nehru remained firmly opposed to any nuclear explosion anywhere in the World, Mrs. Gandhi went ahead with what, to all appearances, was an independent and verbally camouflaged nuclear weapon programme for India. She gave no assurance that such explosions for peaceful purposes would not be repeated in the future.

Speaking on Indian Nuclear Explosion, a foreign scholar observed:

"----- the Gandhism which prevails in India today is not that of the Mahatma, but rather that of Mrs. Indira Gandhi, who has been Minister for Atomic Energy, as well as, Prime Minister ever since 1966. The political style of Mrs. Gandhi may be said to combine the modernizing ideas of her father, Jawaharlal Nehru, but without his Hamlet like hesitancy. Her decisiveness in practice, her skill in crisis management, is more reminiscent of Sardar Patel - tough, realistic, not given to gratuitous explanations and justifications, though without his touch of Hindu chauvinism.¹¹

Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation:

In Nehru's time non-alignment as an operational foreign policy was essentially directed against Western domination. While the rhetoric of non-alignment equated the two super-

11. Peter Lyon, "The Indian Bomb; Nuclear Tests for Peaceful Purposes?",
The Round Table (London) October, 1974.

powers - the United States of America and the Soviet Union - but even in actual practice, and beyond the rhetoric, in fact, non-alignment tilted towards the Soviet Union and the Socialist World, specially from the beginning of the seventies. India under Mrs. Gandhi entered into a bilateral agreement with the Soviet Union. The Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Co-operation of 1971 is a classic example of this tilting of non-alignment towards the Soviet Union.

On 9th August 1971, a twenty years, Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation, was signed. The developments between March and August, 1971 constrained Mrs Gandhi to sign this controversial defence pact. The military developments in East Pakistan, which later came to be known as Bangladesh, supply of American arms and ammunition to Pakistan, the U.S. - China diplomacy and the failure of the General Assembly of the United Nations to take note of the atrocities and other political developments in Bangladesh compelled India to strengthen its military capabilities. The non-alignment policy of Mrs. Gandhi was highly criticized both at home and abroad. Its credibility was questioned and its operational arrangements among the non-aligned countries were suspected. The operative part of the treaty merely stated: 'In the event of either party being subjected to an attack or a threat thereof, the High Contracting Parties shall immediately enter into mutual consultations in order to remove such threat and to take appropriate measures to ensure

peace and the security of their countries.¹² But even in this diluted form, the military implications of the treaty were clear enough as a signal to China and U.S.A. Probably, without this treaty India would have suffered a strategic setback worse than that of 1962. Soviet support for India undoubtedly helped India's victory in the War. Soviet deliveries of India's increased arms purchases in the last quarter of 1971 were prompt. Significantly, China condemned the free Bangladesh and accused India of interfering in the internal affairs of Pakistan. However, it refrained from making any commitment of direct involvement in the crisis.

It is not surprising that Indians frequently call attention to Article 4 of the Indo-Soviet Treaty, according to which the Soviet Union 'respects India's policy of non-alignment.' Notwithstanding this, the Indo-Soviet Treaty created new precedents for both states. The twenty years commitment made by Mrs. Gandhi to a super power would possibly have been avoided by Nehru in the 1950's.

So controversial was the treaty and so different had non-alignment become from its original shape and form that the movement was called 'New Alignment'. After signing of the Indo-Soviet Treaty Mrs Gandhi began to speak in accents of determination and powers.

12. Article 9 - Text of Treaty of Peace, Friendship and co-operation between India and Soviet Union 9th August 1971.

Rapport with the South and South-East Nations:

The basic orientation of India's foreign policy in 1973 was in many ways totally different from what it was earlier. From 1972 till 1977 India was deeply involved in establishing rapport with its South and South East Asian neighbours. Mrs. Gandhi was not interested in seeking a global role any more, nor the super powers were interested in soliciting India's good offices to solve international crisis. India did not play any role in the Vietnam settlement of January 1973 unlike in Korea War in 1950 or the Geneva Conference of 1954 or the Arab-Israeli conflict. In her speech in the Algiers Conference of non-aligned countries, Mrs. Gandhi said: "We have not come here to negotiate or to settle disputes."¹³

Mrs. Gandhi was more interested in achieving economic and political stability at home, defence of its borders and in building up security on a base other than international good will. She tried to improve the country's relations with all the significant nations of the world whose ties with India had been secured by major tensions in recent years, i.e., Pakistan, China and the USA, which enabled it to achieve greater freedom of action. During the eleven years under her leadership, India recaptured its international prestige.

13. Embassy of India, Washington D.C., India News, 14th September 1973.

Some examples of Mrs. Gandhi's strenuous efforts to seek friendly and harmonious relations with her neighbour are the steps taken to further the process of normalization with Pakistan by resumption of several links, opening of possibilities of trade and re-establishment of diplomatic relations. Bangladesh was advised to shed its policy of obsession and not to internationalise the controversy over sharing of the Ganga water.¹⁴ The diplomatic relations between India and China were resumed. There was discussion with the Ceylonese (now Sri Lanka) Government regarding the problem of minorities. India followed a pragmatic approach in refusing the former Burmese Prime Minister U Nu's request for political asylum in June 1973. Economic initiatives were taken with Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand. India supported Vietnam's admission into the United Nations; it advocated the reunification of two zones of Vietnam.

Indira Gandhi supported the intensification of the national liberation movements against the white minority regimes in Zimbabwe and Namibia and the struggle in South Africa under the leadership of African National Congress.

14. In spite of her emphasis on bilateral negotiations, goodwill and spirit of accommodation, relations with Bangladesh continued to be under crisis till the Farakka Agreement was signed by the Janata Government.

Thus, the main aim of her foreign policy was to reduce the causes of conflict, to spread the area of detente and to broaden the base of bilateral and regional co-operation within a wide international co-operative frame-work, embracing particularly the Third World.

Even as India's role in fostering friendly and harmonious relations in the subcontinent was commended, it was suspected that India was gradually losing the status that it had gained after the Bangladesh war. Criticism was specially directed at India's seemingly inability to take a firmer stand during the negotiations with Pakistan. Even in Bangladesh, a large section of opinion had become increasingly hostile and suspicious of Indian influence and assistance. This image was further damaged by the dismal picture at home where a serious decline in political and economic order had set in and Mrs. Gandhi's government was under constant challenge. Civil disturbances continued unabated in the country and clearly Mrs. Gandhi's rule was being slowly undermined. Opposition parties lost no opportunity in increasing their volume of criticism. In the external relations India found itself largely on the defensive handing out explanations for events which engulfed the country and overshadowed its foreign affairs interests.

The explosion of India's first nuclear device on 18th May 1974 coming in the wake of

these difficulties, therefore, not only deflected attention from these problems but also boosted the nations morale. The record food harvest in 1975-76 further boosted India's image abroad, but the basic socio-economic problems remained unresolved, with the result that popular discontent and the number of unemployed and under-employed continued to increase.

These factors along with the excesses committed during the emergency played a major role in the defeat of Mr.Gandhi's Government in the March, 1977, elections.

Return of Mrs.Gandhi in 1980.

In January 1980 elections Mrs.Gandhi returned to power by as decisive a vote as that which had swept her out of power in March 1977.¹⁵ Expectations ran high that she would provide her problem-ridden country with a 'government that worked.'¹⁶ Mrs.Gandhi was also expected to play an active role in world affairs, which were fraught with political and economic tensions of crisis proportions.

15.As a result of the 1980 elections, the party position in the Lok Sabha was as follows:

Congress (I) - 351 ;	Congress (U) - 13;	Janata -31;
Lok Dal - 41;	CPI - 11;	CPM -35;
D.M.K. - 16;	Independents - 6;	Others -21.

Data India, New Delhi, January 1980, p.13.

16.One of the slogans used by Congress (I) during election campaign.

Throughout the first year of Mrs. Gandhi's second term of office, a procession of foreign dignitaries moved through New Delhi to obtain her views or gain influence with her.¹⁷ Mrs. Gandhi herself went to Salisbury in March 1980 to attend the independence day celebrations of Zimbabwe and thus testify to India's continuing interest in the decolonisation process in Africa. She also attended the funeral of Yugoslavia's President, Marshal Joseph Broz Tito, in May 1980 in recognition of his friendship with her father, and to reinforce the mutual interest that the two countries had in ensuring the viability of nonalignment. India played host to the United Nations Conference on Industrial Development in February 1980, to the Commonwealth Regional Conference in September, and most important, to the Foreign Ministers Meeting of the Nonaligned Nations in February 1981. Thus, with Mrs. Gandhi at the helm of affairs once again, India's importance was being recognised in the world.

17. They included President Giscard d'Estaing of France, Chairman Leonid Brezhnev of the Soviet Union, President Portillo of Mexico, President Ziaur Rehman of Bangladesh, the Prime Ministers of Vietnam and Singapore, the Foreign Ministers of Pakistan, Indonesia and Japan, and special emissaries from the United States.

HESITATION IN SOLVING GRAVE ISSUES:

In spite of the non-aligned movement getting world wide recognition and the strengthening of her position internally and externally, Mrs. Gandhi exhibited her limitations and obvious hesitation in taking a firm stand in solving some grave problems that were threatening the prospects of peace, security and development in the world. It appeared that the non-aligned had lost their initiative, credibility and problem solving capacity even in matters that concerned, the vital interests of their own members. From Kampuchea to Afghanistan, from Algiers-Morocco dispute to the skirmishes around the Horn of Africa and over the disastrous Iran-Iraq conflict, the non-aligned movement revealed strange limitations and incapacity to play a decisive role either as a moderator, arbitrator or even as a negotiator. Some of these problems and India's controversial role in handling them has been discussed.

Towards the end of the chapter the controversial IMF loan of \$ 5.7 billion approved for India in November 1981 and the extent to which Mrs. Gandhi succumbed to U.S. pressure in seeking the loan has been discussed.

