

**THE SOVIET VIEW OF INDIAN POLITICAL
DEVELOPMENTS, 1964-1971**


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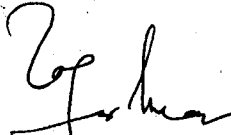
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.....

This is to Certify that the dissertation entitled :
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submitted by Miss Anuradha Malik in partial fulfilment of 6
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Degree of MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY OF THIS University, is her
original work according to the best of my knowledge and may
be placed before the examiner for evaluation.


(ZAFAR IMAM.)
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Amratha Malik
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Chapter 1

The Theoretical Framework

Introduction :

India has been a significant area of Soviet interest, especially ^{since} the mid fifties. Soviet interest in India has increased ever since, and the period under study i.e. 1964 to 1971 is no exception.

The main objective of this study is to examine and evaluate Soviet writings, primarily scholarly works on Indian political developments. The importance of such a study lies in the fact that the role of Soviet social scientists in the policy-making process has now been officially acknowledged and sanctioned.¹ Besides it also seeks to underline the application of Marxist - Leninist methodology (the only valid methodology in Soviet social science) to an analysis of a concrete reality in a given setting and its various nuances.

In socialist theory, any social phenomenon be it an individual nation or state, would be manifested by the nature of its development and process of growth, and also ^{viewed} in its entire dimensions. The general conclusion arrived at by the formulators and theoreticians of socialist theory, is that society comprises of national and state formations with varying characteristics, that are usually not even comparable. Thus, though history is analysed by some general and primary laws of social development, national peculiarities determine the character and form of these various sub-divisions. The Laws of the development of society do not have "any reality, except as approximation, tendency, average, and not as immediate reality."²

1. R.B. Remnek, Soviet Policy Towards India : The role of Soviet Scholars in the formulation of Soviet foreign policy, Oxford 1975, p. 288.

2. F. Engels, Selected Correspondence, Moscow, 1956, p. 563.

A society must be studied therefore in its specificity and then related to the world historical process as a whole. It is in this light, that Soviet scholars visualize India - "an active participant in the world historical process and its theoretical generalisation".³

Indology has, since the sixties, become a well developed discipline in its own right, in the Soviet Union. Soviet writers claim, that the reasons for this are : "the demands of the science itself and the rising interest of the Soviet people in this great country of the Asian continent."⁴

G.G. Kotovsky, the head of the Indian section of Moscow's Institute of Orientology under the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences, has provided an outline of Soviet methodological framework to contemporary Indian reality :

- a) the creation of a series of important historical and economic investigations referring to modern and contemporary times, these works analysed the manifestations of general historic regularities in specific Indian forms.
- b) the study of the influence of religious factors, the national community and to a smaller extent the caste system on the development of class struggle in colonial India.⁵

3. V.I. Pavlov, "Political and Economic Doctrine and Planning in the Third World," in R. Khan ed., India and the Soviet Union : Cooperation and Development, N. Delhi 1975, p. 102.

4. G.G. Kotovsky, "Soviet Indology : ways and stages of Development" in G.L. Kolokolov ed. Soviet Studies of India : Achievements and stages of Progress, Moscow, Soviet Land Booklets, p. 1.

5. Ibid.

How far Soviet academics have applied such a framework to the study of Indian politics, can be easily deduced by reviewing their work on India. From this point of view the period 1964 to 1971, is crucial. The effect of de-Stalinisation jettisoned certain dogmatic formulations, leading eventually, to what the Soviets call "objective" and sympathetic attitudes towards India.

The process of discarding the dogmatic approach was initiated at the twentieth congress of the C.P.S.U, in 1956⁶. After the 20th Congress, it was stated "The misunderstanding of the character and seriousness of the contradictions between the forces of imperialism and internal reaction, and the forces of national progress in the non-socialist countries of the East, has been very detrimental to orientology."⁷ Soviet scholars, further added that Soviet economists have studied chiefly the activity of foreign capital, and neglected the analysis of internal social processes. The trend towards independent capitalist development had been ignored. Thus for the first time possibilities of economic development independent of imperialism for excolonial countries like India were recognised.

This call, by the 20th Congress to reexamine theories on the East, led to the emergence of an objectively vigorous approach, based on Marxist-Leninist methodology.

According to this methodology, the central theme in

6. See on this aspect of the 20th Congress, Z.Imam, Ideology and Reality in Soviet Policy in Asia, new Delhi, 1975, ChIII, p 103.

7. T.P.Thornton ed. The Third World in Soviet Perspective, Princeton University Press, 1964, p 80.

studying a society i.e. a social structure is, that every social structure, is made up of certain elements: an economic base, legal and political forms, and ideological forms. Secondly history can be divided into periods. Thus there is discontinuity within the continuity of history. The periods of history are determined by the mode of production, which dominates in that period. As societies develop, a plurality of instances become part of every social structure.

Besides these formulations, that are set with regard to studying contemporary problems, the frame of analysis, when studying societies like India must also include - the diversities and multi-level character of the structures of society.

Soviet analysts emphasize, that the model which is built to refer to Indian problems shows " the interaction of different social structures during the transition from colonialism to modern bourgeois society." ⁸ And that Soviet authors attempt to investigate the dynamics of socio - class and political structures.

How far, these theoretical formulations, have been applied to Indian reality, by Soviet social scientists, can be easily examined in the period 1964 to 1971. This period has been significant for India both in terms of internal development and external relations. Internally the end of the Nehru era, and the consequent power struggles; split in the communist movement; growing schism within the Congress Party; its poor

8. G.G. Kotovskiy, Op.cit., p 12.

showing in the 1967 elections; emergence of Indira Gandhi and the radicalization of Congress policies—leading to the Congress split; the stress and strain of socio-economic development; and finally the 1971 Congress victory at the polls. These are events that constituted the main scenario of Indian political development. Externally, the 1965 and 1971 wars, with Pakistan, the latter leading to the armed liberation of Bangladesh, were events which involved the Soviet Union. India, moving away from Western orientation gained stature as a leader of the non-aligned 'group of 77', which had evolved itself into a international 'power bloc' to be reckoned with. An analysis of the Soviet view on such major events and developments, would reveal a heightened perception of Indian reality by Soviet policy makers.

A study of Indian political development, in the Soviet view is essentially, "important not only from the point of cognition but also from that of methodology. The exposure of the regularities governing the development of the countries of the East, is one of the key tasks of social science. The neglecting of this task at the present stage of development would prevent one from viewing the world historical process in its entirety ".⁹

Indologists from the Soviet Union, attempt to demonstrate the continuities and contradictions of India's historical process; the similarities and distinctness of the basic laws governing India's development as compared with other countries.

9. A.H. Vafa. "Studies in the history of India," in G.L. Kolokolov. ed. Soviet Studies of India, N.Delhi, Soviet Land Booklets. 1969, p 13.

In this dissertation, an attempt will be made, to review and evaluate writings of Soviet scholars on Indian political developments, and thus to understand the Soviet view of politics in contemporary India. As it is self evident, this study confines itself to political aspects of India, during 1964 to 1971. Economic and social ~~exisist~~ problems are not entirely neglected as, in the Soviet view politics cannot be divorced from its economic basis and socio - economic structures.

^G
General Framework for the study of Third World Countries.

A study of the Soviet view of the third world involves the examination of the national liberation movement, which is considered to be its theoretical basis.

The Indian situation is regarded, as a classical example of a national - liberation movement of the third world. Hence Indian political developments of any time, must necessarily be seen as part of this broader phenomenon.

Ex-colonial and semi-colonial young states have much in common, "the consequence of protracted imperialist rule have proved the same: extreme economic backwardness, under-developed industry, feudal survivals, dire poverty of the working people." ¹⁰ Yet in the essential attributes, there are differences between these states as-in degree of economic dependence on imperialism; in level of social and economic

10. Y. Kozaliyev, "State capitalism in Asia and Africa", International Affairs, No. 2, Moscow, February, 1963, p 33.

development etc.

This backwardness and poverty are shown by Soviet scholars, with the help of available statistics, for example, "average per capita national income in the U.S.A. exceeds \$ 2,200 a year..... while in most of the non-socialist countries in Asia and Africa, it is only \$ 50 to \$ 100, a year."¹¹

It is therefore obvious that these newly independent states, within the sphere of the world capitalist economy, not with standing some progress "have not yet been able essentially to alter their subordinate position in the international capitalist division of labour and to reduce their lag behind the industrial capitalist powers".¹²

Despite the decline of Imperialism, these young states are warned of a newer, ' more flexible ' and less direct form of neo-colonialism. Which results in the retention of economic privileges, of the imperialist countries, as well as, in reinforcing capitalism in the young states.

" Like all social revolutions in a society with antagonistic classes, national-liberation revolutions are aimed at removing obstacles blocking the development of new productive forces and at abolishing the moribund social system".¹³ The problem of the development of national-liberation movements, have been widely discussed in the Soviet Union. The variety of opinions

11. Y.Guzevaty, "Third way or genuine Freedom?", International Affairs, No. 4, April, 1963, p.43

12. R.A. Ulyanovsky. The Dollar and Asia: U.S. Neocolonialist policy in action, Moscow, Nauka, 1965, p 9

13. Y. Guzevaty, Op.cit., p.43.

on these formulations, comes out clearly in the debates, which took place in spring 1964, at the Institute of International Relations, Moscow. 14.

Whilst summing up the debate, Victor Tyagenko, the leading theorist of this concept, remarked that national liberation revolutions had not developed into socialist revolutions, as believed by some theorists. These movements were still in the national democratic stage i.e. they were bourgeois - democratic in nature. They were, however, nothing like the 'classical' bourgeois - democratic revolutions in England and France. They differ from these earlier revolutions in their tasks as well as their motive forces. Whereas absolutism was overthrown in independent countries, in the course of a national liberation revolution the task is to: banish imperialism; to win national independence; to resolve the agrarian problem; to break the colonial economic structure; democratize the whole of socio-political life etc. Such a revolution, it is asserted, is thus not only national but also democratic in character.

Accomplishment of these tasks is inevitably carried out through an attempt to build an independent capitalism. As a national liberation movement does not "set up for itself as its prime task the socialist reconstruction of society". 15

14. Hélène Carrère d'Encausse and S. Schram, Marxism in Asia, Great Britain, Allen Lane and Penguin Press, 1969, p 340.

15. V. Tyagenko, quoted in Ibid., p.340

Tyagenko, refuted the claims of some Soviet scholars, who felt, that these countries were now faced with socialist revolution. He strongly felt, that there are various distinctions and groups within the bourgeoisie. He said that the expression the national bourgeoisie covered representatives of the middle; the big industrial bourgeoisie who share power with the landlords; the feudal elements; and the petty, middle commercial bourgeoisie; as also the intelligentsia. An analysis was therefore required to determine which section of the bourgeoisie holds the power. ¹⁶

Tyagenko felt, that earlier works on the subject, wrongly asserted, that a revolutionary or progressive movement was possible only under working class leadership. By not making the distinctions within the bourgeoisie, Soviet scholars, had tended to overlook the possibility, of a progressive movement being built under non-proletarian leadership. Soviet scholars, thus agreed that due to the new trends in history, it was time to review the earlier formulations. As, "life has toppled these theories". ¹⁷

After the Moscow conference of workers and communist parties, in 1960, ¹⁸. Much emphasis was laid, on the study of liberation movements. The pivotal question to be determined being "What road are these newly independent states following?"

16. See The 20th Congress of the C.P.S.U., Moscow 1958

17. V. Tyagenko, op.cit.

18. Hélène Carrère d'Encausse and S. Schram, op.cit.

The answer to this has been given in more or less the same form in various books and articles on developing nations. "Capitalism has emerged and consolidated itself in the less developed countries of Asia and Africa, while feudal survivals still remain in rural areas." ¹⁹ Supported by statistics from the various countries, Soviet authors argue that these feudal survivals are the legacy of imperialist rule. Landlords still own the greater part of arable land in nearly all these developing countries, while the bulk of tenant farmers are exploited by semi-feudal methods. "Having completely lost all sources of livelihood in the country side, vast masses of the rural population in Asia and Africa are forced to go to the town, and there swell the army of unemployed." ²⁰

On the subject of agrarian reform, Soviet opinion has been, that these reforms have been carried on "from above" and had not brought any essential changes in the position of the vast majority of the peasantry. ²¹

The general understanding of the economy of these countries can be summed up by referring to an article by a Pravda correspondent. : "It is already clear, what capitalist development yields to liberated states. Most of these countries that have elected this path have not attained any noticeable economic advancement, and political independence remains precarious or simply nominal. Foreign monopolies

19. Y. Aozaliyev, op. cit., p. 33

20. Ibid., p 33

21. See. R. Ulyanovsky. 'Socialism and the newly Independent nations.' Moscow, Progress, 1974, pp. 288-289.

consolidate their position in these countries, and the role of backward social forms and social groups connected with these forms has not yet diminished." 22

Soviet scholars differentiate between the developing countries, and acknowledge the progress in some of these young states. These countries (like India, Egypt etc.) are termed as 'relatively developed', in comparison with others. There is some progress like development of industry; increase of production in export-oriented branches of agriculture; limitation of the role of feudal and prefeudal relations; expansion of education; elimination of social and caste privileges, which have been registered. But even here the basic social and economic problems await solution.