Afghan Conflict

Developments in Afghanistan, beginning December 1979 led to a massive military intervention there by the Soviet Union. This was the most serious challenge to

the basic tenets and framework of the non-aligned movement. In the General Assembly, Indian representative spoke in a language which almost conveyed a repudiation of the concept itself. He recalled India's vital concern for peace and security in the area, reiterated its opposition to the presence of foreign troops and leases in any country and then went on to say:

"----- the Soviet Government has assured our Government that its troops went to Afghanistan at the request of the Afghan Government and we have been further assured that the Soviet troops will be withdrawn when requested to do so by the Afghan Government. We have no reason to doubt such assurance particularly from a friendly country, like the Soviet Union, with which we have many close ties."¹⁸

This meant that Mrs. Gandhi's Government was putting up a new proposition, viz. that if a "friendly" country militarily occupied another country, it was no threat to peace or to the integrity and political independence of the country so occupied; and that any similar action by others, i.e., by countries not friendly to India,

18. United Nations Document A/ES 6/PV 3, 11th January, 1980, pp.11-12.

should be condemned.

This was a far cry from what independent India's first prime minister had spelt out as the cardinal principles of India's foreign policy and what India had professed to pursue ever since, viz pursuit of international peace not through alignment with any major power or group of powers but through an independent approach to each conflict situation.

Commenting on India's approach towards Afghan issue, a diplomat has expressed that:

"It is not so much that India's non-aligned policy is weaker now than it was before as that the capacity of the non-aligned to influence the actions of great powers is now noticeably feebler inspite of the movement's apparent success in achieving near universality in the United Nations - a success which as many of us realize, is only technical."¹⁹

The Iran-Iraq War:-

Even in finding a solution to the problem of Iran-Iraq war, there does not appear to have been any special effort on the part of India to bring about a peaceful settlement through the nonaligned movement either at the Bureau or in the United Nations apart from general resolutions.

19. Krishna Gopal, Nonalignment and Power Politics, Part II.

Kampuchea

On the question of Vietnamese invasion of and continuing presence in Kampuchea and the installation by them of the Heng Samrin regime, India has recognised the latter arguing that wisdom and realism lie in strengthening it, if the Vietnamese are ever to quit and the region to become stable enough to keep out all meddlers. Considerable controversy has been raised with regard to our stand and many have bemoaned that India has tilted towards one side and implicitly compromised her nonalignment.

On the question of representation of Kampuchea at the Havana Summit in 1979, India and some other countries tabled a motion calling upon the Assembly to suspend consideration of the question and keep the seat vacant. The Indian draft even failed to get the support of the majority of nonaligned countries.

The IMF Loan

The IMF Loan secured by India in November, 1981 was an indication of the pro-westward shift in Indian foreign policy. There was quite a controversy over the \$ 5.7 billion IMF Loan approved to India. After heated discussions in both the houses and in the light of the speeches of the Finance Minister and the Prime Minister, a majority of the members gave their general support to the loan - inspite of the strong attack mounted against it by the West Bengal Government in its White Paper titled: The IMF Loan - Facts and Issues.

It held that firstly, the loan was not necessary, secondly, even if it was necessary it need not have been so large and so trammelled with conditions, thirdly, given the loan almost all the conditions imply the surrender of economic sovereignty of India and a reversal of the fundamental postulates of the working of the Indian economic system. Finally, the loan, in all probability will put India into a deeper debt trap.²⁰

In short the IMF Loan speaks of a foreign policy which is well past its phase of 'playing one power against the other'. It is more a policy of 'going down under one power rather than the other'.²¹ Probably, Nehru would have done things differently. Surrender of our economic sovereignty and the murmur of protest that the IMF Loan has generated are a good indication that those who swear by Nehru have severed all connection with old fashioned nationalism.

Thus, while Mrs. Gandhi's second tenure in office began under a cloud created by India's controversial stand on Afghanistan, it ended under no less a controversial cloud created by the \$5.7 billion IMF loan to India approved in November 1981. In the first instance it was questioned whether India had become aligned to the Soviet Union; in the second instance, it was also asked whether India had not knuckled down to United States policy directives, in seeking

20. These points are summarized from the White Paper published by West Bengal Government, IMF Loan: Facts and Issues.

21. G.P.D. - The Lady Doth Protest too Much, Economic and Political Weekly, Vol. XVIII, no. 13, 27th March 1982, p. 483.

the loan. In both instances suspicion was expressed that India's national interest had been compromised and definite shifts in foreign policy had taken place, although, Mrs. Gandhi, time and again, maintained that India was neither pro-Soviet nor pro-U.S., but pro-its own interests.

This shift in foreign policy and her handling of the various problems discussed above were, to quite some extent, influenced by the domestic environment at home. In Assam, the 'sons of the soil' saw their ethnic and cultural identity in danger and their political power threatened, by a steady influx of 'foreigners' - allegedly from Bangladesh - who were altering the demographic balance of the state. The Assamese youth tried to pressurize the central government to protect their interests which resulted in the paralysis of economic and educational activity which lasted more than three years and affected more than north eastern India because Assam supplied vital oil and timber to the country.

In many parts of India, those belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Tribes were being brutalised and murdered, as the more privileged groups in society tried to keep them out from the land, educational institutions, and civil rights available to them by law.

Through the urban centres of northern India swept a fire of communal violence between Hindus and Muslims. In Punjab there was widespread acts of terrorism by those who were demanding a separate state of Khalistan.

Besides all this, Mrs. Gandhi had inherited a divided and self-seeking leadership in the Congress Party whose support to her was qualified. Though her self-possession and prestige grew in contrast to their disrepute, her failure to win the esteem of her colleagues - and subsequent opponents - diminished her international image which, in turn affected her decisions in foreign policy.

EVALUATION, OF MRS. GANDHI'S ROLE

From the preceding two chapters on Nehru and Indira Gandhi, a marked dilution of India's commitment to non-alignment, after Nehru's era, is evident. Nehru carried out an activist policy of mediation and conciliation during a period when the cold war was at its peak and several Afro-Asian nations, emerging from their liberation struggle against capitalist domination and not wanting to be the ward of either bloc, were being attracted to the policy of non-alignment. However Mrs. Gandhi's policy of non-alignment has been comparatively passive. India has been quite passive in involving herself in questions outside her immediate sphere of interest, mainly because she was involved in two major crisis one just before Mr. Gandhi's coming to power and the other during her rule. At the same time two major developments beyond India's capacity to effect the result took place; the American involvement in Vietnam War and the Sino-Soviet Conflict. Besides, the super powers were working together in some areas like nuclear non-proliferation with which she had no sympathy or manoeuvring to outsmart

each other in an arms race, which we had no capacity to control. In this climate of enforced passivity Mrs.Gandhi shifted the emphasis of Indian diplomacy of Non-alignment to the economic and technological gap between the rich and the poor and to a more detailed and ostentatious interest in good neighbourliness. Thus, during her first eleven years, Mrs.Gandhi recaptured India's international prestige and played a worthy if not too prominent role in the non-aligned movement.

While the second term of Mrs.Gandhi's office was marked with the strengthening of her position, both externally and internally, and the nonaligned movement getting worldwide recognition, she showed obvious hesitation in solving problems that were threatening peace, security and development in the world, largely due to the fact that, in 1980, she did not have any new or imaginative solutions to the profound problems of socio-economic development in a land of infinite diversity. All she did was to deploy the police and the army to quell the disturbances. This inability to put an end to the domestic problems in the country affected her handling of the international problems.

CHAPTER III

COMPARISON OF THE ROLES OF THE TWO LEADERS

There is a marked difference between Nehru's and Indira Gandhi's policy of non-alignment. Though Mrs. Gandhi was apt to quote Nehru on appropriate occasions - especially at non-aligned Conferences - she followed a policy in foreign relations which was different from his. Whereas Nehru had articulated India's national interests in flowery phrases of world peace and cooperation, Indira Gandhi stressed it through more tangible goals like security, territorial integrity and prestige as integral parts of national interest.

The constant desire to adhere to general principles, without realising the difficulty of applying them to practical situations, was indeed a general weakness running through the entire gamut of India's policy under Nehru. For example, for a decade and a half and until after the Chinese aggression, Nehru did not accept external military assistance for fear of compromising non-alignment. It was largely because of this doctrinaire opposition to external military assistance, Nehru's desperate appeal in 1962 for military assistance to stem the Chinese aggression must have made the whole world, and in particular the two super powers, to laugh in their sleeves at the humiliating reversal of policy that the appeal represented. On the other hand Mrs. Gandhi was more realistic in her approach and asked for external military help during the Bangladesh War, much before the actual crisis came. For her, security and territorial integrity were more important even at the cost of compromising the ideology of

non-alignment.

Similarly, Nehru used to make a little too much of India's adherence to Panchsheela. Adherence to the principles was not wrong in itself, but Nehru should not have placed absolute reliance on Panchsheela and neglected the duty of acquiring reasonable military strength.

Mrs. Gandhi, on the other hand, tried to win sympathy for India's position in the international sphere but she did not completely rely on this verbal sympathy. Even while she was on a visit to different nations before the Bangladesh war, contingency plans were being perfected by the Indian defence forces. Though, she repeatedly declared that India did not intend to use force and what it was seeking was a political solution, Mrs Gandhi could not but prepare an alternative plan in case no peaceful solution of the problem could be achieved in time. However, Nehru's adherence to the principle of peaceful approach paralysed the capacity for timely and effective action.

Nehru, before the Chinese aggression, appeared to have based the pursuit of non-alignment on the assumption that such a position necessarily meant maintaining relatively weak military establishment, presumably under the belief that augmenting our peace-time military establishment might provoke our aligned and unaligned neighbours and tarnish our World image as a peace-loving nation. However, Mrs. Gandhi did not seem to feel the same. While she emphasized the

need of a peaceful approach to the solution of various problems, she did not desist from acquiring military strength. Besides, while Nehru had categorically declared that India would never manufacture nuclear weapons, Mrs. Gandhi, by her various utterances, created the impression that she wanted to keep her option open. Perhaps she felt that the prestige value if not the deterrent value of acquiring nuclear weapons might be useful at a strategic moment for domestic or international purposes.

Nehru also over-emphasized India's anxiety for a peaceful solution of dispute in respect of the Portuguese possessions. Nehru had proclaimed that India would never use force for the liberation of Goa from Portuguese colonial rule. Thus when India did use force the whole world was shocked. The point is that India should have maintained that, while it desired peaceful settlement, the right to use force is the sovereign right of all nations; that India would not surrender it; and that India would exercise it if and when its vital interests so demanded. And perhaps the Portuguese Government would have also come to the negotiating table in case India were to exercise its right to use force. Mrs. Gandhi, however, stressing the need for exercising restraint conceded that they could not remain passive spectators to the atrocities on the East Pakistani's by West Pakistan. While she discouraged talk of war or threat of war, she warned that they would have to consider the national interest, they could not allow

Pakistan to disturb the peace and stability of India.

The developments in the international arena between March and August, 1971 constrained Mrs.Gandhi to sign the highly controversial defence pact with the Soviet Union. The military implications of the treaty were clear enough . It is doubtful that with his aversion for security oriented **pact Nehru** would have signed such a treaty, negating the very principles of non-alignment. In any case the 20 years commitment made by Mrs.Gandhi to a super power would most likely have been avoided by Nehru.

In the Chinese dispute with India, over territorial claims, Nehru firmly stuck to India's legal claim to the area and refused to negotiate any settlement based on political or military considerations. Seeing India in a militarily weaker position, Mrs.Gandhi would probably have come to a settlement with China, as she did when she agreed to devalue the Indian rupee in return of financial aid and foodgrain from the United States. Nehru would probably have never agreed to the conditional loans by the International Monetary Funds as Mrs.Gandhi did, and Nehru actually resisted all pressures by the western powers, including the International Monetary Funds and World Bank, to devalue the Indian rupee since the beginning of the second Five Year Plan in 1956, and despite severe foreign exchange crisis.¹

1. Cheryl Payers- The Debt Trap: The IMF and the Third World, Penguin, 1974, Monthly Review Press, 1975.

CHAPTER IV

SINO-INDIAN WAR POLITICS

Peaceful and friendly relations with China formed an important core of Nehru's foreign policy. The People's Republic of China was officially proclaimed in Peking on 1st October, 1949. India extended official recognition to the People's Republic on 30th December 1949. The emergence of Communist China as a unified and centralized state posed many grave policy questions before India in 1949, and the Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru was not unaware of them. On one occasion he said:

" Ever since the Chinese Revolution, we naturally had to think of what the new China was likely to be. ----- We knew that a strong China is normally an expansionist China ----- Taken with the fact of China's somewhat inherent tendency to be expansive when she is strong, we realized the danger to India ----- As the years have gone by, this fact has become more and more apparent and obvious. If any person imagines that we have followed our China policy without realizing the consequences, he is mistaken. If he thinks that we have followed it because of fear of China, he is doubly mistaken."¹

How should India deal with this new power on her frontier? Should India's policy towards China be one of hostility? Would it be favourable to India to come into conflict with this big neighbour with incalculable consequences, even while India was already occupied in a

1. Cited in Khilnani, N.M. 'Realities of Indian Foreign Policy', New Delhi, 1984, p.35.

conflict with its north western neighbour? Should China be treated as a potential enemy or a possible friend? Should India endeavour to arrive at modus vivendi and thus avoid permanent hostility in her relations with China? Thus, the possibility that a strong and militarist China could become a menace to freedom in Asia was never ruled out by Nehru.

The Chinese challenge was not unanticipated. In a speech broadcast from New Delhi, six days after the formation of the Interim Government, Nehru said:

"China, that mighty country with a mighty past, our neighbour has been our friend through the ages and that friendship will endure and grow. We earnestly hope that her present troubles will end soon and a united and democratic China will emerge, playing a great part in the furtherance of world peace and progress.²

Probably Nehru thought that if the Communist revolution in China was dealt with sympathetically and if the new regime were brought into the world community of nations, perhaps this revolution might find its human moorings quickly & then India might be able to live peacefully with her Himalayan neighbour.

2. See Nehru, I, n.12, p.3

The essentials of Nehru's China policy stemmed from his conviction that India and China were big countries with an important part to play in world affairs. During a Lok Sabha debate on foreign affairs on 30th September 1954, Nehru said:

"Leaving these three big countries, the United States of America, the Soviet Union and China, aside for the moment, look at the world. There are many advanced, highly cultural countries. But if you peep into the future and if nothing goes wrong - wars and the like - the obvious fourth country is India."³

He added:

"Countries like China and India, once they get rid of foreign domination and internal disunity, inevitably become strong; there is nothing to stop them."⁴

If China and India are the third and fourth potentially big powers of the world, it followed

3. J.L.Nehru, India's Foreign Policy: Selected Speeches, September, 1946 - April 1961 (New Delhi, 1961, p.305.

4. Ibid.

for Nehru, that they could, by living amicably and cooperating together, advance the cause of world peace and human progress.⁵

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL SCENARIO

Despite some friction between the two countries during 1950-51, mainly arising out of the Chinese misunderstanding of India's attitude on Tibet, peace, cooperation and friendship marked the relationship between India and China, in the early years. The Indian delegation to the General Assembly of the United Nations sponsored resolutions, year after year, urging that the Government of the People's Republic of China should represent China in the United Nations.⁶ There were exchanges of state visits by the Prime Ministers of China and India. The establishment of India-China Friendship Associations, the visits of cultural delegations to and from China, the conclusion of trade agreements, visits of technical experts, artists and sportsmen evidenced growing friendship and mutual confidence between the two countries.

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5. Nehru's speech at a banquet in honour of Chou-En-lai, Prime Minister of China, at New Delhi on 26th June 1954, Nehru, n.2, p.307.
 6. On 7th October 1959, 14th November 1951, 25th October 1952, 28th September, 1953, 21st September 1954, 20th September 1955, 10th November 1956, 13th September 1957, and 14th July 1958.

Besides the above, India voted against a resolution in the United Nations General Assembly in February 1951 branding the People's Republic of China as an "aggressor" in Korea. India declined to attend a conference convened at San Francisco in September 1951 to sign a Peace Treaty with Japan, because, among other reasons, China was not a party to it. In 1953, India introduced a resolution in the United Nations General Assembly on the question of the prisoners of war; Nehru declared that the resolution was intended to accommodate the view point of China, as far as possible, on that question. India pleaded for the restitution of Formosa and the off-shore islands to the People's Republic of China.⁷

India's policy of friendship was reciprocated for some years by China when it publicly supported India's claim to Goa and criticized the US-sponsored resolution

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7. Speaking at a Press Conference on 7th September 1958, Nehru said: " No country could tolerate an island 12 miles from its shores being owned as a base for attack on it. India therefore felt that the off-shore islands immediately and later Formosa should belong to the People's Republic of China". The Statesman (New Delhi), 8th September 1958. See also Asian Recorder (New Delhi), 1955, p.139.

on Kashmir in the Security Council in January 1957. The hall-mark in the development of friendly relations was reached when an agreement with China on Trade and Intercourse between the Tibet region of China and India was signed. The Preamble to the agreement came to be known as Panchsheela which was to govern their mutual relations.⁸

Beginning in June, 1954, with the arrival of Chou-En-Lai in India and the subsequent joint statements by the two Premiers putting forth the doctrine of Panchsheela, Nehru visualized that the era of Hindu-Chini Bhai Bhai had finally arrived. Nehru played a leading role in providing China a prominent position at the Afro-Asian Conference held at Bandung in April 1955. In 1954, India signed an agreement with China recognizing China's sovereignty over Tibet. Thus, between 1954-57, Indo-China relations touched their high point.

8. The principles of Panchsheela were-

1. Mutual respect for each others territorial integrity and sovereignty;
2. Mutual non-aggression;
3. Mutual non-interference in each others internal affairs;
4. Equality and mutual benefits; and
5. Peaceful Coexistence.

India on its side gave up all extra-territorial rights and privileges enjoyed by it in Tibet and inherited by independent India from the British Indian Government and recognized Tibet as a region of China.

As mentioned earlier, there was some friction between the two countries during 1950-51, mainly arising out of Chinese misunderstanding of India's attitude in Tibet. The Government of India in October 1950, in a friendly spirit, drew the attention of the Government of China to the possible harmful consequences of their use of force to "liberate" Tibet, and received a rude reply. Before 1949, India used to maintain a Consulate General at Kashgar in Sinkiang; after the Communists came to power in 1949, they refused India permission to maintain the Consulate and declared Sinkiang a closed area.⁹ The Government of India was pressed to withdraw their Political Agent from Lhasa and India agreed, converting their Political Agency into a Consulate-General.¹⁰ Again on 6th October 1954, Nehru drew the attention of the Chinese leaders to the question of some maps published in China showing an incorrect boundary alignment between the two countries. Chou-En-Lai, in reply, sought to treat these maps as merely a reproduction of old pre-liberation days maps and that the Government of the People's Republic have had no time to

9. P.C.Chakravarthi, "India China Relations", (Calcutta, 1961) pp. 56-57

10. Ibid

revise them. However, it was from October 1957 that Indo-China border-disputes began to emerge with some regularity and intensity.

Soviet Thrust:

In 1955-56, the Soviet leaders responded more than enthusiastically to Nehru's attempts to cultivate a specially close relationship with the U.S.S.R. Some argue that this Soviet thrust was designed to counter-balance the growing Chinese militancy in international affairs by shoring up India's economic and military capabilities. However this is highly unlikely because such attempts by Nehru much predated any perception of threat from China. Such attempts were more likely to remain equidistant in the cold war rivalry. Further more, the now well known Sino-Soviet split had reached a decisive and critical stage by 1957. As Premier Nikita S.Khrushchev's Memoirs indicated, in his view, a Sino-Soviet reconcilliation appeared extremely unlikely because the Chinese were so obstinate on matters dividing the two Communist powers."¹¹ The Chinese began to be suspicious of India's close relationship with the Soviet Union. Perhaps, unknowingly, Nehru fell into the Soviet scheme of introducing a wedge between India and China. The Chinese, in turn, revived their claims upon Indian Territory and started to put pressure on her. This assumption is specially appealing when we recall that, earlier in 1955, Nehru drew Premier Chou-En-Lai's attention to Chinese maps showing parts of Indian territory as belonging to China. Chou-En-lai,

11. Khrushchev : Members (New York: Harper & Row, 1970)

merely dismissed them as old Kuomintang Publications that the new regime had not gotten around to revising.