Foreign capital from the West continues to flow into these developing nations. In non-aligned countries it assumes chiefly the form of credits for the purchase of food, materials and equipment. The basic objective of these credits is " to secure in the former colonies the triumph of reactionary forms of economic development and to set up a corresponding political and social structure controlled by the U.S." 23

The redeeming feature of these economies, Soviet economists feel, is the development of the state sector. This represents the progressive force of the community, and strengthens the

22. Pravda, Feb 1, 1967. Trans. in Current Digest of Soviet Press (C.D.S.P.) Vol. X IX, no 5, Feb. 22, 1967 p.24

23. R. Ulyanovsky, Op.cit., p.15

objective material and technical pre-requisites of socialism. Today, as R. Ulyanovsky has often repeated in his book, no country can get along without government interference in private activity and "active regulation of economic life." ²⁴

The points made above, will be further elaborated while discussing the example of India.

The Case of India : Socio-Institutional Structures:

In considering the Soviet perspective on the problems of development in India, the socio-institutional structures, and economic formations require examination. Once these formations are analysed, political developments follow a logical pattern. This is not to say that a study of these structures offer a solution to the entire problem of development, but it would deepen our understanding of India, as also how Soviet scholars view the problem.

India falls within a group of South and South - East Asian countries, which are characterized by " a specific multi-structural pattern, which includes vast spheres of archaic traditional relations." ²⁵ In these countries, the social and economic structures are extremely complex and varied due to a prolonged period of feudalism, and the suppression of capitalism due to foreign rule. Thus these young states, encompass the existence of structures, representing both feudalism and capitalism. This accounts for

25. R. Ulyanovsky, V. Pavlov. Asian Dilemma, Moscow, Progress Publishers, 1969, p.19.

24. Ibid., p.58

the existence of outdated social relations persisting on the political scene. ²⁶

Every society has, and needs, a system of social norms of law and morality, and corresponding superstructural institutions for regulating and normalising relations between its members; micro-elements (family, community, caste etc.) ; productive units, and the macro-formations (state, nation, the national economy as a whole).

As India has been a slowly evolving society, its mechanisms, both ideological and institutional appeared to be almost stagnant. This has given the society and its institutions a kind of additional independence (i.e. it has led the members of the society into feeling a self sufficing and eternal nature in their existence). However, elements of a bourgeois society, had begun to arise long before they were discovered.

The first question that arises therefore, is, what is the class structure of Indian society? This question needs priority, as it underlies and influences the other structures. General class structure:- In an article by two noted Soviet Orientalists, Avakov and Mirsky, which appeared in 1962, on under developed countries, an extremely stimulating analysis of class structure is made. ²⁷ Its main points can be summed

26. Ibid., p.54

27. R. Avakov, G. Mirsky, "Class structure in the underdeveloped Countries," in T.P. Thornton, Third World in Soviet Perspective, Princeton, 1964, p2 76.

up as under:

(i) Classes in developing countries (as any where else) were formed under specific historical conditions. But unlike their Western counterparts, these societies did not go through a slave-owning society, nor a developed feudalism. And saw even less of the higher stage of development of capitalist relations. As the colonialists, wanted to maintain the feudal class structure - for their own gains, they attempted to freeze the development of capitalist relations. But despite these odds, new classes - the proletariat and local bourgeoisie began to rise, gradually transforming themselves into an active political force. This was a very slow process, and in fact class formation is still not complete.

(ii) The class structure of young states is characterized by the presence of numerous classes and social groups. The barriers between classes are not as sharply defined as in the West, (where the monopolist bourgeoisie and the proletariat; the upper rural bourgeoisie and the peasantry are distinct divisions). In developing nations extreme heterogeneity and many social strata are present.

(iii) With the help of data from the I.L.O. office, ²⁸ Avakov and Mirsky have arrived at certain conclusions. Agriculture accounts for two - thirds of the working population of these regions (south Asia, Latin, America, Africa). Feudal relations have survived to the greatest extent in South Asia, even though

capitalist relations in the country side have been accelerating recently.

Peasantry: In India, a sizeable part of the agricultural population consists of unpaid family members. ²⁹

During the late fifties and sixties, family labour averaged over half of the total number of rural families who were selling their labour in varying proportions and on various terms to the producers in return for a wage. ³⁰ This is also an index of the relative agrarian over population. The family helpers' constitute an enormous reservoir supplementing the army of rural lumpen-proletariat and agricultural proletariat.

Since surveys of the 1960's reveal, that over half of the total number of rural families in India, possess no land, this section forms the largest contingent among the sellers of labour power. This type of labour does not create surplus value, and cannot even provide for itself a necessary minimum subsistence. "He is therefore a pauper in the fullest and absolute meaning of the word." ³¹

Another common category is the worker with a plot of land. Share-cropping is widely encountered, this, however, is a transitional form leading to the capitalist system.

The above points have been amplified by other Soviet

29. V. Rastvannikov, "Social Types of Hired Labourers in the Indian Countryside," in-New Indian Studies by Soviet Scholars, ed., Social Sciences Today, no. 33. Moscow, 1976. p 68

30. Ibid., p.68

31. Ibid., p.69

economists. In addition to the categories of agricultural labour, mentioned above, there exist rural producers having their own means of production; artisans, handicraft workers, weavers, tanners etc. The characteristic of cottage industries, is the primitive manufacturing methods employed, and that they are concentrated in the Country-side.³² Traditional village craft greatly suffered from the more advanced form of industry, ever since the colonial period. The Indian state, attempted to increase employment in this sphere, by taking measures to encourage cottage industry. This has drawn a definite number of new workers into production, and also led to the increase in output per person employed.

The Working Class: The composition and structure of the Indian working class was influenced by colonial conditions. Their growth is associated with the development of capitalism, within the framework of the colonial economy. The colonial economy led to the penetration of the commodity - money relationship into every branch of the national economy.³² This led to the mass ruin and impoverishment of the intermediate producers-peasants and artisans. The 'normal' process of gradual transformation of the immediate producer into a proletarians and semi-paupers. The army of the hired labour

32. L.I.Reisner, G.K. Shirikov. "The Industrial Revolution in contemporary India" in Asia in Soviet Studies ed. Moscow, Nank, 1969, p.204

32. L.A. Gardon, L.A. Fridman, "Peculiarities in the composition and structure of the working class in the Economically under-developed countries of Asia and Africa", in T.P. Thornton, Op.cit., p.157

expanded far beyond the demand for it. Gordon and Fridman have distinguished between, three groups among the workers and semi-proletariat. ³³

- i) the home and handicraft workers; independent artisans.
- ii) Agricultural workers; occasional labour; farm hands etc.
- iii) The hired labour, engaged in commerce, in service industries; and hired white - collar intellectual labour. ³⁴

Part of the white collar workers, are in the professions, and are also part of the ruling class. The bulk however, are made up of commercial office employees, who have an intermediate status between the contemporary industrial proletariat and the urban middle strata.

Due to their colonial background, the industrial proletariat has evolved and developed into an active political force. Soviet authors emphasise, that this group, is marked by a high degree of production concentration, as also territorial concentration. Till the mid 1960's, about 70% of the Indian proletariat, was concentrated in the three regions of Bombay, central Gujarat and W. Bengal. Also, as only a limited number of industrial branches were developed, the number of skilled workers was small. Connections of the proletariat, to the villages of their origin remained very strong in this period.

33. Ibid., pp 159.

34. The first two groups have been dealt with under the sub-title of 'peasantry'. It is the third group which is contiguous with the working class.

Though in recent years, the industrial proletariat has increased to more than double its earlier size, Soviet writers feel, that the correlation between the basic nucleus of the working class and its surrounding groups, remain the same as before. The agricultural and hired labour, as also the rural proletariat, are still more numerous than the industrial proletariat. The reason for this being: "Capitalist industrialisation is incapable of providing such a growth in employment in the course of twenty years." 35

However, with the growth of small-scale commodity production, employment has risen considerably. The consequences of industrialisation have made important improvements in ^{the} composition of the working class. It has led to a growth in skill and literacy among the workers. Gordon and Fridman believe, that the workers employed in the state sector are more conscious as they have more participation in economic life.

The Bourgeoisie: According to the Soviets, the characterization of the bourgeoisie, plays a central role in determining the path of development of a country, as also its policy. The question of the role of the bourgeoisie in colonial and developing societies has caused, much controversy and debate, not only amongst Soviet indologists but also among Soviet national leaders. 36

However, we are concerned here in this study, with the characterization of the bourgeoisie, which was laid down at

35. L.A. Gordon, L.A. Fridman, op.cit., p.173

36. Shoban Lal Datta-Gupta. "The Decolonization Controversy." centre for studies in social science, calcutta, occasional paper no. 10. 1976.

the 20th Congress of the C.P.S.U. Stalin's theory, that the bourgeoisie in a colonial country, were compradore and reactionary, as they were aligned with imperialist powers, was turned down. Lenin's earlier formulations, at the Comintern, on the "National and Colonial Question" were again taken up as the basis of further analysis.

In line with this, Soviet theorists said, that in specific historical moments, the bourgeoisie could play a progressive and revolutionary role. Especially at the time of colonial domination, when the interests of the nascent commercial classes, clashed with the foreign monopolists. This clash, could take a nationalist and 'progressive' turn. Moreover, with the gaining of political independence, the progressive role of the bourgeois class did not necessarily end. For, they could still lead the country to independent economic development. "The facts have shown that as national capitalist enterprise grows in the countries of the East, the contradictions between the local bourgeoisie, and foreign financial capital and feudal landownership become intensified."³⁷ Soviet indologists acknowledge, that it was the inability to comprehend this pattern of economic contradictions, that led to their 'sectarian' approach of wrongly characterizing the national bourgeoisie.

Within the bourgeoisie, there are various strata, their role being determined by: " where the basic economic activity

37. "The 20th Congress of the C.P.S.U. and problems of studying the contemporary East." Trans. in T.P. Thornton *op.cit.*, p.83; See also Z.Imam. Ideology and Reality in Soviet Policy in Asia, N. Delhi, 1975 pp 57

of one stratum or another, of the bourgeoisie is concentrated, what is the degree of its connections with the public sector of the economy and the domestic market, and what is its objective economic interest in developing the national economy and shattering the influence of foreign capital." 38

The relationship of the bourgeoisie to the national economy thus depends, to a great extent on the branch of the economy in which its capital is invested, and on the scale of this capital.

The intelligent strata, which forms part of the national bourgeoisie, are, according to soviet analysts, mainly bourgeois or landlord in origin. This group has from the very beginning played a prominent role in the national liberation movement. Generally, cadres of the activists of the political parties consist of professionals, white-collar workers, lawyers, teachers, students, and business men, who form the backbone of nationalist parties and groups.

Despite the collapse of colonialism, and the weakening of feudalism, the feudal landlords^d continue to be a major force in India's political scene. This is the most reactionary section of the population, and Soviet indologists feel, that India's bourgeois - democratic revolution will not be complete, unless this class is eliminated. In keeping with the times, the feudal landlords have adapted to methods of capitalist exploitation, and capitalist modes of production, by becoming entrepreneurs, and investing in capitalist industry. They thereby

form an influential section of the bourgeoisie, especially so in the regions where they are located. As, these Landlords control large rural areas, they usually have a big say in party politics.

"There is no doubt that in India, the national bourgeoisie is the ruling class."³⁹ Government policy, basically coincides with the interests of this class. This ruling group is extremely wealthy, and has the experience of politically guiding the masses. The political organ and party, of this class is the Indian National Congress. Much of the ruling group, is closely linked with landownership. The landlords thus having a definite say in the government.

As the bourgeoisie, especially the monopolist section, (which is fairly well developed in India) wants economic independence, its relations with foreign capital are those of struggle and co-operation. The course towards independent capitalist development being combin^ed with the "attempt to avoid any resolute measures against foreign capital. The policy of compromise is a half hearted, irresolute form of eliminating foreign private capital, whose importance to the economy of these countries is decreasing, though very slowly." ⁴⁰

Multi-level character of Indian Society; India's system of social stratification, however, cannot end, simply by understanding its broad class structure. Soviet authors emphasize

39. Ibid. p.299

40. Ibid. p.299

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that the multi-structural nature of Indian society, necessitates inclusion of social institutions which are either withering away, or emerging, or still existing. As for example, the caste system. This system, due to its prolonged coexistence, with newer social structures, has been subjected to "reciprocal influences, which in conditions of general social stagnation leads to the drawing together of their formal organisations and functions." ⁴¹ Features of tribal solidarity, slavish submission; guild and estate organisation, are to be found in the caste system. Some features of the caste system have penetrated into India's class structure. ⁴²

Soviet authors agree with certain Indian authors, like M.N. Srinivas, that castes have adapted themselves to modern conditions, with education, urbanization, and industrialization castes have not dissolved. But they continue to play an important role in the social life of the people. The main reason for this, bring the general backwardness and force of tradition. The caste system, whose "main features are reflected in definite religious precepts. These precepts can hardly be obliterated in the course of several decades, for the simple reason that the social conditions which engendered them, have changed so little." ⁴³

The evils perpetuated by the caste system needs no

41. R. Ulyanovsky, V.Pavlov. op.cit.

42. The main soviet work on castes "KASTYVINDII" by G.G. Kotosky, has not been translated into English.

43. L.R. Polanskaya, A.D. Litman. "The Influence of Religion on the Social Thought of the Peoples of the East," in, Asia in Soviet Studies, Moscow, 'Nauka' 1969 O. 234

repetition and Soviet awareness of the problems, can be seen in V. Rastyannikov's article.⁴⁴ He shows how personal dependence arising from this rigid stratification condemns large groups of labourers, selling their labour in agriculture, to the lower social orders of the rural population. These 'untouchables' are given the lowest wage often these 'untouchables' form an overwhelming and large part of the army of farm labourers.