U.S. attitude

During the forties and fifties, Nehru's policy of non-alignment did not evoke appropriate response. John Foster Dulles considered India's non-alignment 'immoral'. Besides, as compared to the neighbouring 'Asiatic' U.S.S.R., Nehru considered U.S. a distant power with its "cultural imperialism" and its provocative global military stances, United States had to be kept away from South Asia.

When the new Communist Government came into power in 1949, both India and United States found themselves poles apart in their relations with the regimes. Pursuing a policy of containment of communism everywhere, the American Government looked upon the new Government in China as a hostile one. While India extended its diplomatic recognition to the People's Republic of China, the United States declined to do so. The United States on the other hand, recognised the Nationalist Government at Formosa as the only real and legitimate Government in China, while India did not.

The question of China's representation in the United Nations created additional hostility in the United States towards India, as the United States Government opposed the admission of People's Republic of

China into the United Nations vehemently while India supported it.

With the outbreak of the Korean war in 1950, the 'Chinese Question' assumed new dimensions in Indo-American relations. The United States considered the aggression on South Korea as part of the "international conspiracy of communism" emanating from the Soviet Union, with whom China was aligned. The American Government hoped that the Indian Government would now see the Communist aggressiveness and stop supporting the seating of Communist China in the United Nations. The American resolution in the United Nations branding China as an aggressor was bitterly opposed by India.

Domestic Public Opinion:

As explained in Chapter I, Nehru emerged as a leader of the National Liberation Movement, enjoying political and moral legitimacy with the masses. He was the chief spokesman of the Congress. He retained an "extraordinary status within the Congress" as a sole repository of final decisions, master of his own household.¹² His singular position as the maker of India's foreign policy was completely undisturbed. Nehru's own mass base, built through the years of struggle for national liberation, helped him defy the domestic critics of his foreign policy.¹³

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- *2. Michael Brecher, Nehru: A Political Biography, Oxford University Press, London, 1959, pp 435,436.
13. Ashwini K.Ray, Nonalignment: Retrospect and Prospect p.62 (Nonalignment and Neutrality - Preceding of the Indo-Australian Seminar (Ed.) by K.P.Misra)

His unrealistic and baseless glorification of the 2000 years old friendly India-China relations responsible for the lack of vigilance in our borderland also was not criticized at home.

CIRCUMSTANCES LEADING TO THE WAR AND NEHRU'S ROLE:

What was to turn into the Indo-China border war in 1962, began with occasional incursions by armed Chinese military parties along the Indo-Chinese border in the North-West and North-East regions, starting 1955. During 1955-56 period, however, there were only four such incidents and the situation did not seem to cause the Indian Government any serious concern. At the same time the Chinese felt that the 'Indian armed personnel' have unlawfully intruded into 'Chinese territory' despite the 'solemn warning' of the Chinese frontier guards.¹⁴

From October 1957, border intrusions by China assumed a certain pattern and frequency. In September 1957, however, the Government of India learnt from an announcement by the Chinese Government that a motor road had been constructed from Yehcheng to Gartok through the

14. Government of India, Ministry of External Affairs, Notes, Memorandum & Letters Exchanged between the Government of India and China, White Paper No. II, September-November 1959, p.p. 1, 3, 13 & 59 and White Paper no. IV, March 1960 in November 1960, p. 25.

Aksai Chin area. But the Government of India waited till 18th October 1958 to submit an informal note of protest on the issue. This note was written with a view to seeking the release of one of the Army patrols (sent in the summer of 1958 for verifying the alignment of the Sinkiang - Tibet Road, who were presumably in the Chinese custody. The Chinese Government released and deported the Indian patrol through the Karakoram pass on October 22, but they protested against Indian personnel conducting unlawful surveys within Chinese territory. Already on 21 August 1958, the Government of India had written a Note objecting to the boundary of China with India as shown in a map published in the China Pictorial, July 1958. In this Note, for the first time objection was taken about large areas of eastern Ladakh being shown as Chinese territory.¹⁵ The publication of maps showing Indian territory as part of China in the 'China Pictorial' evoked delayed and informal protests from Nehru to which there was no favourable response from China. The Chinese

15. A protest had been made on July 2nd about the visit of the Chinese troops to Khurnak post in eastern Ladakh. Before this the Government of India showed concern about only the McMohan Line Border - Karunakar Gupta's book - The Hidden History of Sino-Indian Frontier, (Calcutta 1974)

Government replied that "these maps were reproductions of old maps and that it had not yet undertaken a survey of China's boundary, nor consulted with the countries concerned."¹⁶

Nehru's concern grew and on December, 1958, Nehru personally wrote to Chou-En-Lai on the issue of 'incorrect Chinese maps', specially objecting to a large part of NEFA (McMohan Line sector) being shown as part of China. He referred to the possibility of grave misunderstanding arising between the two countries out of this. However, there was no favourable response from Chou-En-Lai. In his reply to Nehru, on January 23, 1959, Chou-En-Lai stressed the point that "the Sino-India boundary has never been formally delimited", and objected to the way in which the Sino-Indian boundary was shown in the Western section in the Indian maps. On the McMohan line issue he said that the so called McMohan line was the product of the policy of aggression against the Tibet Region of China, and therefore, an "illegal line."¹⁷

In July 1959, Chinese armed forces came into Khurnak Fort in Ladakh and arrested an Indian patrol party in Aksai Chin. On 7th August a Chinese patrol crossed the Indian border in Khinzemane in NEFA. Nehru said in the Lok Sabha on 28, August, 1959, 'while I do not wish to take

16. Notes, Memoranda and Letters Exchanged and Agreement signed between the Government of India and China 1954-59 (New Delhi, 1959), PP 46,47.

17. Government of India, Ministry of External Affairs, Notes, Memoranda and Letters exchanged between the Government of India and China, White paper 1954-59, p.53. Even before that in July 1954, China laid claim to a 78sq.mile area along the Indo-Tibetan border called Barahoti. The Government of India protested against this.

any alarming view of the situation, we shall naturally be prepared for any eventuality and without fuss or shouting keep vigilant."¹⁸

On September 8, 1959, Chou-En-lai formally laid claims to some 50,000 sq.miles of Indian territory (in NEFA and Aksai Chin part of Ladakh). The claim had not been preferred earlier because, according to Chou-En-lai, 'conditions were not yet ripe for its settlement. In October 1959, Chinese troops penetrated into Ladakh and opened fire on an Indian patrol near the Kongka Pass killing some Indians. This incident brought Sino-Indian relations almost to a breaking point. The Indian public opinion was inflamed and the entire Nehru's China Policy came in for severe criticism at the hands of the opposition. Intermittent attempts at a peaceful negotiated settlement followed throughout much of 1958-60 but to no avail.

The most serious attempt to settle the border issue was made only when Chou-En-lai came to Delhi in April, 1960, and offered to formalize the India-China border in the North-Eastern sector in accordance with the "McMohan Line" provided that Nehru agreed to recognize Chinese claim to Aksai Chin area in the North-West, where Chinese had already built a road and were in physical control of the territory.

18. Lok Sabha Debates, Vol. 33, no. 19, 28th August 1959, columns. 4796-4801 & 4862-70.

19. Baljit Singh, India's Foreign Policy Analysis, (Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1976.)

Given that the Chinese were in a militarily stronger position in this sector, India would, probably have been both wise and realistic to come to a settlement with China. Nehru, however, firmly stuck to India's legal claim to the area and refused to negotiate any settlement based on political or military considerations.

The Tibetan Revolt

The political developments in Tibet, since the summer of 1958, contributed to a rapid worsening in Sino-Indian relations and made the solution of border dispute politically difficult for both the Governments, more so for the Government of India, as the expression of public opinion was much more free in India than in China.

In the middle of March 1959, there was a sudden uprising in Lhasa leading to the outbreak of hostilities between the Tibetans and the Chinese forces and as a result, the Dalai Lama fled to India. The Government of India granted him asylum and made it clear that although they sympathized with the Tibetans in their aspirations for autonomy they fully recognized the suzerainty of China and could not, in anyway, intervene in the developments inside Tibet.

Within the country Nehru faced a storm of protest at his 'inactivity' in the face of events in Tibet. He stuck to the policy that under the Panchsheel Agreement, he was not entitled to interfere in the internal affairs of China. Soon, Tibet lost autonomy.

Speaking in Parliament on 30, March 1959, on the Sino-Tibetan question, Nehru said that:

'Although it is important for us to have friendly relations with the great country China, our sympathies go out very much to the Tibetans --- We want to have friendly relations with the people of Tibet and we want them to progress in freedom.²⁰

This statement marked the beginning of the end of the 'Sino-Indian honeymoon'.

Impact of Nehru's Tibet policy on Sino-Indian Relations:

The impact of India's Tibet policy on Indo-China relations may be seen from the criticism made by the Chinese Government on 22 April 1959, over Peking Radio and in the People's Daily. They held that the Dalai Lama had been abducted by the rebels with the connivance of India and that he was "held under duress"²¹ by India. Secondly, India's expansionist ambitions were responsible for the rebellion in Tibet, India wanted to "turn Tibet into their colony or protectorate."

20. Lok Sabha Debates, Vol.28, 20th March - 4th April 1959, Cols. 8520-1.

21. Concerning the Question of Tibet, (Peking:1959) pp.80-97.

Prime Minister Nehru, in a dignified speech in the Lok Sabha,²² marked by restraint, refuted these allegations as "unbecoming and entirely void of substance".