Ideology as part of the structure of Indian society: Ideology in another component of the extremely complex social reality in India. "The level of mass awareness corresponds to and in many ways, is conditioned by the specific "traditional" level of the socio economic organisation, and the vague and incomplete class structure."⁴⁵

In India due to the force of tradition, the authority of ancestors, the most obvious ideological formation has been religion. The reason for the continuous influence of religion on social thought, some soviet analysts remark, has been, because: " the necessity of unity in the struggle against foreign oppression was an idea that came spontaneously to the people, but such was their level of social development that they often understood this to mean religious unity first and foremost."⁴⁶ To maintain their culture, the people took more seriously to their religion, and began idealizing their pre-colonial past.

44. V. Rastyannikov. "Social Types of Hired Labourers in the Indian countryside (1950-60's)" in New Indian Studies by Soviet Scholars, Social Sciences, no 33 Moscow, 1976 p.72

45. V. Lukin, "The Ideology of Development and Mass consciousness in the Third World," in National Liberation Movements: Current Problems ed. Moscow, novosti Press, 1969, p 142

46. L. Polansky, A.D. Litman, Op.cit., p.244

The first ideological spokesmen of India's liberation movement, were largely from the feudal class. To their minds thus, interest of the country was inseparable from the defence of religion. Due to the existence of a variety of religious creeds, there were also, attempts at religious syncretism and tolerance, as foreign rule threatened all communities. ⁴⁷

Soviet writers argue, that sometimes, however, ideas of religious unity were pitted against those of national unity, leading to communal riots.

With the rise of the bourgeoisie and working class, new concepts of social justice came up, and secular tendencies gained predominance. Even though some sections of the national bourgeoisie "disguised their political views in religious garb" ⁴⁸.

Nehru saw that if religion was put up as the ideology of the national movement, it might "close the eyes of its participants to the social and economic problem, whose solution he considered crucial to the success of the struggle for independence." ⁴⁹ He therefore dislinked politics and religion, promoting in the nation, a more secular ideology.

The Soviets believe that many of the trends, which governed social thought during the colonial period, are still very marked even today in India. Basically because of the persistence of the social and economic conditions, that had earlier operated " to conserve religion as one of the characteristic features of the

47. Ibid., p. 225.

48. Ibid., p. 232

49. Ibid., p. 233

psychology of the masses. " 50

The ideology of 'nationalism' has been most easily acceptable in India, as it got well established at the time of the national movement. Being a purely political formula it is accepted by all groups. With independence, the process of national formation raises certain problems, arising out of the "primary" social sentiments associated with race, language, tribe etc. Thus the problem of nationalities, which India faced in the past, and still does, was due to these initial social formations. 51

The 'nationalist' ideology, after independence was changed to 'national type socialism,' and is proclaimed by the ruling party, as its motive force. This ideology, has been regarded by soviet academics as "based on petty-bourgeois, utopian notions of 'general equality', recognising the right to private ownership in the means of production and rejecting the scientific theory of classes and the class struggle." 52 The reforms proposed by the ruling classes are not anti-capitalist in nature, but only anti-feudal to some extent.

However, ideologies of national type of socialism, are not discredited by soviet authorities as purely negative. For, it is commonly believed, that the spread of socialist ideas, even in their unscientific form, play a positive role, "because when the tasks of bourgeois democracy (constituting the main content of these theories) are consistently implemented, they objectively

50. Ibid., p.233

51. A.M. Dyakov. The Nationalities Problem in India Today. Moscow, Nauka, 1966, p.3 onwards.

52. Y. Gusevaty. "Thirdway" or Genuine Freedom? International Affairs, no. 4, April, 1963. p.47

pave the way for the non-capitalist development of the young national states, opening before them broad prospects of rapid economic development and raising living standards." 53

The intricacy of multi-structural social mechanisms, is obvious from the points made in this chapter. An analysis of the general structures of Indian society, without correlating them to their specific characteristics cannot lead to an understanding of India. It is only when all these factors are viewed in totality, that a full picture of Indian reality does emerge. For, it is "the interconnection of state, class, group, personal relations and of the ideological interactions in the sphere of traditional spiritual life of the peoples," 54 that combines to form the socio-institutional structures of society.

One can see, therefore, that the Soviet formulations present a detailed view of the class structure of Indian society, both rural and urban. They rightly show, the multi-structural society that India consists of. They acknowledge also, the existence of pre-capitalist social formations and class structures.

This class analysis is linked with Soviet political predictions about the course of future Indian political developments. The character of the Indian state, and the path of social development followed under its aegis, is based on this Marxist-Leninist analysis.

53. Ibid., p. 47

54. R. Ulyanovsky, V. Pavlov, op.cit., p.66

The soviet analysis, though it has suffered aberrations and extremes, is now, since the 20th Congress, in congruence with class analysis made by other Marxists, while analysing Indian society. Even though the tactical lines may differ, most Marxist scholars, recognize the various classes as outlined by the Soviets, on the basis of Marxist-Leninist ideology.⁵⁵

Only this concrete analysis of a concrete class society permits a Marxist - Leninist appreciation of Indian political realities and political developments over the period under study.

55. for example, the class analysis of Indian society, can be compared with A.N. Desai, Social Background of Indian Nationalism, Bombay, 1948

Chapter IIEconomic Structure of India.

Soviet analysts believe that understanding the economic structure is the key to the analysis of a society; so much so, that solution of economic problems would more or less solve socio-political problems. They do not view the relationship between the latter as merely an epiphenomena, as problems of the super-structure (i.e. socio-political) are complex, and not totally determined by the economic base, but have some degree of autonomy. In developing societies, economic and social structures are deformed, due to colonial exploitation, and so the relationship between the base and super-structure, is all the more complicated.

Soviet studies on Indian economy have been enormous in quantity, with a substantially high degree of sophistication in quality. It is not our purpose to review and analyse them all. We shall look at their view of Indian economy in-so-far as it helps us to focus our attention on their understanding of Indian politics, during the period under study.

The first section of this chapter will deal with the Soviet analysis on the agrarian sector, and the second with that of the industrial sector, although the two are interlinked.

I Agrarian Sector of the Economy.

After the expulsion of the British colonialists, the task was to face the general problems of the country. The land and peasant problem was the biggest and most complex, and was recognised as being so by Indian economists and also by

Soviet analysts. 56

India being primarily an agrarian country with 70% of the people derive their basic income from agriculture. This structure, had resulted due to two centuries of exploitation by the British. A distinctive feature being, that even when the major part of the population worked on agriculture, there existed a chronic disparity between production, and the demand of the nation. Agriculture always lagged behind the industry this resulted in "an almost uninterrupted crisis of productive forces in the country side. " 57

Between 1901 and 1945, the increase in gross agricultural output was only 12%, and the population went up by almost 45%. Between 1951 and 1969, the gross output of agriculture went up by 71%, while the population increased by 50% (despite the fact that the gross harvest dropped by 17%, while the population in 1965-67 due to drought)

An increase in agricultural output however, did not bring about any radical change, as India still had to depend on food imports. 58

This crisis has been caused by the extremely backward methods employed in farming, almost semi-feudal in nature. There have been long periods of stagnation, decline in arable farming and non-investment of capital. Natural calamities, famine, under-developed industry and transportation systems, all added to the

56. G. Kotovsky, Agrarian Reforms in India, Peoples Publishing House, New Delhi 1964, p.2

57. R. Ulyanovsky, Socialism and the Newly Independent Nations, MOSCOW, PROGRESS PUBLISHERS, 1974, p. 279.

58. Ibid., pp. 279-280.

agrarian crisis. Surveys during the early fifties revealed massive rural unemployment and underemployment. Land was concentrated in the hands of Landlords, in the 1950's 69.2% of the peasant holdings were in debt to the usurers. The money lenders exploited the peasant-holdings needing credit, by lending at high interest rates. They also engaged in trade, acting as the intermediary for outside or local purchasers, and thus they could dictate market terms to the peasant. ⁵⁹ These factors led to an acute social problem, so much so that ^{if} it was not solved, it would mean that the ruling classes would constantly face social unrest.

Soviet economists generally feel, that there are two ways of solving agrarian problems; (i) confiscation of landlord property, in the interest of the entire peasantry, leading to a complete elimination of the landlords as a class; and (ii) carrying out of such agrarian reforms, by means of which semi-feudal land-holding are restricted and gradually transformed into capitalist land-holdings. This strengthens the stratum of the rich peasant and further impoverishes the majority of the peasantry. While the first method is considered an ultimate goal, the second is only transitory in essence. The latter solution solves the agrarian problem only in the interest of the ruling classes - mainly the national bourgeoisie, at the expense of the peasantry.

Soviet academics agree that, since independence agrarian reforms have reflected the attempt at adopting the second

solution i.e. the bourgeois - landlord way.⁶⁰ Hence, in India reforms have centered around the system of land-ownership and cultivation; encouragement of different forms of agricultural cooperatives, and other such state capitalist measures to advance agriculture. This type of development also includes a system of community projects and national extension services. Soviet economists point out, that these measures will not change the very system of social distribution, which is basically the crux of the problem.

Kotovsky, Ulyanovsky, and other Soviet writers on India's agriculture feel, that the governments legislative and economic measures "constitute a single complex favouring the gradual switch-over of Indias' agriculture to the path of capitalist development."⁶¹

Soviet authors, have traced with great details, the agrarian reforms carried out by the Parliament. Their views can be summarised as follows: As 43% of India's territory, under colonial rule was in the hands of the Zamindar landowners, the peasants were mainly tenant farmers. The high rate of tenancy being paid by the peasants cut into not only their economic surplus, but also their subsistence. This feudal exploitation limited the possibilities of a home market and delayed capitalist development.

Some capitalist development in agriculture, did exist, in export oriented raw agricultural products, and for example: cotton; jute; sugar etc.

60. G. Kotovsky, Op.citi., p.10

61. Ibid.

The agrarian reforms enforced, since independence, in the various states have a long history, and vary from state to state. However, there are some common features in them such as abolition of absentee landlordism and zamindari, introduction of a few regulations between landowner and tenant, establishment of direct taxes, and other such forms between the tenant and the local state apparatus. There were attempts to gradually transform the tenant into an owner of his land-holding, to redistribute land by stipulating a maximum size for existing holdings, etc. The surplus accruing from these rather half-hearted reforms, as a rule being bought and redistributed to landless peasants. This also resulted in a consolidation of small scattered plots into compact holdings to prevent stray-farming, and an organization of peasant holdings on a co-operative basis to promote joint cultivation, and thus effect an increase in production.

State-wise legislation⁶² gave much leeway to landlords, who made use of the loopholes to escape, these laws. For instance, by division of land amongst family members, they managed to escape land ceiling, etc.

"A formally legal approach is the characteristic feature of the agrarian reforms, they are aimed not to eliminate the landlord class but, on the contrary to preserve it." ⁶³

Moreover, land reforms did not effect the ryotwari areas, which embraced 57% of the total land under cultivation. Under the zamindari abolition law, the agricultural land category remained the Zamindars property. In anticipating the land reforms the

62. Ibid., p. 294

63. G. Kotovsky, op.cit., p. 47

Zamindars carried out mass eviction of their tenants, thus changing land ownerships suited to themselves. Compensation was paid to the Zamindars, for all the land that was confiscated. This compensation was as a rule, scaled higher, as a result of direct encouragement and pressure by representatives of "the congress high command"⁶⁴ itself.

Despite a barrage of land legislations, Soviet scholars have no illusions on their actual implementations. ⁶⁵ In fact Kotovsky opines: "since the implementation of the agrarian legislation the upper stratum of the peasantry have become, along with the ex-zamindars, the chief owners of land and employers of agricultural labourers.....it is this upper stratum which now fills the 'power vacuum' caused by the abolition of Zamindars". ⁶⁶

Soviet scholars, while tracing the debate within the congress on land reforms, generally show, that it is here that the dual nature of the bourgeoisie is reflected. The upper stratum of the national bourgeoisie, being monopolistic in nature tends, as they stress, to align with the landlords and thus discourage the implementation of the reforms. ⁶⁷

Soviets remark, that the trend shows, that redistribution of land has not been in the favour of the landless, and this has led to the formation of a class of agricultural labour, which

64. Ibid., p. 50

65. Ibid., p. 74

66. Ibid., p. 80

67. R.A. Ulyanovsky. "Agrarian Reforms in the Countries of the Near East and India, and S.E. Asia" in T.P. Thornton, op.cit., p. 189

helps in the development of capitalism in agriculture.