Apart from these attacks, it was noted by the Government of India that, during the month following the Tibetan disturbances, normal facilities and courtesies expected in international relations were being denied to the Indian representatives and nationals in Tibet. Trade was also adversely affected, because of new currency regulations and restrictions imposed by the Chinese authorities on the border trade. The Government of India in various notes, protested to the Chinese Government against their unfriendly attitude.²³

In spite of all this, as late as October 21, 1959, at a Press Conference at Calcutta, Nehru said that he did not think that there was any "major idea" behind the recent Chinese incursions into Indian territory.²⁴ He added, "I am inclined to think that all these were tagged to Tibet". Again in December 1959, in an exclusive

22. Nehru, n.2, pp. 321-23.

23. Ministry of External Affairs Report. 1950-60, p.31.

24. Subhimal Dutt, With Nehru in the Foreign Office, (Calcutta, 1977)

interview with the veteran American journalist, A.T.Steele, Nehru said, "--- that (the Tibetan revolt) rather brought about a certain speed in the events in our borders, because the revolt in Tibet was being crushed by the Chinese forces and naturally came to our border where the fighting was on the other side."

When the April 1960, talks between the two Prime Ministers failed to resolve the boundary dispute, Nehru, in order to assuage public opinion, formed the so called 'forward policy' in 1961, the purpose of which was to establish some symbolic posts both in Ladakh and in NEFA, probably under pressure from the opposition parties.²⁵

By the middle of 1962, India had established some 43 new posts in Ladakh and had reoccupied some 2,500 sq.miles of Indian territory. China protested against the forward policy in Ladakh, against India's attempt " to realize its territorial claim unilaterally and by force," and warned that if India continued its military probings in Ladakh, " the Chinese-Government would have every reason to send troops to cross the so-called 'McMohan Line' and enter the vast area between the crest of the Himalayas and their southern foot."²⁶

25.Lt.Gen.B.M.Kaul, The Untold Story (New Delhi, 1967), p.281.

26.Notes, Memoranda and Letters Exchanged and Agreements signed between the Government of India and China 1954-59, pp.3-4.

However, India continued its forward policy in the Eastern Sector, and asked its troops to establish more forward posts in NEFA and move as close as possible to the McMahon Line. This probably was one of the reasons which provoked the Chinese to cross the McMahon Line in the Eastern Sector on September 8, 1962, and launch a large scale attack in the Western and the Eastern sectors of the border on 20 October 1962. On 24 October, Chou-En-lai put forward his three point proposal for cease-fire and disengagement.²⁷ The Government of India made the counter proposal that the status quo on the border as on 8th September 1962, should be restored and that the two countries should then enter into discussions. Further violations took place.

On 21 November, 1962, the Chinese announced their unilateral ceasefire and their decision to withdraw. India declined to accept the terms of the unilateral cease fire but stated that it will not interfere with the cease-fire. She reiterated the previous demand for the restoration of status quo ante (8 September 1962) in all sectors of the boundary, as a condition precedent to a mutually agreed cease-fire. A stalemate ensued.

27. For details, see Government of India, Ministry of External Affairs, Notes, Memoranda and Letters exchanged between the Governments of India and China, October 1962 - January 1963, White Paper, no. VIII, p.1.

EVALUATION:

The Sino-Indian conflict created an entirely new situation in South-Asia. Not only did it shake Nehru out of his complacency for having been humiliated by his former friend, but it put even the nation's security into jeopardy. The question here is the efficacy and political wisdom of Nehru's decision not to agree to a settlement with Chou-En-lai in 1960. It may well be that Nehru sincerely believed that the Chinese would adhere to 1954 India-China declaration of Panchsheela, but, as his own words at the time indicated, he was living in "an artificial atmosphere of his own creation" and the Chinese attack finally shook him out of it.

The fundamental defect in Nehru's China policy, probably, stemmed from a failure to take sufficient cognizance of Peking's long-term goals. It was not Nehru's "Hindi-Chini Bhai Bhaism" which was responsible for India's inadequate preparedness against China. In his book, My Years with Nehru. The Chinese Betrayal, B.N. Mullick disclosed that from the very beginning Jawaharlal Nehru had his reservations about China. Frank Moraes in his book, Witness to an Era, has written that in 1952, when he went as a member of a cultural delegation to China, Nehru in his briefing had said:

" Never forget that the basic challenge in South-East Asia is between India and China. That challenge runs along the spine of Asia. Therefore, in your talks with the Chinese keep it in mind. Never let the Chinese patronize you."²⁸

In his book, The Guilty Men of 1962,

D.R. Mankekar stated that at the time of his visit to Peking in 1954, during his discussions, Pandit Nehru had said "that some day or other these two Asian giants, were bound to tread on each others" coxns and come into conflict, and that would be a calamity for Asia. That was an eventuality which we should all strive hard to avert."²⁹

On December 9, 1959 he referred to the Border Committee, which was appointed in 1951, and said that since 1950 the picture of the two powerful states coming face to face with each other on a tremendous border had been before the Government. They might have "differed as to the timings in our minds as to when that would happen, whether in five years, ten years, fifteen years or thirty years."

28. Frank Moraes, Witness to an Era, (London, 1973), pp.220-21.

29. DR.Mankekar, The Guilty Men of 1962, (Bombay, 1968), p.110.

Besides, it cannot be said that there was no warning of what was to come. The Government knew that the "Liberation of Tibet" in 1950 removed a useful buffer; when India, as mentioned earlier, drew the attention of the Chinese Government to the harmful effects of resorting to military action to "liberate" Tibet, they received a rude reply. In November 1955, Brigadier S.S. Mullick, the Indian Attache in Peking, sent a report to the Indian Government of China's project of constructing a highway through the Indian territory of Aksai Chia in Ladakh." No one in Delhi took any particular notice of it."³⁰ "Intelligence reports pouring into the Army headquarters and his ministry gave adequate warnings as well as a good idea of the dimensions of the threat the Chinese were posing on the Tibetan border."³¹ As early as 1959 General Thimayya, the Army Chief, had informed the Government of India what would be required in men and material to contain the Chinese. Yet, at a Press Conference on 5 November, 1959, the Prime Minister referred to the maxim of trusting in God and keeping the power dry, with reference to China. Clearly, the awareness of the threat from China was there.

In spite of adequate warning, Nehru did not take steps in time to prevent the Chinese from occupying Indian territory. Explaining his policy in the

30. D.R. Mankekar, n.70, p.27.

31. Ibid., p.122

Rajya Sabha, on 9 December 1959, Nehru said that because India was economically and militarily weak, the best course was to postpone meeting the Chinese challenge after we had made better preparations. In the meantime, "We" said Nehru, "explored avenues for an honourable settlement by peaceful means."³²

However, the question arises whether the policy laid down was rigorously implemented? All evidence now available - suggests that the policy of preparing to meet the Chinese challenge later was implemented haltingly and in a slipshod manner.³³

Probably Nehru hoped that a policy of friendship with China if vigorously pursued, would pay dividends, though events showed later that it did not, as Nehru himself said: "We were stabbed in the back". Even as late as 2, October 1962, Nehru said he had good reasons to believe that the Chinese would not take any strong action against us.³⁴

32. Broadcast to the Nation, 22nd October, 1962.

33. Himalayan Blunder by Brig. J.P. Salve, of the Indian Army, India's Defence Problem by S.S. Khera, a former Defence Secretary, The Untold story by Lt. Gen. B.M. Kaul, and, India and World Politics: Krishna Menon's view of the World, by Michael Brecher.

34. B.M. Kaul, The Untold Story (Bombay, 1967). pg. 365

Added to the inadequate realization of the danger was the priority which the Indian Prime Minister gave to world peace; to the ordinary citizen, the Government of India appeared to be more concerned with the relations between the super-powers, Korea, Hungary, Suez, Indo-China, the Congo, and West Asia and other world problems than how to protect the territorial integrity of India.

The immediate effect of the Sino-Indian War of 1962, however, was to call into question the basic pillars of India's foreign policy. Criticism was strong in the country and in Parliament. Nehru himself said that India had been living in an unreal world and that "we are growing too soft and taking things for granted."³⁵ But he clung tenaciously to the old lines of policy. "We are not going to give up our basic principles because of our present difficulty."³⁶

Revelations of India's weakness eroded Nehru's personal stature which had already been tattered in the Western eyes, at least by the occupation of the Portuguese Indian possessions in 1961. Nehru's urgent appeal to Washington and London for arms supply in the wake of the

35. Jawaharlal Nehru's speeches, Vol.IV, New Delhi, Government of India, 1964, p.230

36. Ibid.

Chinese attack, the sudden enlargement of India's armed forces and the mushrooming of expenditure on weapons, all destroyed the practical basis of Nehru's policies. The attack dealt a severe blow to India's international standing, cast doubts on the effectiveness of non-alignment as a means of ensuring the nations security and made inroads into the developmental plans which were in the offing.

Two collateral disillusionments have accompanied India's clash with China. First, Indo-Pakistan tensions have not lessened but heightened as a result of India's arbitrary build up to meet China's challenge. In fact, Pakistan and China have moved closer together against their common enemy. The initiative towards a resolution of Sino Indian conflict was taken by a group of six-non-aligned nations who met in Colombo in 1962 after China's unilateral ceasefire. They were at pains to make clear that they saw their task to be that of pacification not adjudication. Only the U.A.R. showed a marked disposition to support the Indian cause, and Nehru allowing third party negotiations in resolving Sino-Indian conflict, thus, learned that open support from fellow non-aligned states was not to be counted on.

CHAPTER V

BANGLADESH CRISIS

Following the humiliation suffered by India at the hands of the Chinese in October-November 1962, when they pushed back the Indian forces in the Himalayas, it began to be pointed out that India's relatively unarmed foreign policy had failed to ensure the security of the country. Nehru's policy of non-alignment, though based on noble idealism, was no substitute for realism. The defeat suffered by the Indian armed forces had damaged India's military establishment. The attack dealt a severe blow to India's international standing.