Soviet scholars further amplify that, one of the main reasons for the failure of land reforms is that: "the peasantry has not been enlisted to help carry out the reform; its enforcement is entirely entrusted to the administrative and revenue authorities." ⁶⁸

The progressive features of the land reforms are, Soviet economists conclude: that they have considerably reduced the sphere of semi-feudal exploitation of the peasantry that alienated land holdings are decreasing, and that there has been a fair increase in co-operatives, loan facilities, etc. This however, does not mean, that pre-capitalist production is eliminated.

The 1961 census showed that 61% of all Indian peasants were still landless, despite the reforms. Methods to conceal land beyond the stipulated unit also continued. ⁶⁹

The incompleteness of agrarian reform and increasing class stratification in the countryside and above all, a deterioration in the conditions of the mass of the working peasants and agricultural labour, led to the sharp conflicts in various states in 1970.

It is Ulyanovsky's contention, that the progressive sections within the congress, have recently disregarded the rightest obstruction, and from 1970 onwards, it has resumed agrarian reforms and re-distribution of land in earnestness.

Soviet economists agree, more or less that the capitalist sector is becoming the leading, but not the predominating sector

68. G. Kotovsky, op.cit., p. 111

69. R.A. Ulyanovsky, Socialism and the Newly Independent Nations, op.cit., p.443.

in India's agriculture. ⁷⁰ The extent of development of capitalism is a topic, of some controversy. For, some of the economists insist, that agrarian reform in favour of the peasantry have not been achieved, and cannot be successful unless a non-capitalist path of development is followed. ⁷¹ Others, have more hope, and feel: " A new period is now on the way, a period of deep-going changes in the Indian countryside, and in the mind of the peasantry. " ⁷²

The difference of opinion, amongst soviet writer is very slight. For in their perspective, the peasant in India is still part of the most suffering and exploited class. And that emancipation of the peasant is still an outstanding task.

II. The Industrial Sector of the Economy.

At the time of independence, India's economic sector was not much better off than the agrarian sector. The economy was suffering from stagnation; the raw material sources were scant; engineering industry was almost non-existent; transport and railways underdeveloped; there was a scarcity of skilled labour; and, above all, the country lacked any substantial capital formation as also the know-how of entrepreneurship to undertake the speedy industrialization of the country. Soviet economists attributed these problems to the aftermath of colonialism. ⁷³ The colonies were, according to Marxist-Leninist doctrines, maintain as the source of raw material supply to industrializing countries.

70. G. Kotovsky. op.cit., pp. 158 to 170

71. Ibid., p. 170

72. R. Ulyanovsky, v. Pavlov, op.cit., p. 102

73. M.L. Pavlov, India: Economic Freedom Versus Imperialism, New Delhi, P.P. S., 1965, pp. 36

country as also an extension of the foreign commodity market. The exploitation of these colonies was further increased by what Pavlov terms, the "colonial tribute". This includes taxes; customs; indemnities, pensions and salaries of colonial officials and military. With the seizure of key positions in the economy of India, by the imperialist monopolies, the colonial tribute was supplemented by the super-profits from capital investments. ⁷⁴

The political and economic subjugation hampered the development of the national bourgeoisie, however, even under distorted conditions, Indian entrepreneurs still arose. The interests of the Indian bourgeoisie were represented in their political organization, the Indian National Congress. The Congress, during the independence struggle, outlined its policy of speedy industrialization on the basis of political and economic freedom in the country. Emphasis was laid in the industrial policy resolutions, on the development of heavy industry. ⁷⁵ Along with this, the development of small-scale and village industry was to be encouraged, in order to avoid the negative consequences of capitalist development. The emphasis on heavy industry was meant to provide the basic infrastructure for economic reconstruction and for establishing control over the domestic market. This revealed the contradiction, as A.I. Levkovsky remarks, between the interests of the national bourgeoisie and foreign capital. ⁷⁶

74. Ibid., p.6.

75. O.K. Shirikov, Industrialization of India, Moscow, Progress, 1973, p. 55

76. A.I. Levkovsky, Capitalism in India: Basic Trends in its Development, New Delhi P.P.H., 1972, p.405

The industrialization plan, drawn up by the National Planning Committee, envisaged active participation of the state on the basis of a mixed economy.⁷⁷ Its purpose, as Nehru had said, was to activate the state sector more and more until the economy turned into a socialist one.⁷⁸ But on the whole, the overall policy for industrialization was rather vague, and the role of the state remained undefined.

The industrial policy resolution passed in 1948, put aside railways, defence and atomic industries exclusively under state control, without touching other important spheres of industrial activity. This policy, was only a "modest" approach towards industrial relations, for it simply was, the continuation of the existing state of affairs.⁷⁹ In view of the fact that railways and defence were part of the state sector even in British era, and atomic industry had not yet come up.

This departure from the 'peoples plan', which had the objective of taking over of all key industries in the state sector, has been explained by Soviet economists, in terms of the political influence of the big bourgeoisie who had participated in the freedom movement, and were opposed to such a move.⁸⁰

77. G.K. Shirikov, op.cit., p 57

78. J. Nehru, quoted in V.I. Parlov, op.cit., p 43

79. G.K. Shirikov, op.cit., p.54

80. G.K. Shirikov, op.cit., p.54

However it is conceded that, the industrial policy resolution of 1956, was a substantial advance over the previous one. For instance all industrial enterprises were divided into three categories. The first category (List A), was inclusive of key industries, over which the state would assume entire responsibility, as defence, atomic industries railways and air transport, etc., totalling thirteen. The second category (List B) included the industries like food, production of building material etc. where state and private entrepreneurs could set up new units but the states' role was to be gradually increased. The third category of industries, (List C) was left exclusively for the private sector.

The reason for the increase in state participation Soviet economists feel, was due to the unsatisfactory growth rate during the first Five-Year Plan, as well as the aim of economic self-reliance. During 1950-1955 period, the average annual increase of industrial production was only 3.8%⁸¹ with a significant increase of 70% during the plan period in the output of equipment. Another feature of interest was the development and increase in the fixed capital about 1.5 times. The second Five-Year Plan, envisaged the development of heavy industries within the state sector with almost twice as much investment by the state, than the First Plan period. It is Levkovakys' contention, that this investment was necessitated, as the big bourgeoisie had failed to take up heavy projects because of the capital intensity they required, as also their long

81. V.I. Pavlov, op.cit., p.56

gestation period. Only the state could have mobilised the resources required in these projects.

In 1956, all the insurance companies were nationalised and all monopoly rights were given to the newly set up Life Insurance Corporation of India. Organisational changes were made in the industries where the government had the bulk of the shares, and they were brought under the Central Government.

The Third Five-Year Plan put more emphasis on agricultural development and social services. Compared to the second plan, the increase in the outlay in agriculture was over five times, the increase in social services was four times, whereas the increase in the industrial sector was minimum.⁸²

The following table issued by the Reserve Bank of India, shows the increasing emphasis on the state sector.⁸³

	<u>Number of State Enterprises</u>	<u>Total Investments (R. S. Million)</u>
At the beginning of the First Plan (1950-1955)	5	290
At the beginning of the Second Plan (1956-1960)	21	810
At the beginning of the Third Plan (1961-1965)	48	9,530
At the beginning of 1966/67	74	2,415

The State Sector and its Effect on the Economy

The state sector Indian economy as a rule, attracts

82. Ibid., p. 65

83. V. M. Kollontai, "State Policy and Industrial development" in V. L. Tyagenko-ed., Industrialisation of Developing Countries, Moscow, Progress, 1973, P. 96.

special attention from Soviet Indologists. While favourably appreciating the role of the state sector its short comings are analysed.

It has been emphasized that, though the state sector has been expanded to provide the basic infrastructure for industrial growth, its performance remains far from satisfactory. Moreover, compared to the heavy industries in the private sector, the state units had a very low profitability rate. This short coming is mainly attributed to administrative lapses, delays in construction work and expansion, as also to lower capacity utilisation, which increases the cost of production.

On the other hand, the private sector with its past experience in industrial management, effectively filled up the lacunae. The following table issued by the Reserve Bank of India to show the relation of gross profits percentage, to the employed capital of state and private enterprises in 1965. ⁸⁴

Table

Industry	<u>Category</u>	
	<u>State</u>	<u>Private</u>
Steel	2.5%	14.8%
Engineering	11.2%	18.8%
Chemical	3.1%	17.4%
Coal	0.8%	8.8%
Paper	11.2%	8.6%

It is considered that the better performance of the private sector units was mainly due to the protection and stimulus provided to it through various state incentives like limiting the market competition, favourable customs and tax laws, as also financing these enterprises through the state financial institutions like the Industrial Development Corporation and development banks. ⁸⁵

The need for extending protection to the indigenous industry, arose in order to minimize Foreign competition. High production cost and low quality yield made India's industrial output highly non-competitive, not only in the world market but also in the home market. Low quality of Indian products was mainly due to the low skill of the labour, who had no technical qualification and lacked necessary expertise to use even the out-dated machinery.

The state, in order to curb the rising monopolist trends during this period gave much encouragement to the medium and light industries. The State Bank of India, which was mainly concerned with direct industrial financing, could hardly cope alone, with the increasing financial demands.

A number of specialised credit agencies were therefore established. Amongst the biggest of them were the Industrial Development Bank of India (IDBI) founded in 1964, the Industrial Finance Corporation set up in 1948, the National Industries Development Corporation established in 1954, and Unit Trust of India

started in 1964 and many others.

All these agencies received their capital requirements through direct government subscriptions, or through the Reserve Bank, or through saving mobilization as in the case of unit trusts. These agencies were responsible for specialised credit needs. For example IDBI, was assigned a three-pronged role for (1) refinancing of credits extended by banks and other corporations, (2) subscription to the shares and other capital issues of term-lending institutions, and ~~other~~ (3) direct credit to the private or state enterprises which fail to get credit due to large requirements or low profitability.

The other financial institutions were given similar tasks.

The mode of operation of state credit agencies however did not produce the desired results, and the bulk of their finances went to the well-established big companies. According to a Reserve Bank of India survey in February 1968, The Unit Trust of India had invested the largest amount (74.1%) to the largest joint-stock companies-i.e. in companies with the paid up capital of over Rupees twenty five million, while only less than 4% went to the smaller companies (i.e. with capital investment of Rs. 5 to Rs. 10 million) The companies with less than Rs. 2.5 million got only 0.1% from financial institutions. ⁸⁶

Thus, as Shirikov has concluded, with the help of the Reserve Bank tables, the seventy-three monopoly concerns obtained 2.8% of the total funds, out of which the twenty major monopolies got 33.1 % and sixty other major Indian and foreign firms

received 12.7%.⁸⁷

Such a policy, helped to boost the economic might of big business houses and aided in sky rocketing their assets. Levkovsky has shown, that in a period of ten years (1948-1958) the assets of the Tata group rose from Rs. 690 millions to Rs. 4,000 million, the Birla group from Rs. 222 million to Rs. 3,000 million.⁸⁸

Government stimulus was not solely responsible for their assets soaring. These monopoly houses were actively helped by foreign capital. In the colonial days they had hindered their development, but after independence a new relation ship was established. The foreign companies being restricted to float new companies, preferred to set up joint companies with the Indian monopolies. Indian business, hankering after foreign collaboration, found an excuse in the low level of indigeneous technical know how and backwardness of Indian machinery, and thus jumped at the chance of collaboration.

The foreign investments in basic industries, like engineering, rose from Rs. 7 crores in 1948 to Rs. 53.3 crores in 1960; in the chemical industry it rose from Rs. 8 crores to Rs. 38.2 crores and in metals and metal products from Rs. 8 crores to 93.8 crores. At the same time the number of mixed companies increased from 17 in 1956 to 403 in 1961.⁸⁹

87. Shirikov had also given the groupwise break up.

88. A.I. Levkovsky, op.cit., p. 467

89. V.I. Pavlov, Op.cit., p. 99

It is, however, not intended to exaggerate the state encouragement^e to the private sector and the soaring growth of the big business houses. The Soviets stress that the Five-Year Plans gave more emphasis on the state sector with ever increasing outlays, whereas the outlay for the private sector varied from 39% to 49% with some variation in the actual investment. Besides the companies act of 1956 restricted the functions of foreign managing agencies with a ceiling of controlling not more than 10 joint stock companies, and cutting down their remuneration to 10% of the first million of net profits, etc. The act also gave the government power to control all spheres of industrial activity.

In 1969, the Indian Parliament, passed the Monopoly and Restrictive Trade Practices (MRTP) act to control monopolistic trends in industry. The act provides for governments prior sanction for expansion of existing units, or the establishment of new undertakings by the monopoly houses. The MRTP commission has also been authorised to launch inquiries into the monopolistic or restrictive trade practices against big business houses, and to recommend suitable action to the government. The objective of the act being to allow business to expand, as well as, not to give all the opportunities only to the monopoly houses. The finance minister, had assured in the parliament, that the MRTP act was "only one of a series of measures contemplated to correct certain distortions tending to develop in our economy, so as to achieve purposeful socio-economic growth." 90

The divergent trends in India's economic growth are,

according to Soviet analysts, due to the contradiction inherent in the capitalist path of development that the country chose to follow after independence.

Levkovsky has argued, that the country's independence transferred that political power into the hands of the national bourgeoisie, who had contradiction with foreign capital. The control of key sectors of the national economy by foreign capital of key sectors of the national economy obstructed the all round growth of the bourgeoisie.⁹¹ However with the control of political power, several steps were taken by the government to restrict the foreign capital from its dominating position. The expansion of the state sector greatly reduced the capital and equipment requirements of the bourgeoisie, from the foreign markets. Further, expansion of the state sector brought to the fore the contradictions between state capitalism and foreign monopolism. Meanwhile, the state sector by including key heavy industries, successfully put a check on big business houses, and limited their growth to some extent. These "democratic and anti-imperialist potentialities of the state sector"⁹² have thus been emphasised by the Soviet economists.

The big bourgeoisie, has been resisting the expansion of the state sector as its gains, are at their cost. Though at the same time, they have been utilizing the state sector to their advantage. For example, by using state electricity at very low cost, making use of power facilities etc.

91. A.I. Levkovsky, Op.cit., p. 405

92. V.I. Pavlov, Op.cit., p. 41.

These policies reflect the dual nature of the Indian capitalist class. On the one hand, the contradiction between the big bourgeoisie and foreign capital, in opposing subjugation of the national economy by foreign capital, and on the other their collaboration with the foreign capital, in order to subjugate and control the state sector for their own purposes.⁹³

Moreover the bourgeoisie is also split; the monopoly group is opposed by the non-monopoly sections of the bourgeois class. Though the monopoly section received considerable help from the state sector and some concessions from the government; the state sector laid the basic infrastructure for the growth of small-scale light and medium industries. State encouragement was also given to such industries by creating tariff restrictions to minimise the market competition, through subsidies to cut production cost. Other such incentives have also been given.

The emergence of the class of non-monopolistic national bourgeoisie, and state protection to these entrepreneurs sharpened the class contradictions between the big bourgeoisie and the smaller sections, who had to put up a fight for their very existence, under increasing threat from big business houses. Thus, the non-monopoly stratum of the national bourgeoisie in India, have been preferring a three-fold task of opposing the penetration of foreign capital into the national economy, pressing for reforms in the agrarian sector, to break up feudalism, and have been restricting monopolistic trends. Levkovsky points out, that certain restrictions were imposed on the activities of the

93. Ibid., p. 40

monopoly groups, which characterize the national democratic character of state capitalism. ⁹⁴

In its efforts for the national democratic reforms, the government is also supported by the intermediate strata, as also the working class. Such a united effort is directed against the monopolies, who are aided by the attempts of neo-colonialists, at seizing control, and influencing the "governmental machinery and other organs of political and ideological and military power." ^{95.}

III An Over-View.

The process of industrialisation in India, inspite of its various limitations, as pointed out earlier, has been welcomed by soviet economists. Levkovsky calls it "progressive", and feels, that the process of industrialisation, seeks to solve the problems of a "semi-colonial economy," and its development into a national economy which gives it an "anti-imperialist and anti-feudal edge." ⁹⁶

V.M. Kollontai, hails it as: "an important link in the general chain of anti-imperialist struggle waged by the progressive people". Besides he continues to say, that industrialisation alters the "material basis of society and its social pattern", ⁹⁷ and thereby intensifies the class

94. A.I. Levkovsky, Op.cit., p. 513

95. V.I. Pavlov, Op.cit., p46, p 52

96. A.I. Levkovsky, Op.cit., p. 513

97. V.M. Kollontai, "Distinctions and Prospects of Industrial Development" p.19 V.L. Tyagenkoed, Industrialisation of Developing Countries, Moscow, Progress Publishers, 1973 p. 19

struggle.

In determining the class character of state power, and its anti-imperialist and anti-monopoly role, it should not be forgotten that the role, of ~~the~~ the national bourgeoisie, in making the country's policy, varies with the objective conditions. The role of a national bourgeoisie in colonial times qualitatively differs from its role as the controller of political power in the state. This qualitative change from a vigorous to a moderate anti-imperialist and anti-monopoly stand is manifested in its concessions which it gives to foreign and home monopolies. Another factor which determines the policy stand is that even non-monopolies, have a tendency to grow into monopolies. These negative features, though pointed out in a subtle way by soviet analysts; often tend to get side-tracked by their praise of the democratic programmes of the Indian Government.

However, soviet scholars, never forget to laud, in a big way the development of the democratic working class, which can fight the negative trends. Shirikov states, that a balance of class forces is needed for further expansion of the state sector at the cost of the monopolies. It was a balance of class forces which precipitated a crisis, which brought about a split in the ruling party. ⁹⁸ This led to " the expansion of the public sector in the banking business and in foreign trade " ⁹⁹.

98. G.K. Shirikov, Op.cit., p. 129 ff.

99. Ibid.

One does find differences of opinion among Soviet economists, on the balance of class forces engendered by India's economic development. In fact, there has been a controversy raging amongst them on some major theoretical formulations, in instance the non-capitalist path of development. This concept was studied deeply, and first announced in 1960, in the Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties.¹⁰⁰ Here, it was concluded, that it might be possible for Third World countries, to follow a non-capitalist path. In its declaration the meeting stressed " the people, however, begin to see that the best way to abolish age - long backwardness and improving their living standard is that of non - capitalist development"¹⁰¹.

This led to a number of books and articles on the subject, with varying conclusions. Some of the Soviet Texts remarked that more and more countries were following the non - capitalist path, and to imply or to explicitly state that such a path of development was possible for India.¹⁰²

More recent statements, by an acknowledged Soviet theorist Hedary Simonia, reveals the farreaching differences between Soviet scholars on the potentiality of this path of development for countries of middle - level capitalism like India. " Taking the national - democratic government to mean

100. V. Soldovnikov, V. Bogoslovsky, Non-Capitalist Development An Historical Outline, Moscow, Progress Publishers, 1975, p. 30.

101 Ibid

102. See R. Ulyanovsky, V. Pavlov, Op.cit., pp. 215

a bloc of class forces is contrary to the idea of the non - capitalist path as conscious and determined advancement to the socialist perspective. It is inconceivable that the bourgeoisie, being what it is, should consciously participate in its self-elimination, however remote that perspective may be. And the experience of the African and Asian countries has shown the non - capitalist path to begin just when the bourgeoisie is removed from power." 103 This entire debate, is based on subtle differences in the Soviet appraisal of the balance of class forces. Some soviet writers, appear to stress the democratic aspects of stated policies whereas others focus more sharply on the degree of development of the national bourgeoisie. 104

It can be noted, that the economic structure is viewed by the Soviet authors, as the basis for policies, political movements, and indeed the entire range of policies in India.

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103. N. Simoni, Socialist - Oriented Development and National Democracy, Moscow, Novosti Press, 1974 P. 17. See also, a favourable review of the same by V. Skidanov, "National Democracy: A path Towards socialism," Socialism Theory and Practice, Moscow, Sept. 1975, pp. 147 - 150.

104. For this controversy, see Zafariman ed., Soviet View of India, 1957 - 1975, New Delhi, 1977, "Introduction".

Chapter III

Indian Political Developments, 1964 to 1971

As stated in the introduction, the Soviet appreciation of political developments is based on their theoretical understanding of the Indian societal setting at both the micro and macro levels. Thus what is hereafter stated, must be viewed against the framework presented in our earlier chapters.

Likewise, it should be clearly understood that we have deliberately limited our scope to select major political developments of the period under study. We have adopted the methodology of first narrating a factual account of these developments as presented in the Soviet texts (hence it must not be confused with our own presentation of widely known facts), and only thereafter, we have commented and analysed as needed.

The focal point in studying the soviet view of political developments in India, requires an examination of the nature of government, and the political party, (or parties), which man the government, and influence public opinion.

It is clear from the earlier chapters, that the soviets view India as a bourgeois democracy. " There is no doubt that in India, the national bourgeoisie is indeed the ruling class. The policy of the government fundamentally coincides with the interests of this class, which is extremely numerous and has traditions and experience in the political guidance of the masses through the Indian National Congress Party." 105

105. A. Avakov, G. Mirsky. "Class Structure in the Underdeveloped Countries," in T.P. Thornton, Op.cit., p. 276.

I Politics after Nehru, 1964 - 1967.

1) The Politics of the Indian National Congress. The INC is of an extremely heterogenous composition, the Soviets stress. They believe, it is supported by the various strata of the bourgeoisie, including the intermediate ones i.e. intelligentsia^s, professionals etc. It also has massive support from the rural areas. Since it controls the largest Trade Union - the Indian National Trade Union Congress, the INTUC, it also enjoys support from vast sections of the working class. Due to such a mass backing, " the government of India has to consider the interests not only of the bourgeoisie but also of other classes." 106

Due to such a peculiar character, there exist within the Congress party, various factional groups. Soviets classify the group leaning to the right as " reactionary ", and some sections as " progressive ". These groups represent conflicting interests, and as such, the conflict within the congress has been reflected in the continuous vacillations, in its policies and programmes.

The Soviet view of the Jaipur session of the All India Congress Committee (AICC) in 1963, amply testifies to such a characteristic approach: " The Jaipur discussions brought to the surface the accumulated and sharpening differences over the path India should follow in social and economic development." 107 This indeed was symptomatic of Congress policy. The Soviets emphasize that the congress policy has always been to smooth out inner party differences, but such a task was getting more

106. Ibid., p. 298

107. G. Kotovsky, V. Pavlov, I. Redko, "some Indian Economic and Political Problems," New Times, no. 1, Jan 1964, p. 18

difficult with the increasingly complex situation.

Despite all its factionalism, the Soviets recognise the fact, that the INC has consistently managed, through the years, to retain its hold in most of the parliamentary institutions; the Congress deputies have won majority votes in the Lok Sabha, as well as the state assemblies. Soviet commentators attribute the INC success, to the disunity amongst the opposition, yet they concede that an underlying reason for the popularity of the INC has been : "its ideology of ' National Socialism ', and some of the steps it has taken to reform the state structure." 108.

After independence, the INC, adopted ' socialism ' of a national variety as its creed. Soviet writers felt, that socialism was a more effective variant of nationalism, and by declaring socialism as its goal, the INC could show itself as more modern, secular and purposeful. 109 Soviet writers, while discussing the ideology of the Congress party, have remarked, that their stress on ' socialism ' has increased due to the popularity of the world socialist system, as also, because the masses have been aware, that only socialism can solve the economic and social problems of our times. 110 The socialism adopted by the Congress, Soviet analysts stress, is not scientific in approach, as it does not have the intention

108. Ibid., p. 18

109. L. Stenov, " Socialist Doctrines of the Developing Countries ", in National Liberation Movement: Vital Problems, Moscow, APN, undated, p. 122

110. Ibid.

of doing away with private property.

Despite support from feudal elements, the INC raised the slogan of a radical peasant movement - "Land to the tiller!" With this slogan, it has attempted to gain the support of the peasantry, as that support, is crucial to its very existence. But much of the INC leadership " is tied to semi-feudal landownership and is afraid of abolishing it, and thereby establishing a precedent for the general liquidation of bourgeois property, it opposes the honest and consistent carrying out of its own slogan." 111

So it was nothing unusual, when in the 1963 AICC session though resolutions on socialism were passed, " none of the Congress decisions visualize (d) nationalization of monopoly concerns, banks and wholesale trade, which constitute(d) the foundations of developing capitalist relations in India." 112.

The Soviets have viewed the rightist opposition parties with anxiety, and kept track of their role in Indian political development.

The activities of the Rashtriya Swayan Sewak Sangh (R.S.S.) have been variously written about. They are characterised as " the nationalistic Hindu Communal Organisation." 113

111. R.A. Ulyanovsky, " Agrarian Reforms in Near and Middle East, India and South East Asia, " in T.P. Thornton, Op.cit., p 219

112. G. Kotovsky, V. Pavlov, I. Redko, Op. cit.

113. O. Petrenko and G. Kamalov. " India's Ultras " New Times, No. 27, July, 10, 1963. p.21

The R.S.S. having totally fascist ideas and structure formed the militant wing of the Jana Sangh ^{which} came into existence, when the R.S.S. was legally banned after a member of their organisation assassinated Mahatma Gandhi.

" The Jana Sangh membership is recruited among the landlords, shopkeepers, from amongst peasants befogged by caste and religious prejudice, among callow youth attracted by characteristic slogans, and small folk who feel ill-used by fate. It is a social base very typical of fascist movements. " 114

Soviet commentators, lash out critically at the Swatantra Party founded in 1959 by C. Rajagopalachari. " This party speaks for the big business interests connected with foreign monopolies, for the land owner class, the ex-Maharajas, the reactionary generals. " 115.

The Swatantra being an obviously and openly pre-American party, faced much attack in the Soviet press. On most domestic and foreign policy issues, its position is similar to the Jana Sangh. The Swatantra attacked the five - year plans, especially the state sector in the economy. It opposed agrarian reform and alienation of land from the landlord. It demanded unlimited freedom for private capital, both native and foreign.