Yet another shock was there for India. Three years later the nation's much smaller neighbour, Pakistan, considered itself strong enough to mount an attack on India, even though India was three times the size of Pakistan and Indians numbered five times as many as those in Pakistan. Besides, India had been engaged in improving its defence capabilities by spending more and more on defence and by acquiring sophisticated weapons.

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL SCENARIO

Soviet attitude

The Soviet role during the Indo-Pakistan war, 1965 and at the Tashkent Conference, January, 1966, made it clear that India no longer enjoyed a privileged

position in Moscow's South Asia policy. In fact after the Sino-Indian war itself, Soviet Union began to take note of "new-trends" in Pakistan's policy. Pakistan had shown its displeasure with the American decision to supply arms to India. Along with that the Soviet Union also watched with concern Pakistan's growing friendship and closer links with China. With the twin objectives to exploit Pakistan's dissatisfaction with the United States and prevent the growing relationship between China and Pakistan, the Soviet Union started arming Pakistan. Thus, since 1963, the Soviet leaders had been working towards achieving a balance in their policy between India and Pakistan and had achieved some success in improving their relationship with Pakistan. Anti-Ayub Khan demonstrations in Pakistan in 1968-69 which ultimately led to his decision to step aside on 25 March 1969, in favour of General Yahya Khan, imposition of marshal law, the results of the first general elections held in December 1970, and the decision of the military junta to crush the demand for autonomy in March 1971, made it clear that the Soviet view of considering Pakistan politically stable and economically sounder than India¹ was wrong.

However, after Mrs. Gandhi won the March 1971 elections with a thumping majority and what happened in Pakistan between 1961-71 made Moscow realise that the assumptions on which it had adopted the policy of

1. For details see Vijay Sen Budhraj, Soviet Russia and Hindustan Subcontinent Bombay, 1973 pp.189-90.

equating Pakistan with India were wrong. So, it was only on the eve of Bangladesh crisis that India was back in favour in Moscow. This was evident when on 2nd April, 1971 President Podgorny advised President Yahya Khan " to stop bloodshed and repressions and to turn to methods of peaceful settlement."²

U.S.attitude

The attitude of United States also was far from favourable. The two wars (the 1962 war with China and the 1965 war with Pakistan) had weakened India considerably and had thus increased her dependence on others. The major source of foreign aid had dried up when the United States and Britain suspended both military and civilian aid as soon as 1965 war began.

On the other hand the Sino-Pakistan axis against India started developing in the early sixties, especially after the Sino-Indian conflict of 1962. The growing rapprochement between the United States and China in the late sixties and the early seventies extended this axis into a global one, and seriously threatened the security of India.

Domestic turmoil:

Mrs.Gandhi, unlike Nehru, did not emerge as a political leader of the Congress. Nor did she enjoy,

2. This was mentioned in a message sent by President Podgorny, See Current Digest of the Soviet Press , vol.23, no.14, 4th May 1975, pp 35-36

at least initially, the legitimacy with the masses. She did not have the political stature to resist domestic and international compulsions.

On assumption of office, Mrs. Gandhi faced acute food shortage and serious economic problems. Due to poor harvest, India urgently needed foodgrain from abroad to feed the nation. But the United States and Britain had suspended all aid after 1965 war. What was worse, the 1967 General Elections in India gave the impression that the nation was about to lose its most important asset - political stability.³ Corruption was large scale, scandalous defections and frequent fall of government's in a number of states further reduced India's weight in the world-affairs.

Thus when Mrs. Gandhi assumed the office of the Prime Minister on January 24th, 1966, she not only faced serious economic problems and shortage of food-grains but also the fact that both Washington and Moscow considered India a power of little consequence, " a play

3. Surendra Chopra, Studies in Indian Foreign Policy. For the election results revealed that the Congress Party had lost power in six out of seventeen states to splinter groups and in most cases to reactionary elements.

thing of circumstances" which could be controlled by the big powers and "harassed by smaller countries."⁴

To enable India to find a rightful place in the family of nations Mrs.Gandhi took steps to bring about internal cohesion, political stability and self-reliance, which are essential to a sound foreign-policy. She took steps to bring about the much needed socio-economic change which won her the people's support, which was essential for her to win the March, 1971, elections. Political uncertainty, thus ended and Mrs.Gandhi created an image of herself as a leader who was tactful, forceful and effective enough to carry out the promised social and political reforms.

On the other hand, to solve the problem of shortage of food-grain Mrs.Gandhi made an urgent appeal to the United States for the resumption of aid. Although the United States agreed to supply food-grain to India, it made it known that New Delhi must review its industrial licensing policy, relax controls and devalue the rupee. Some two months later the rupee was devalued, obviously under foreign pressure, in exchange of foodgrain. Mrs.Gandhi

4. Vijay Sen Budhraj, Indian Foreign Policy: The Indira Gandhi Era, (Studies in Indian Foreign Policy - Edited by Surendra Chopra)

frankly told her cabinet colleagues that if India did not devalue the rupee, it could not get aid.

Thus, political stability, increased food-grains production and healthy economy made it possible for Mrs. Gandhi to face the Bangladesh crisis with courage and determination. Perhaps the major traits of her personality, including her courage, determination, as well as her adventurist and gambling spirit were, brought out clearly during the Indian military intervention in Bangladesh.

The questions at issue in March and April were, should India recognise the independence of Bangladesh and the legitimacy of the Government in exile? Should India intervene militarily in Pakistan's civil war? Absorbing the various arguments at home Mrs. Gandhi made up her mind quietly, as her wont. It was only on December 6th that India granted formal recognition to Bangladesh.

Meanwhile, India allowed the Bangladesh provisional government in exile to set up office in Calcutta, posted liaison officers from the Ministry of External Affairs to it and financed foreign trips for its members to rally support abroad.⁵

Meanwhile, Mrs. Gandhi's policy of assistance to refugees and providing training and logistical support to Mukti Bahini, received highly principled enunciation in Parliamentary Resolution of 31st March. The resolution,

5. Talukdar Maniruzzaman . The Bangladesh Revolution and its Aftermath, Dacca, Bangladesh Books International, 1980, p. 110.

however, carefully avoided committing India to an active role in bringing about a settlement in East Pakistan, instead, it asked for international pressure to achieve that end. It called upon the peoples and the governments of the world to bring pressure on Pakistan to put a stop to "the systematic decimation" of the people of East Bengal.⁶ It vaguely raised the possibility of India's physical support, but stopped short of suggesting military intervention. During the first half of 1971, the challenge of Indira Gandhi's diplomacy lay in avoiding war not provoking it, but at the same time ensuring that conditions that could lead to war abated.

In the Lok Sabha, the Prime Minister explained the crisis as neither an Indo-Pakistan dispute nor a purely internal affair of Pakistan. It was an international problem. India must, she stressed, 'Waken the conscience of the world.'⁷

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6. The Years of Endeavour. Selected speeches of Mrs. Indira Gandhi, pp.524-525
7. Indira Gandhi in Lok Sabha, 24th May 1971, Bangladesh Documents, Vol.I, p.672f.

CIRCUMSTANCES LEADING TO THE WAR AND MRS. GANDHI'S ROLE

Bhutto recklessly instigated Yahya Khan to suppress the popular democracy in East Pakistan. Yahya Khan, thus, embarked on a policy of ruthless repression. The arrest of Mujibur Rehman and a military crackdown on the unarmed people of East Bengal produced a consternation in India, and the profound sympathy felt by the people was reflected in Parliament. The Prime Minister was forthright in deploring the suppression of the whole people. The dispatches from East Bengal brought tales of brutality and bloodshed.

As the resistance movement and gureilla War grew in East Pakistan, millions of refugees started pouring in across the frontiers into India until they reached the staggering figure of 12 million and imposed an unbearable strain on the Indian economy. The danger also developed of the prolonged liberation war in East Pakistan converting itself into an insurrectionary war led by political extremists and spilling over into West Bengal and other parts of India, thus aggravating the delicate internal security of the whole region.

Throughout the summer and monsoon months of 1971 popular opinion in India was in a state of turmoil. The Opposition pressure for strong action daily mounted. The financial burden of the refugees inundation was unbearable. Attempts were made by Pakistan to give the

tragic happenings a communist turn. Despite the emotional strain and provocations from Pakistan, India, under Indira Gandhi, presented a picture of absolute national unity.

While India was a recipient of much sympathy and admiration, actual help, Mrs. Gandhi lamented in Parliament, was pitiable in proportion to the need. As to the pressure in the direction of political settlement, it was not strong. The only country which could really have brought pressure on Pakistan was United States, which was, however, engaged at the moment in creating an opening in China and Yahya Khan was acting a go-between. Beyond verbal sympathy for East Bengal, Nixon administration refused to do anything. Under the veneer of quiet bilateral diplomacy for a political settlement, military aid for West Pakistan continued to pour in directly as well as through third countries, which aimed at restoring East Pakistan to the political and economic control of West Pakistan.

China also issued a strongly worded warning to India against involvement in the liberation movement in East Pakistan. In this desperate situation, when Government of India was left with no other alternative but to assist the liberation forces, directly or indirectly to attain quick victory, the Indian Ambassador in Washington was called to the State Department and told in effect that in case China attacked India and Bangladesh, the United States Government would not actively oppose such an attack.

MOBILIZATION OF WORLD OPINION:

During most of 1971, the entire machinery of Indian diplomacy seemed directed towards publishing the cause of East Bengal's search for a democratic polity.