The article, " India's ultras " went on to say that the Janasangh follows a similar line, but indulges in 'social

114. Ibid., p. 21

115. Ibid., p. 21

demagogy ' unlike the Swatantra. For example in opposing state intervention in industry and economic life, " they invoke the interests of the small and cottage industries, whose development the government is supposedly holding back. " 116

In the field of foreign policy, both parties are against non - alignment, especially the policy of freindship with the socialist countries. This policy was reflected at the time of the Indo - China border conflict, when C. Rajagopalachari said " India should now strongly, firmly and openly ally itself with the western bloc..... " 117

Other articles in Soviet journals, speak of the direct link of these parties with the west, the CIA and monopoly capitalism, In particular Soviet journalists, blame, in their articles, the rightist parties, not only for the persecution of the communists but also hold them responsible for the removal of left elements as Krishna Menon and K.D. Halviya from Ministerial rank.

Indologists in the Soviet Union, place the Indian socialist Party, and its various splinter groups, with the rightist parties. They condemn it demagogic policy of nationalism, and socialism which does not include any real socialist formulations. These parties ally with the right, and are vehemently anti-communist. 118

116. Ibid.

117. Ibid.

118. P. Kutsobin, "The Socialist Parties in India," in Soviet Periodical Abstracts, Vol. III, no. 3/4, Slavic Languages Research Institute, New York, March 1964, p. 31

An apparent feature, in Soviet Press reports on India, is the wide coverage given to the Communist Party of India (CPI). Statements by CPI leaders, its annual conferences etc. are widely reported in Soviet newspapers and journals. Often, especially till 1966, the Indian situation, as summed up in Prav.da, was based on the reports, of the annual CPI conferences.

Though the earlier tactical line of the CPI was criticised as "sectarian errors in which the revolutionary potential of the bourgeoisie was underestimated" the Soviets felt that "they have now been able to set a correct line"¹¹⁹ (with the help of the 20th Congress of the CPSU).

Soviet writers tended to overestimate, the strength of the CPI in their articles. However, they made constant appeals for unity of all 'left and democratic sections', whether they be in the communist party or not.

It is with this characterization in mind, that the Soviets perceived the actual day to day events, taking place in India at the time.

111) Political Developments, 1964 - 1966

1964, was an eventful year in India's political life. Soviet-Indian relations were on a successfully steady course, and India was given a fair amount of coverage by the Soviet press. India's foreign policy was often praised in their

119. F.S. Pokatsava, "The Communist Parties of the Countries of E.A. Asia in the Struggle for Independence and Democracy (1848-1966) : Soviet Periodical Abstracts, Vol. III, no. 1, 1963, p. 19.

newspapers. The Non-aligned Conference of March 1964, was given Soviet support. Khrushchev, in his report to the 22nd CPSU Congress, remarked, that the newly independent states, "are becoming a serious factor for peace, a factor of the struggle against colonialism and imperialism; major questions of world politics cannot be decided today, without taking their interests into account."¹²⁰

Soviet reports continually warned India and the non-aligned nations on the activity of Western imperialist powers : "The relocation of part of the Seventh Fleet is a direct challenge to the policy of non-alignment pursued by most countries in the region."¹²¹

In the early sixties, Soviet articles on India, tended to concentrate more on India's foreign policy, especially India's growing friendship with the Soviet Union. Thus in the sixties there were a spate of articles, paying lavish tributes to India's national leaders and heritage.¹²² This was perhaps the reaction to the earlier period when the Soviet press did not cover India as widely.

When Nehru died in May 1964, Soviet leaders and press eulogised his role and character : "An outstanding statesman of our time, a confirmed champion of peace, a sincere friend

120. N.S. Khrushchev, Report to the 22nd Congress of the CPSU, Moscow, Jan. 1964.

121. Pravda, March 10, 1964. in Current Digest of Soviet Press hereafter (CDSP) Vol. XVI, no. 8, March 18, 1964, p. 21.

122. See Pravda, 1964 in CDSP. 1963-1964.

of the Soviet Union - thus he will remain in the memory of each of us."¹²³

Shortly after this, when Lal Bahadur Shastri succeeded the primeministership, the Soviet deduction was, that though he was chosen after, "involved negotiations", Nehrus policy would be continued, "at least in the near future."¹²⁴

This article, spoke of the changes in the composition of the cabinet, saying that rightist sections in the Congress, tried to re-enter two of their representatives who had left Nehru's government in 1963. These were Morarji Desai and S.K. Patil. Though M. Desai did not succeed, two of Shastri's cabinet ministers S.K. Patil and T.T. Krishnamachari, were closely associated with big capital.¹²⁵

Along with this trend - i.e. of the rightist sections in the Congress holding important positions, another event in Indian political development, which caused much concern in Soviet minds was the split in the Communist movement. In an article called "Appeal for Unity" in Pravda it was reported :
"..... a so called "left" grouping has been operating in the ranks of the communist party of India for a long time now, openly declaring its disagreement with the line of the overwhelming majority of the party's National Council, which was elected at last Sixth Congress of the C.P.I."¹²⁶

123. Pravda, May 28, 1964, in CDSP vol. XVI, no. 22, June 24, 1964, p. 20.

124. Pravda, June 11, 1964, in CDSP vol. XVI, no. 24, July 8, 1964, p. 22 .

125. Ibid.

126. Pravda, June 23, 1964 in CDSP, vol. XVI, no. 25, July 15, 1964, p. 21.

The article traced the split mainly to the Sino-Indian border conflict, and the appeals of the Chinese Communist Party for a split in the C.P.I. The article put almost the entire blame on the Chinese. It said, that the national council was attempting to reunite the party, but it was difficult. The article also gave a brief outline of the party differences.¹²⁷

The activities of the CPI (M), termed by the Soviets as "the parallel communist party", however, have been largely ignored in the Soviet Union. Only some oblique references are made. The activities of the CPI, continued to receive wide coverage. For example, in August 1964, when several communists were arrested for demonstrating against price rise, etc., a report in Pravda, concluded by saying: "The Soviet public appraises the arrests of participants in the campaign of civil disobedience, as actions of an anti-democratic character."¹²⁸

The 7th Congress of the CPI was much appreciated: "the Indian communist party is on the right path"¹²⁹. Though the Congress of the CPI (M) was ignored, it was obvious, that the Soviets were concerned about the split in the communist movement.

The AICC annual sessions, have always been commented upon by Soviet journalists. For instance, Soviet commentators

127. Ibid.

128. Pravda, Aug. 28, 1964, Trans in CD&P vol. XVI, no. 35, Sept. 23, 1964, p. 26.

129. New Age, Jan. 5, 1965, p. 1

claimed, that the 1964 session, discussed mainly foreign policy issues, leaving out all the important economic issues.¹³⁰

Thus one can notice, that, though several internal events of India, were either ignored, or only reported straight from the Indian press, Soviet analysts, did often discuss India's internal situation.

(iv) Indian Foreign Policy

An assessment of India's foreign policy was a recurring theme in Soviet writings, during this period. Although Indian foreign policy postures since the mid-fifties have always been lauded in the Soviet Union, the death of Nehru provided a suitable occasion for reasserting the Soviet appreciation of India's policy of non-alignment.¹³¹

Earlier, Soviet analysts, had termed India's foreign policy as "neutrality", which was not considered as progressive and favourable a policy, as non-alignment was. For non-alignment, implied active participation, of a nation in strengthening the forces of peace, whereas "neutrality" meant, just non-involvement. From 1965 onwards, Soviet writers, slowly dropped the term "neutrality" in favour of "non-alignment", when discussing India's foreign policy.¹³²

130. Pravda, Nov. 14, 1964, Trans in CDSP vol. XVI, no. 46, Nov. 20, p. 19.

131. Pravda, May 26, 1964, in CDSP, vol. XVI, no. 22, June 24, 1964, p. 20

132. Contrast for example R. Ulyanovsky, The Tollar and Asia, op. cit., 1965 where he characterises India's foreign policy as "neutralism", and the same author's works after 1966, where the term "non-alignment" is used.

In this connection, the Soviet attitude to the Indo-Pak conflict of 1965 was symptomatic. Though Pakistan was not included in the non-aligned camp, the Soviets viewed the Indo-Pak border disputes of 1965, rather dispassionately. All press reports took care, whilst disclosing events of the border clashes, not to take sides with either camp. Soviet commentators warned, that these incidents would be taken advantage of by reactionary forces from within and outside the two countries, and that the situation was contrary to the interests of both the countries.¹³³

The Chairman of the USSR council of Ministers, sent a message to the head of both the countries, pleading for peace and normalization of relations. By this time however, not only had India and Pakistan clashed over the Rann of Kutch, but also in August a full fledged war began between the two countries.

All through the Indo-Pak conflict, the Soviet government and press avoided taking sides, but only pressed for peace, and offered to host a meeting of both sides in Tashkent. This was finally agreed to by both countries.

The Tashkent agreement was reached, after difficult negotiations, with the Soviet Prime Minister playing the role of a honest broker, and was welcomed by all. Pravda commented : "the most important conclusion that already can be drawn, is that the leaders of both Asian states, which until quite

133. Pravda, May 9, 1965, in CDSR, vol. XVII, no. 19, p. 20.

recently were belligerents have arrived at the firm opinion that the solution to the problems dividing them lies not in military but the political sphere."¹³⁴

The leverage that the Soviet Union was able to exert in bringing about reconciliation of the two parties, was largely due to the fund of good will it had gradually accumulated with the Indian government.¹³⁵ Furthermore the U.S.A., which had supplied the bulk of the military equipment to Pakistan had been compromised in Indian eyes. And the Soviets were quick to seize the opportunity to strengthen their influence in South Asia, and in India in particular.

When Shastri died suddenly at Tashkent, glowing tributes were paid to the late Indian Prime Minister, who was regarded to have continued the policies of Nehru.¹³⁶

v) The Politics of the Transition Period, 1965-66.

Although, the main reports in the Soviet Press, during this time were on Indian foreign policy, India's internal problems were not entirely ignored. It was felt, that with Nehru's death, reaction within the country had strengthened, and the democratic

134. Pravda, Jan. 10, 1966 in CPSP, Vol. XVII, no. 2, Feb. 1966, p. 2

135. Zafar Imam, Ideology and Reality in Soviet Policy in Asia: Indo-Soviet Relations 1947-60. Delhi, Kalyani Publishers, 1975, pp. 136 ff.

136. Pravda, Jan. 10, 1966, in CPSP, vol. XVI, no. 2, Feb. 2, 1966, p. 2.

forces (including the communists) were disunited.¹³⁷ Further within the Congress party, centrifugal trends had accentuated, the rivalries sparking off not only between individuals, but also among large groups, notably the ministerial leaders and party bosses. In Kerala, this resulted in the downfall of the Congress ministry. Seventeen members, from the Congress resigned in the state, to form a party of their own, which attacked the Congress from the right. Similar incidents took place in U.P., Punjab and West Bengal. Soviet texts, expressed surprise at the number of inner party disputes, which ranged from such issues as location and distribution of industrial enterprises, allocations of Central Government funds, water resources, etc. "A latest quarrel now between Mysore and Maharashtra is over Goa, which they both claim, on 'ethnic', 'geographical' and other grounds. Bitter violence and hostilities have been taking place due to these issues."¹³⁸

To add to these problems, the worsening of the Indian economic situation, led the government to grant major concessions to monopolies, upon the advice of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, which is largely influenced by U.S.A. The creation of a massive fertilizer plant in collaboration with private and foreign capital was sanctioned. The

137. P. Nilolaky, "Jehru's Party Without Jehru", New Lines, no. 32, Aug. 11, 1965, p. 16.

138. Ibid.

official explanation of the abandonment of the earlier policy vis-a-vis foreign capital, was that India needed help from foreign investors in the production of fertilizers to solve her food crisis.¹³⁹

Soviet commentators felt, that "the large sums of money allotted to the funds for India by the Americans strengthens their position in India and makes it easier for them to impose their ideology."¹⁴⁰

II. POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS UNDER INDIRA GANDHI

1) Problems and Perspectives

The political process leading to the emergence of Indira Gandhi as Prime Minister was keenly watched in the Soviet Union. Soviet commentators welcomed the election of Indira Gandhi to Prime Ministership, though, they warned her, that American aid, would act as a lever to turn economic aid into a means of political pressure, which could not coincide with India's interests. Moreover, she was also cautioned that, the capitalism that was developing in India was not beneficial to the mass of the people.¹⁴¹

The preparations for the scheduled elections to the Lok Sabha and state legislatures in February, 1967, was viewed as a sign of further polarization within the ruling party. For example the Central Election Committee of the INC, refused to let the

139. Pravda, April 20, 1966, in CDSR vol. XVIII, no. 16, May 11, 1966.

140. Izvestia, May 19, 1966, in CDSR vol. XVIII, no. 20, June 3, 1966.

141. Pravda, July 15, 1966, in CDSR vol. XVIII, no. 23, August 2, 1966.

"progressive politician", Krishna Menon contest the election from North-East Bombay, where from he had won twice before, and consequently Menon left the Congress, and he was followed by several others.¹⁴²

As a result of the elections, the Congress party, again gained the opportunity to form the country's new government. The Soviets argued, that although the INC received a majority in the country's parliament, yet the election could not be termed successful for the ruling party, as it lost the vote of many electors. In the Lok Sabha, about ninety seats, that had previously been won by the Congress were now taken over by the opposition. Many prominent Congress leaders, lost their seats, including Kamaraj, the Chief Ministers of Punjab, Bihar, Madras and West Bengal; Ten Congress ministers of the Central government including C. Subramaniam, S.K. Patil, and Atulya Ghosh, were unseated. In the States, more than fifty Congress state ministers were defeated. The Soviets emphasised, that this election, showed the intense dissatisfaction of the masses.¹⁴³

On the other hand Soviet commentators expressed concern, over the election gains of the Swatantra and the Jana Sangh. They felt that these parties had taken advantage of the growing dissatisfaction of the masses, and by resorting to anti-Congress demogogy, had managed to obtain eighty seats in the parliament.¹⁴⁴

142. V.Kondatcv, "India 1966" in Z. Imam, op.cit.

143. J. Pastukhov, "The Indian Elections", New Times, no. 10, March 8, 1967, p. 19.

144. Izvestia, March 2, 1967, in CDSP, Vol. XIX, no. 9, March 22, 1967, p. 15

Important gains were made by the Left-Wing, which won about forty seats. Soviet analysts commended as "remarkable" the left front victory in Kerala and West Bengal. Yet its losses were not glossed over, as one commentator remarked : "Unfortunately, in a number of other regions the left-wing forces operated without co-ordination, frequently running candidates against each other. Naturally this had negative consequences."¹⁴⁵

Soviet academics believed that the elections showed a sharpening of class contradictions. Rightist parties had now formed governments in Madras, Orissa and Bihar. And had formed coalitions in U.P., Punjab and Rajasthan.

The polarization of forces, was keenly felt, in the sharp division in parliament and the state assemblies. Its first sign could be seen at the time of the Presidential elections. Although the Congress candidates, Dr. Zakir Hussain and V.V. Giri were victorious, the opposing candidates Koka Subha Rao (formerly of the Supreme Court) and Mohammed Habib, were backed by all seven opposition parties. Dr. Hussain won by gaining 54%, and Mr. Giri 65% votes.¹⁴⁶

Soviet analysts, emphasized, that the influence of monopoly groups in the Congress party, as also in the Parliament, reached an all time high with the 1967 elections. For examples, in Bihar, ten out of thirtyfive seats contested for, were by the men working for G.D. Birlas interests. The number of candidates running for

145. Ibid.

146. A. Reginin, "The Presidential Election", New Times, no. 20, May 17, 1967, p. 13.

monopoly houses was massive.¹⁴⁷

The Soviets felt, that a large group of business men joined the Congress, and attempted to get into prestigious party and government positions. It was thus, according to the Soviets, no surprise, that : "the big monopoly and imperialist circles, taking advantage of the governments' vacillations and playing up the economic and foreign policy criticism, were deliberately stirring up internal political tensions with a view to stifling democracy, depriving the working class of its social and class gains and pushing India off the path of independence."¹⁴⁸

Communal riots, were taking place in various parts of the country. Hindu-Muslim clashes occurred in Kashmir, throughout 1967. In Maharashtra, a new communal group, the Shiv Sena was formed. Under pressure from the right wing, the West Bengal left-coalition was dissolved, and President's rule was clamped down in November 1967. In protest, a civil disobedience movement was started in West Bengal.¹⁴⁹

By November, the same year, new alignments took place due to the dissensions within the INC. The Congress governments fell in Haryana, U.P. and Madhya Pradesh. Thus nine states, with about 2/3 of the total population of India, had non-Congress ministries.

Soviet commentators divided the non-Congress governed states into three groups (1) West Bengal and Kerala where leftist

147. N. Savelyev, "Monopoly Drive in India", International Affairs, no. 4, April 1967, p. 35.

148. Ibid.

149. A. Medovoi "India in 1967", in Zafar Imam, op. cit.

coalitions were at the helm of affairs; (2) Bihar, U.P. and Punjab where representatives both of Right and Left (and the local parties) were in power; and (3) Orissa, Haryana and Madhya Pradesh, where state governments were in the hands of rightist parties. "The Southern state of Madras is in a class by itself, with a government formed by the local democratic party - Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam."¹⁵⁰

Madhya Pradesh, soon lost its Congress ministry, as a group led by the Rajmata of Gwalior, who entered into an alliance with Jana Sangh and Swatantra, and voted against the government. Soviet writers, gave various reasons for the dissensions within the INC. They felt that internal struggle in this party rose from its very historical and social roots, reflecting, above all its extremely heterogenous composition. Many Congress followers elected to state legislative assemblies frequently left the party, not as much because of political differences, as because of personal rivalries, and struggles for power and influence. Moreover, the Soviets stress, that, the dissatisfaction of the masses need not be overstated, as their problems were obvious, and had not been solved for years. Neither was any solution being found, given the state of the nation.¹⁵¹

Soviet press regarded as correct, the demands the CPI was making for sweeping economic reforms to change the present economic and political situation. The Soviet press gave wide coverage to the VIII Congress of the CPI, held in January 1969.

150. Y. Gotlober, Y. Shtykanov, "The Indian Political Scene", New Times, no. 48, Nov. 29, 1967, p. 8.

151. Ibid.

11) Social Tensions

The Soviets viewed social tensions in the country as a part of political development. In this connection their understanding of such tensions is worth focussing. Throughout this period communal tension, was constantly being fanned. This time, the tension area was Maharashtra, for which the Soviets entirely blamed the Shiv Sena. They analysed the Shiv Sena as indulging in chauvinism. According to the Soviets, this organisation had a vast membership, and though it was financed by Bombay business groups, its slogans were addressed to the petty bourgeoisie and backward sections of Bombay's masses. Its membership consisted of mainly Marathis, the predominant national group in Maharashtra State. The aim of the Shiv Sena, Soviets said, was to incite the local groups against other nationalities, so much so, that its posters proclaimed "clear Maharashtra from outsiders", etc.¹⁵²

Since Bombay is racked by a large unemployment and over-population problems, the Shiv Sena agitators claimed, that their sufferings were the fault, "not of the local capitalist and landlords, but of outsiders - mainly from the South, who snatch away their jobs."¹⁵³ In this way, the Soviet texts continued, the resentment of the poor is whipped up by chauvinist propaganda and "directed against people whose plight is equally bad."¹⁵⁴

Soviet writers asserted, that this organisation was vehemently anti-communist, and has a fascist approach. In fact its

152. B. Leptev, "Bombay's Ultras", New Times, no. 22, June 5, 1968, p. 29.

153. Ibid.

154. Ibid.

Chief ideologue, Bal Thakore declared : "It is a Hitler that is needed in India today".¹⁵⁵

Social problems of other kinds, also plagued the Indian political system : "It is hard to say which gives rise to the most complex problems - the birth of 55,000 babies daily, or the fact that these young citizens of the republic are divided from birth by barriers of prejudice and social inequality."¹⁵⁶

In the Soviet view, centrifugal tendencies increased dissensions within every state. Where there were no communal riots, language problems arose. For example in South India the anti-Hindi propaganda was at its worst stage, while the North-East was full of separatist groups, and underground hostiles. The Lachit Sena was active in Assam.¹⁵⁷

111) Political Crisis, 1969-1970

To add to the problems mentioned above, economic crisis plunged the country into inflation. Whereas the National Income for the fiscal year of 1964-65 had increased by 7.4%, for 1965-66, it declined by 4.8%. In 1966-67 it went up again, but only by 1.7%. The industrial growth rate for 1967-68 was also on the down grade.¹⁵⁸

Though food production increased by 27%, it did not restore the 1961-65 average, and grain had to be imported.

154. Ibid.

155. Ibid.

156. L. Stepanov, "India : A Study in Complexity", New Times, no. 31, August 7, 1968, p. 6.

157. Ibid.

158. Ibid.

It was easily deductable, from the Indian political situation, the Soviets argued, that the challenges the parliamentary mechanism was faced with proved enormous. Not only was the Central Government at logger heads with a number of state governments, but also, all the principle parties were in power in one state or another, and thus each party had the chance of being in opposition. Such a situation turned out to be a great ordeal for the parliamentary mechanism. Many parties had to make shifts and compromises in their programmes, slogans and tactics, "for it is one thing to be in opposition and criticize and quite another to be in power in the state next door, and have to prove in practice that your criticism is sound."¹⁵⁹

Another reason for the crisis in the parliamentary system was the very structure of parliamentary institutions in India. This system was borrowed largely from the west (mainly the Anglo-Saxon models). Thus the Soviets find it questionable whether a system suited to highly developed capitalist societies of the West, with mainly a two-party system, would suit a country, which still had feudal institutions in its structure, and its government was made of multi-parties.

But, as they see it, the crux of the problem lies not in the "formal qualities of the parliamentary system but the social environment in which it operates."¹⁶⁰

As the governments of four states, had fallen by January 1969, there arose the need for a by-election. Soviet reaction to

159. L.S. Stepanov, "India : A Study in Complexity", Jew Times, no. 43, Oct. 30, 1968, p. 11.

160. Ibid.

the result of the by-election, was that whilst the election battle in West Bengal was definitely of a class character, there was no clearcut differentiation of forces in the three other states. In U.P. the INC won 208 out of the 420 seats, followed by the Bharatiya Kranti Dal. The Jana Sangh suffered a loss of 50 of the 98 seats it held before. In Punjab 43 out of the 104 seats were won by the Akali Dal forming a coalition with the Jana Sangh. In Bihar no party got an absolute majority. Soviet commentators lauded the communist front victory in West Bengal, as they had achieved 214, out of 280 seats in the legislative assembly.¹⁶¹

It is in the context of elections, and the crisis of the parliamentary system, that the Soviet view of regional and linguistic politics of the sixties becomes important. Alexander Chicherov, a renowned Soviet historian, wrote an interesting article on the tendencies of the development of varying nationalities in Independent India.¹⁶² He has traced, within the Indian Sub-continent several historically established national communities. With independence, these got more developed, though due to uneven development of capitalism in India, some were more developed than others. The initial demand for linguistic states, were supported by the local business groups, who were trying to strengthen their positions, in the State

161. Y. Gotlober, Y. Shtykanov, "India : Test of Strength", New Times, no. 8, Feb. 26, 1969, p. 14.

162. A. Chicherov, "The Tendencies in the Development of National Relations in India", Strategic Digest, vol. IV, no. 11, New Delhi, Nov. 1974, p. 36.

apparatus, against those "old", more developed and powerful monopolistic groups, who were by now entering and influencing all state markets. These "earlier" monopolistic groups mainly hailed from the regions of North-West India, and had spread their influence even before the British had left.

Thus linguistic states were created and states were reorganized on the federal basis. "While at the preceding stage of the national movement the ruling congress party was seemingly a cementing force for the Indian Union, now the situation has changed."¹⁶²

The oligarchic tendencies of many state organizations within the INC, and the subordination of Congress policy to their regional interests, especially since a similar policy is being followed by the reactionary party bosses (the "syndicate" group) combined to encourage many of the local bourgeois groups to come out against the INC. These regional business groups, then proceeded to strengthen and aid local parties against the Congress, and attempted to cause splits in the Congress Organizations.¹⁶³

Against such a background, discussed above, Soviet view of the political crisis of 1969-1970 has to be seen. The Soviets argued that it was, when the situation could not have worsened that the government of Indira Gandhi, decided to take some remedial steps. In July '69, the Indian government decided to nationalize 14 leading, Indian private commercial banks.¹⁶⁴ The foreign banks

162. Ibid., p. 39

163. Ibid., p. 40

164. "Nationalization of Banks in India", Editorial comment, New Times, no. 30, July 30, 1969, p. 3.

operating in the country were not affected. It was estimated, that about 85% of all bank deposits were brought under government control. This decision was part of an economic policy resolution, passed by the AICC, which also envisaged other positive steps as, introduction of a social security system, a minimum wage for workers who earlier had no legal protection, curbs on the growth of monopoly and big land holdings and agrarian reforms.

The decision to nationalize banks, precipitated an intense debate in the Congress, as certain sections (the ' Syndicate ' and Rightist) tried to obstruct it. The Jana Sangh and Swatantara called these measures illegal and demanded the resignation of the Prime Minister. Since the Minister of Finance, Morarji Desai opposed the changes, the Prime Minister dismissed him. ¹⁶⁵

Another topic of controversy, within the Congress ranks, was the Presidential elections. The rightist sections within the Congress managed to get Sanjiva Reddy as their candidate for Presidentships. At the same time, it was announced that V.V. Giri would stand as an independent candidate against S. Reddy.

The CPI, CPI (M) and the Socialist Parties, decided to support Giri, against the Syndicate candidate. So with the support of these parties as also of the ' progressive ' sections within the Congress V.V. Giri was elected President. Soviet Press had termed S. Reddy, the tool of a " blatantly reactionary alliance. " ¹⁶⁶ The Soviet believed, that the Right-wing group had planned to use the victory of their candidate to try to oust Indira Gandhi.