As many as thirteen ministerial delegations visited seventy countries in the course of the year. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi addressed letters to heads of government on 14th May and again on 10th August. India asked the United Nations Human Rights Commission to approach the Government of Pakistan for restoration of human rights and also to assist in the relief of refugees. The issue was raised in numerous international forums and national legislatures and resolutions were passed. The result of these efforts as of the world press reports on the atrocities in Bengal, revealed a gap between public moral outrage and an official willingness to act. While governments, non-governmental organizations, and private individuals were willing to make statements expressing the possibility of a political solution and offer some financial assistance for refugees, they were not able to apply effective sanctions against Pakistan.⁸

A letter from Soviet President Nikolai Podgorny to President Yahya Khan on April 2, expressed 'concern', and contained an insistent appeal for the

8. Thomp, W. Oliver, United Nations in Bangladesh, Princeton University Press, p. 197f

adoption of the most urgent measures to stop the bloodshed and repression against the population in East Pakistan and for turning to methods of a peaceful settlement.⁹ However, it went no further than that. The Governments of Western Europe contributed to refugee relief but felt that 'nobody from outside can dictate' a political settlement.¹⁰ Indira Gandhi faced the discouraging fact that the international community left the burden of the Bangladesh crisis for India to bear alone.

Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's speeches on the East Bengal situation sought to articulate the gravity of the situation. While she stressed the need for exercising restraint, she conceded that they could not remain passive spectators. She rejected arguments about outside interference in the internal affairs of Pakistan. To claim immunity of domestic jurisdiction was of no avail to Islamabad because "what was claimed to be an internal problem of Pakistan has also become an internal problem of India". While Mrs. Gandhi discouraged talk of war or threat of war, she warned that they would have to consider the national interest, they could not allow Pakistan to disturb the peace and stability of India. Besides, refusing to be

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9. President Nikolai Podgorny's letter to President YahyaKhan
Bangladesh Documents, Vol.1, p.540.
10. Indira Gandhi's statement in Parliament, 15th November, 1971, in Years of Endeavour, p.571 f.

pressurized into accepting United Nations Observers all along India's frontier with what was then East Pakistan, Mrs. Gandhi held that what was required of the United Nations was the creation of political conditions whereby further influx would be stopped effectively and the return of refugees under credible guarantees for their future safety and well being ensured. She held that there could be no military solution to the East Bengal problem and a political solution had to be brought about by those who wielded influence in and over Pakistan.

While the nation responded to the Prime Minister's appeal to maintain national solidarity and relegate internal differences to the background, the public opinion was getting over heated as days passed. The public was becoming increasingly sceptical about a peaceful solution of the crisis.

Mrs. Gandhi's statement, by the end of May, that Mukti Bahini would have to wage a long drawnout armed struggle and that the Pakistani forces would have to be expelled, implied that India could not avoid military involvement. Even if she had reached the conclusion that military intervention was inevitable she did not disclose her hand prematurely, because successful military action would entail thorough preparations. In the existing conditions of the world, military intervention could not be contemplated without an effective transformation of world opinion, securing of prior military assistance and considerable diplomatic support. Ultimately, she assured the Parliament that the Government would be guided by its own "independent assessment of the

situation."

INDO-SOVIET TREATY

Faced with the indifference of the organized world community, the unconcealed support of Washington and Peking to Pakistan and the increasingly threatening attitude of General Yahya Khan, Mrs. Gandhi made the most important diplomatic move of taking up the old draft for an Indo-Soviet Treaty for consideration.

Although she repeatedly declared that India did not intend to use force to solve the problem and that what it was seeking was a peaceful solution, Mrs. Gandhi could not but prepare an alternative plan in case no peaceful solution of the problem could be achieved at time.

It was in the context of grave threat to India's national security that Indira Gandhi adopted a diplomatic strategy which was typical of her personality and political style, & concluded a 20 years Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Co-operation in August, 1971, thus ensuring Soviet support.¹¹ The operative part of the Treaty merely provided for "immediate mutual consultations" and the adoption of "appropriate effective measures" in the event

11. In 1969 the Soviet Union had suggested a bilateral treaty with certain Soviet Commitments to India's security. At that time Mrs. Gandhi had declined the proposal, presumably for fear of adverse public reaction in India and of damaging India's long term relations with the United States of America and China.

of a military threat to either country. But even in this diluted form, the military implications of the treaty were clear enough as a signal to China and the USA.

There was criticism from the Opposition (non-communist) regarding Soviet emphasis on a peaceful solution. It was widely interpreted as meaning that it was directed towards dissuading India from intervening in Bangladesh. It was forgotten that, perhaps, it was directed to Pakistan's attempt to solve the Bangladesh problem by applying military force. Even otherwise the statement was a good camouflage. If it had misled foreign powers, especially, the United States, it was a result much to be desired from the Government's point of view. Under the cover of this demand, which Pakistan was in no mood to satisfy, Mrs. Gandhi could perfect the preparations and complete the disposition of the armed forces without India being suspected of planning military intervention. She continued to keep her moves a closely guarded secret, and did not allow experienced politicians like Nixon and Kissinger to anticipate her moves. Nixon even accused Mrs. Gandhi in his memoirs that she gave him no inkling of her intentions during her visit to the United States.

Thus, in the latter half of 1971, Indira Gandhi's goals became more precise and her coordination of diplomatic and military activity closer. Her objectives remained consistent - to win recognition for Bangladesh nationalism as a 'just cause' deserving international

support; to make it clear that the continuing threats to India's security posed by the crisis in Pakistan gave New Delhi the right to resolve the situation by any means it deemed effective to ensure that the refugees returned to a situation which they found satisfactory. India rejected the suggestion of UN Secretary General U Thant (initially made on 19th July) to send representatives to both sides of the border to 'facilitate the voluntary repatriation of refugees in a secure and orderly manner'.¹² The Indian Government deemed the Secretary General's offer as an attempt to 'sidetrack the main problem and convert it into an Indo-Pakistani dispute'.¹³

While contingency plans for a quick military intervention were being prepared with a view to forestalling any counter-move by the USA, China and the UN, Mrs. Gandhi launched a global diplomatic offensive in order to win sympathy for India's position and apparently also to prepare ground for the military intervention which was sure to follow. In September she visited the Soviet Union and held discussions with Kosygin and other Soviet leaders. In October and November she visited Belgium, Austria, the UK, France, West Germany and the United States. She won sympathetic response in Europe

12. United Nations Secretary General, "Aide Memoire to the Governments of India and Pakistan", 19th July 1971, in Bangladesh Documents, Vol.1, p.657.

13. Thomas W. Oliver, United Nations in Bangladesh, Princeton, Princeton University Press, p.66.

which can be seen in the abstentions of Britain and France in later security council voting and their rapid recognition of Bangladesh in January 1972, at the cost of diplomatic breach with Pakistan. However, she made no headway with the United States. She sent some of her Cabinet colleagues and other emissaries to other parts of the world, including West Asia, Africa and Southeast Asia. At home and abroad Mrs Gandhi constantly talked about the need to avoid war.

While Mrs Gandhi was on her visit to the West, certain contingency plans were being perfected by the Indian defence forces. These quiet preparations, behind the smoke-screen of the battle for influencing the mind of the people around the world, were an index both of the confidence of the armed forces and perfect coordination between actions on the defence front on the one hand and political and diplomatic fronts on the other.

Throughout the month of November the situation on the East Bengal border deteriorated. Supported by India and using the border areas of the Indian Union as base the Mukti Bahini scored important successes in East Bengal. The proclamation of a state of emergency in Pakistan was an indication of the desperate conditions of the military regime. India's position was buttressed by the growing sympathy of the world opinion and especially, after the conclusion of the Indo-Soviet Treaty Mrs. Gandhi began to speak in accents of determination and power. She now said that the people of Bangladesh were determined to be free from outside control and would continue to fight to the last man. With supreme

confidence, she said:

"We have only one question before us - to strengthen our forces for any emergency. I can assure you that they are fully prepared to meet any aggression and our territory and freedom are completely safe in their hands. We hope there will be no war. We shall do our best to avoid it but you must know that in a modern war it is not only the armed forces but the people as well who have to be prepared for it".¹⁴

When Pakistan made preemptive airstrike on 3rd December, presumably with a view to internationalising the Bangladesh crisis and diverting India's armed forces to the Western front, the Indian Army immediately and rapidly moved into Bangladesh on several fronts in an obviously pre-planned manner. A well planned three-pronged drive to the heart of East Bengal was launched. In a closely coordinated move, the Soviet Union vetoed American resolutions in the Security Council condemning India and demanding the withdrawal of Indian armed forces from Bangladesh. Undaunted by the moving of the U.S. Seventh Fleet into the Bay of Bengal, Mr. Gandhi advised the service Chiefs to try for as quick and decisive victory as possible and sent D.P. Dhar to Moscow for assurance of Soviet support against any Chinese attack. When the U.S.A, stymied by the Soviet veto in the

14. The Years of Endeavour: Selected Speeches of Mrs. Indira Gandhi,
p. 580.

Security Council, successfully moved a resolution in the General Assembly calling for immediate cease-fire and withdrawal of troops, the war had been nearly over. On the afternoon of 16th December, Lt. General Abdullah Niazi signed the instrument agreeing to surrender all Pakistan armed forces in Bangladesh to Lt. General Jagjit Singh Aurora, General Officer Commander-in-Chief of the Indian and Bangladesh Forces in the Eastern Sector.¹⁵ In a spectacular move to prevent internationalization of the issue, Mrs. Gandhi immediately announced a unilateral ceasefire on the western front. With her political acumen and astute sense of timing she decided not to continue war in the West to Yahya Khan's further discomfiture or to try and evict Pakistani Forces from all of Jammu and Kashmir. She deliberately ignored UN Resolutions as well as fulminations as being subjective and unfair. She demonstrated by action, not words, that their fears of India consuming Pakistan were groundless.

The emergence of Bangladesh as an independent nation has been described as "a second liberation for India", for it made the nation "more secure than it ever was"¹⁶ and shattered all Pakistani hopes of achieving parity with India, atleast in economic strength and military might. Additionally, many countries praised India's diplomacy and capability demonstrated in 1971. Mrs. Gandhi was, thus, able to rehabilitate India's image in Asia where it began to be recognised as a

15. D.K. Palit, The Lightning Campaign, New Delhi, Thomson, Press, 1972, photocopy of the Instrument of Surrender, p.112f.

16. Pran Chopra, India's Second Liberation, Delhi, 1973 pp.3-4.

great power.

In his Annual Report to United States Congress on 3rd May, 1973, President Nixon had referred this to India:

"India has emerged from the 1971 crisis with new confidence, power and responsibilities. the United States respects India as a major country. We are prepared to treat India in accordance with its new stature and responsibilities, on the basis of reciprocity. Because India is a major country, her actions on world stage necessarily affect us and our interests."¹⁷

PRINCIPLE OF BILATERALISM AND SHIMLA AGREEMENT

Mrs. Gandhi, conscious that India now was in a strong position, firmly ruled out third party mediation or interference in settling the question of prisoners of war and captured territory. Unlike her father, who had permitted outside interference in Kashmir affairs for a long time, Mrs. Gandhi concluded the Shimla Agreement on 2nd July 1972 to settle the differences between the two countries through bilateral negotiations.

India offered to return to Pakistan a little over 5100 square miles of territory captured by the Indian Army in exchange for nearly 70 square miles in the possession of Pakistan Forces. Regarding prisoners of war,

17. Richard Nixon, President of the United States,

"The United States Foreign Policy of the 1970's: Shaping a Durable Peace", A report to the Congress, 3rd May 1973, in Department of State Bulletin, Vol. LXVI No. 1974, 4th June, 1973, pp. 791-92.

India held that Pakistan had surrendered to the joint Indo-Bangladesh command, hence repatriation of these prisoners would require the permission of Bangladesh too. This probably a device to secure recognition for Bangladesh by Pakistan which Bhutto resisted for sometime but had to ultimately give in.

Undoubtedly, Mrs. Gandhi's skillful handling of the Bangladesh war and its aftermath enhanced India's prestige.

CHAPTER VI

COMPARISON OF THE ROLES OF THE TWO LEADERS

Nehru cared immensely about the opinion in the West more particularly British. His concern about India suffering greatly in prestige - as an exponent of peace in public and governmental esteem paralysed capacity for timely and effective action. It wasn't as though he was unaware of the gravity of the situation. Although, he confessed in the Rajya Sabha on 9th November, 1962, that his Government had been engaged in developing a war machine for the inevitable confrontation with China¹ from the time of the entry of Chinese into Tibet in 1950-51 while preaching peaceful co-existence and disarmament and condemning arms race. But the war machinery that was developed in the fifties was not the type required. The security of India's Northern frontier depended more on her capability in mountain warfare than on the strength of her conventional forces. What India needed was a few lightly equipped but tough mountain divisions, to which no serious thinking was given until 1960. Moreover, in view of the Chinese tactics of combining general war with guerilla war, it was necessary for India to raise such mountain troops. But no serious effort was made in this sphere too. Also the border roads programme was not seriously put into operation until 1964. In Nehru's foreign policy there never was a balancing of the need of national security and the requirement of a peaceful approach. Consideration of geo-politics in national security asserted themselves in the end.

1. Beijing Review - 12th September 1982.

'While Mrs. Gandhi repeatedly declared that India did not intend to use force in the solution of the problem and that what it was seeking was a political solution, Mrs. Gandhi could not but prepare alternative contingency plans for a quick military intervention in case no peaceful solution could be achieved. There was an absence of a relative short-term strategic thinking in Nehru's China Policy, which is found in the nature of the Defence preparations during the fifties.

As said earlier, the personality of the leader, his psychological propensities, ideological predilections and his need for personal political survival and growth inevitably condition his decisions in foreign policy. Nehru would perhaps not have made cold-blooded preparations for the military action months in advance while talking of peace all the time, or engaged in a strategically well-timed diplomatic offensive without being deflected from the real objective of dismembering Pakistan or ordered the armed forces to move into Bangladesh in full strength at the crucial moment.² In all probability Nehru's commitment to fundamental principles and values would have placed him in a Hamlet - like state of indecision, in spite of the economic and strategic problems imposed on India by the resistance movement in Bangladesh. Nehru would have probably opted for a diplomatic and United Nations solution to the Bangladesh Crisis, as he initially attempted in Kashmir.

Also, Nehru would probably never have approved of the deep and massive involvement of the RAW in organising

2. In 1954 the United Front Government in East Pakistan reportedly requested Nehru to stop over flights of Pakistan Armed Forces in East Pakistan. Nehru refused. Indira Gandhi did it in 1971.

the resistance movement in Bangladesh and in the conducting the military operations. In the ultimate analysis, it should be noted, the military intervention in Bangladesh was a gamble. In spite of the diplomatic preparations there was a large element of risk in the success of the operation. The war might not have ended so quickly and external powers might have intervened more directly than they in fact did. In that event, the results would have been very different and almost certainly damaging to India's interest. Ability to take such calculated risk was part of Indira Gandhi's personality.

The signing of the Indo-Soviet Treaty came somewhat as a surprise to the world. The Cabinet, itself, was informed by Mrs. Gandhi of the signing of the treaty only on the morning of the day it was signed. It is doubtful, however, whether Nehru, with his political commitment to the basic principles of democracy and Cabinet Government and aversion for security oriented pacts, would have signed such a treaty in spite of grave international threats and provocations. In all probability he would have been in a prolonged state of indecision and let the situation drift for a long while. He would probably not have resorted to extreme secrecy prior to the surprise announcement of the Treaty. It required the political style and personality of Mrs. Gandhi, to make the crucial decision quickly and apparently without hesitation, to conduct the negotiations in such extreme secrecy, and to take India and the world by complete surprise, in the way she did.

The decision to enter into a treaty was the most momentous decision taken by any Prime Minister in twenty four

years of independent existence of India. Nehru asked for external military assistance and accepted it to the extent it came in 1962. That decision followed after the country was attacked and there was an attempt to project an image that India was accepting assistance from all quarters without undue violation of its posture of non-alignment.

After the Bangladesh war, conscious that India was now in a strong position, Mrs. Gandhi firmly ruled out third party mediation or interference in settling the outstanding problems. This marked a fundamental departure from the unhappy legacy. Her father had permitted outside interference in Kashmir affairs for a long time. Even in the settlement of Sino-Indian dispute, after the unilateral ceasefire, the initiative towards the resolution of the dispute was taken up by a third party at Colombo. (A group of six non-aligned nations).

CONCLUSION

The domestic and international context in which India's foreign policy and relations were formulated and implemented during Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru - for most of the period at least - was essentially different from that of the domestic and international context in which Mrs. Gandhi formulated and implemented India's foreign policy and relations.

Nehru's period was characterized by the cold-war in full swing between the Communist and Western Camps and a state of "armed fear". Neither of the blocs tolerated or respected non-alignment - each suspecting that this was merely a facade for leaning towards the opposite camp. This was a period of proliferation of military pacts and alliances, particularly the establishment of the NATO and the Warsaw Pact. Also the Super powers heading the two camps were trying to enlist to their respective camps the non-aligned nations, if not as allies, at least as friends, through military pacts and military aid. Many parts of the world were under colonial rule or the political domination of the Western nations. These nations were fighting colonial domination and the emerging liberated nations, not wanting to join either camp, started getting attracted towards non-alignment.

Nehru, himself the leader of the liberation movement in India, and one of the founder of non-alignment, enjoyed the legitimacy of the masses. It was this legitimacy which accounted for the success of his policies, initially. Nehru's policy lay in the basic fact that it was articulated by someone whose political legitimacy was absolutely assured. His own mass built through the years of struggle for national liberation often helped him to resist the domestic critics of his foreign policy.

Thus, Nehru had sufficient prestige to resist national and international pressure. It was the political legitimacy that he enjoyed with the masses and the newness of the policy of non-alignment in a world torn between two blocs by the cold war which accounted for the success of his policies.

However, Nehru probably considered non-alignment, which is merely an instrument of our policy, as the very goal of our foreign policy and treated it as a moral imperative from which no deviation was permissible except under moral

obloquy. When pressure from Opposition mounted on Prime Minister Nehru to abandon the policy of Non-alignment, he held that if we abandon non-alignment it would mean a "terrible moral failure".¹ To treat it as a moral principle is wholly an error. To consider it as a moral precept is to commit the same mistake as John Foster Dulles once did when he called "neutrality" immoral. It was, thus, his own idealism, which made India lose her image in the world. His concern about India suffering greatly in prestige - as an exponent of the policy of peace in public and governmental esteem - paralysed capacity for timely and effective action in the Chinese war, which led to the erosion of his policy of Non-alignment.

5024-41.
On the other hand, it was against the background of general decline in non-alignment, isolation of India in the international sphere, discontent of Afro-Asian nations with India, period of detente, defeat in the China War that Mrs. Gandhi came to power.

At home also she did not have the political stature to resist domestic compulsion, as she neither enjoyed the legitimacy of the masses nor was she the leader of the Congress. The country at that time was going through a severe economic and political crisis. Yet it was her own realism which won her national and international prestige. Through, her programmes of socio-economic upliftment, increase in political stability and self-reliance she won the support of the people, even though it involved the compromising of

1. Hindustan Times, 28th January, 1962,

non-alignment. For, her the ultimate goal of foreign policy of ~~any~~ country was national interest and non-alignment was only a means to an end.

Thus, coming to power in unfavourable domestic and international circumstances, Mrs. Gandhi through her own efforts and realistic approach brought about a success of her foreign policy. She did not let the circumstances overcome her and thus built up an image of a successful national and international leader. She used the crisis situation to reinforce her legitimacy. While, Nehru came to power in favourable domestic and not so unfavourable international circumstances, yet his unrealistic approach led to the failure of his policy. He let the circumstances overcome him and thus, India lost national and international prestige.

The above paragraphs show that foreign policy operates in an international environment much outside the sovereign jurisdiction of the nation. As a result the decisions are often outside the control of ~~the~~ leader. Often value-judgements are involved in foreign policy decisions.

Thus, one can say that decisions in foreign policy are not only a result of objective reasoning of the leaders but the subjective variables also play a very significant role.

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