Soviet commentators, were in total praise of the steps taken by Mrs. Gandhi, and underlined, that the stand taken by

165. M. Stasov, " nationalization of big Commercial Banks in India ", International Affairs, no. 11, Nov. 1969.

166. A. Usvatov, " India: Presidential Elections ", New Times no. 35, Sept. 3, 1969, p. 22

the " Rightists " led to a sharp crisis within the Congress Party : " The success of the democratic candidate shows that through the united action, the left forces are becoming an important factor in Indian politics, capable of ensuring the consistent implementation of the peoples policies. " 167

By November 1969, the crisis in the leadership of the INC reached its highest mark; so much so that, the Congress working committee meeting scheduled for November 1, did not take place. However the two factions met separately. 168 Soviet analysts termed the syndicate as : " a coterie of party bosses headed by the Congress President Nijalingappa. " 169 This group included S.K. Patil, Atulya Ghosh, Morarji Desai, and Kamraj. All these leaders, Soviet texts claimed, were known for their right - wing views, and had links with big business. This group, by the end of October had expelled Mrs. Gandhi's supporters, like C. Subramaniam, Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed and Shankar Dayal Sharma from party ranks. The separate meeting of the two sections, led finally to a split within the ruling party.

By mid - November, the Syndicate and its supporters voted for a no-confidence motion in the parliament. But only 62 out of the 282 Congress members of Parliament joined the

167. Ibid.

168. P. Kutsobin, " The Indian Confrontation, " New Times, no. 47, Nov. 26, 1969, p.6.

169. Ibid.

opposition group led by Morarji Desai. With this it was clear, that the Congress party, had sailed out of a difficult situation. The Soviets commented : " The overwhelming majority is still with Mrs. Gandhi and her progressive socio-economic reforms".¹⁷⁰

The issue of bank nationalization, once again became a controversial one by early 1970, when the Supreme Court decided by a majority of 10 to 1 that the bank nationalization decree was invalid, and constituted " hostile discrimination ", as the measure did not extend to all foreign banks and some of the Indian banks. The court also held that the compensation offered to the owners of the banks was unfair. So, V.V. Giri as President for the second time decreed nationalization. Soviet journalists were emphatic in their view that, " Indian reaction has been dealt another blow. " ¹⁷¹

Throughout 1970, there were a spate of articles in the Soviet newspapers and journals on the clashes between the ' left ' and ' Right ' forces, both in Parliament and out of it. At this time, the Jana Sangh was constantly staging anti - government demonstrations. Though the R.S.S. was at one time banned, it had re-activated itself, especially in Delhi. ¹⁷²

The Shiv Sena continued its terrorizing the non - Marathi population of Maharashtra, and constantly attacking

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170. " India : Setback for the Syndicate ", comment, New Times, no. 48, Dec. 3, 1969, p. 3.
171. " Indian Banks ", comment, New Times, no. 8, Feb. 24, 1970, p. 3.
172. B. Kalyagin, " Indies ultras", New Times, no. 28, July 15, 1970. p. 26

the communists. They succeeded in murdering Krishna Desai the CPI trade Union Leader. The Soviets were perturbed at these events, as the rightist forces, they said, were constantly disturbing not only the implementation of progressive measures in parliament, but also causing harm to national consolidation and progress.

Soviet writers, during this phase put stress, as they always did, on the follies of following the path of capitalist development. However, they were all in praise for Mrs. Gandhi's new policies, the latest in line being the abolition of privy purses. 173

When the Supreme Court overruled this decision, The Soviets criticised the Rightists for causing such disturbance in parliament, by demanding the resignation of Mrs. Gandhi. In this situation, the President dissolved the parliament, and called on Mrs. Gandhi to head the government till the new elections scheduled in early 1971, were held. 174

(iv) Regional Pulls and Tendencies, 1969 - 1970

By June 1970, the Leftist united front Ministry of Kerala had also been dissolved. Reacting to its dismissal, a Soviet analyst while having stated, that one of the reasons for communist popularity in this state " is due to the progressive nature of the people ", 175 went on to comment on various

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173. A. I. Andronov, "India without Maharajas," New Times, no. 39, Sept. 30, 1970 p. 26.
174. E. Bragina, " India in 1970 ", in Zafar Iqbal, op.cit.
175. A. Igorin, " India. The state of Kerala", International Affairs, no. 3, March, 1971, p. 103

features of the state. The literacy rate is the highest in the country (48.8% in Kerala, and an average of 24% in the rest of the country.) Though rich in agriculture, with commercial farms, there is hardly any industry in the state, even the manufacturing industry being equipped with very primitive machinery and low capital investment. Living standards of the workers is low and there is much educated unemployment. When the CPI led united front came into power in 1969, concrete steps towards solution of the agrarian problems were made, for example landless labourers were given suitable land from previous wasteland; by restricting black marketing and organization of grain trade - the food situation was improved; nationalization of foreign owned plantations was announced. However, the soviets warned that, " to discredit the new administration certain anti - reform forcestook advantage of some mistakes committed by the government through lack of experience, " 176 and got the Achutha Menon government dissolved.

In the new elections, held in September 1970, a communist led united front won the elections.

The Soviet appraisal of the Naxalite movement again reveals their sympathetic yet critical attitude to Indian political developments. In 1967 a movement, which had been carrying on for some time now, and which managed to shake the congress regime,

weak as it was during this period, was the Naxalite movement. In 1967, the landless farm labourers and poor peasants of Naxal Bati, in West Bengal, launched an armed struggle for land. This struggle, soon spread beyond the locality, taking the form of an armed struggle for land. One Soviet commentator called it " a highly original form of class struggle. " 177 In general, the Soviets regarded it as a very determined and violent form of protest, by the worst exploited segments of the rural population against the tyranny of the feudal landlords, and corrupt local authorities who had lacked in solving the agrarian problem.

By 1969 however, the Naxalite movement was taken over by a group formed in April 1969, calling itself the Communist Party, Marxist - Leninist. Its membership comprised of mainly members of the CPI (M) who broke away from this party. Though the movement soon spread to the tribal areas of Andhra Pradesh Bihar and Orissa, very soon rifts began to appear in new leadership.

The Soviet analysis was, that the theoretical foundations of the Naxalite movement, which were Maoist in origin, were " contradictory and Vague ". 178. There was, amongst them no unanimity on the question of tactics. Some of them believed

177. A. Igorin, " India: The Naxalite Movement " International Affairs, no. 8, August 1971, p. 117. We have noted that there have been very few articles on the Naxalites in the Soviet Press. The reasons for this will be discussed in the concluding chapter.

178. Ibid.

in armed struggle, others wanted to combine it with permanent work in the trade unions.

The Naxalites proclaimed the peasantry, as the main revolutionary force of Indian society. And 'guerilla tactics' were used to annihilate all 'class enemies'. This led to the murder of government officials, businessmen and policemen. They also used other forms of destruction as burning busses, destroying monuments etc. The authorities retaliated not only by tracking and killing the Naxalites, but also passed certain laws, that Soviet writers felt were directed "against working peoples mass movements in general."¹⁷⁹ For instance in West Bengal the 'Terrorist Violence Suppression Act' of 1939 was introduced and in Andhra Pradesh laws on Preventive Detention enforced. The Soviets felt, that due to Naxalite action, democratic rights of the people were being restricted; there were unjustified reprisals against CPI functionaries and leaders. Moreover the Naxalite terror was used by reactionaries to whip up anti - communist sentiment.

(v) The Final Phase of the Political Crisis, 1971.

It was in such a tense atmosphere, when the constitutional machinery seemed to have broken down, and when there was chaos everywhere, that the country went to the polls in March 1971.

The general elections gave a landslide victory to the Ruling Congress Party, which won 350 out of 518 seats in the new Lok Sabha. ¹⁸⁰ The Right Wing, which had joined in a " grand alliance " suffered heavy losses. Out of the 65 seats the 'syndicate' had in the dissolved Lok Sabha, it now retained only 16. " The Syndicates attempt to win power in league with the naked reaction thus proved disastrous for it." ¹⁸¹

The Swatantara which had 44 seats earlier, now got only 8. The Jana Sangh obtained 15 less seats than earlier. In Delhi, which was their stronghold they lost all their seats. Besides these losses, many prominent leaders of the right were defeated, e.g, M. Masani of the Swatantara; B. Madhok of the Jana Sangh; Charan Singh of the Bharatiya Kranti Dal; S.K. Patil, Sanjiva Reddy, Ashoka Mehta, Tarakeshwari Sinha of the Syndicate and G. Fernandes, Raj Narain of S.S.P.

The communist parties retained their earlier positions, the CPI (M) gaining with 25, and the CPI with 23.

The Soviets concluded their analysis of these results saying, that the Congress, now with its newly found strength was determined to carry out new socio - economic measures to alleviate poverty and other social ills; as the country had clearly shown, what direction it wanted. ¹⁸²

180. B. Kalyagin, " Defeat for Indian Reaction ", New Times no. 12, March 24, 1971, p.6.

181. Ibid.

182. A. Usvatov, " India: After the Elections ", New Times " no. 14, April, 1977, p. 15.

The new policy was barely laid out when a new and difficult problem arose. This however originated from India's bordering country, Pakistan.

The roots of the problem, went back to 1947. The two "wings" of Pakistan, as they were formed were not contiguous geographically. The cultural differences between East and West Pakistan were also great. These differences alone did not precipitate crisis, but the fact of total uneven development of the two regions did. The central authorities distributed funds unequally and unfairly, the West being the better beneficiary.¹⁸³ This greatly retarded the economic development of the East Pakistanis. They were exploited of their raw materials, for example, jute. All the currency earned by jute export was invested in the Western Wing. East Pakistan suffered from food shortages, whilst the West had achieved self-sufficiency. The difference in standards of living were glaring and a source of resentment.

When the local Awami League won the elections in East Pakistan by an overwhelming majority, the leader of the party, Mujibur Rahman, asked for broad political and economic autonomy for the East. This was not granted as all key positions of ~~the~~ government were held by people from the West. The people thus launched a civil disobedience movement.¹⁸⁴

The Soviet press reported, that in March, "the military

183. A. Ulansky, "The events in Pakistan", New Times, no. 15, April 14, 1971, p. 8.

184. Ibid.

administration had resorted to armed action against the population of East Pakistan. In many places bombers, tanks and heavy artillery were used. " 185 The dictator of Pakistan Yahya Khan did not stop any where in his attempt to put down the uprising. As a result millions of E. Pakistani refugees entered into India. The soviets shared the Indian government's concern over this influx, and the civil war taking place in the direct vicinity of its frontiers. The Indian Parliament passed a unanimous resolution of sympathy and solidarity with East - Bengal. Similar sentiments were echoed by the Supreme Soviet of the U S S R. 186

Soviet support for India, during the armed war which followed, was obvious in their articles, and press reports. 187

USA's open support of the Pakistani Military regime, especially their attempt to pressurize India, by sending their 7th Fleet into the Indian Ocean, led to a deepening of Indian appreciation of the Soviet support of India. In the U.N. security council meetings, in which the USA took constant anti - Indian positions, they were countered by the Soviet delegate, who exercised his veto powers. China too, colluded with USA and Pakistan, criticising severely USSR's pro-Indian

185. Ibid.

186. Ibid.

187. See A. Ulansky, " The threat to peace on the Indian Subcontinent ", New Times, no. 49, Dec. 1971, p. 10

postures. 188

In two weeks, however the situation was a changed one, Pakistan was defeated in its attempt to crush the liberation struggle, the Soviet government lauded India's efforts: " The recent events on the Indian sub - continent were a severe test for India. But, with the support of the Soviet Union and other peace forces she came through with flying colours " 189

(vi) An Overview.

Soviet support for India, during this period of crisis, when she was isolated by western powers, led to a firm understanding between the two nations. It was felt, that the three factors which led to the positive and cordial relations between them, were based on(1) enlightened bilateralism (2) their mutual commitment to world peace (3) support to liberation movements and India's positive ideas of anti - imperialism in her foreign policy.

Soviet support of India, during the Bangladesh crisis , laid the foundation stone, for the future bonds in Indo - Soviet ties. The 1970 trade treaty and the 1971 Indo - Soviet treaty is a strong indicator of this mutual cooperation. These treaties intensified economic cooperation between the two nations. Joint production projects with Soviet technical or financial aid, entering

188. D. Volvsk, " The Indo-Pak conflict and American-Chinese collusion", New Times, no. 51, Dec. 1971, p. 8

189. V. Yakunin, " India's Progress ", New Times, no. 4, Jan. 1972 p. 6.

into most branches of Indian industry. As this aid, is exclusively meant for the state sector, it falls into the Soviet plans of strengthening the ' potentially socialist sector ' in India's economy.

Thus it is evident at this stage that the Soviet appreciation of Indian political developments over this period governed its politico - economic relations with India.

Chapter IV

Towards An Assessment.

In this chapter we shall attempt at assessing an overall soviet view of India's Political developments during 1964 to 1971.

The soviet view of the political developments in India, is broadly conditioned by the ideological orientations of soviet society. Thus the nature and dynamic of political developments are seen as ultimately determined by the predominant mode of production, and the consequent balance and relations of class forces within Indian society. There has been a continuity in the ideological orientations vis - a - vis India, before and after 1964. Though the earlier dogmatism was shed in the 20th CPSU congress, the constantly refined Marxist categories of analysis have been made use of.

The Soviets analyse Indian political developments as part of a complex phenomenon of overall social change. India, according to them, is a multi - structural society in transition. The development of capitalism is marking headway and more areas are getting ' modernised '. In her effort to gain economic independence, and move away from the neo - colonial bloc, India has reacted favourably to the Soviet offers in her developmental projects.

With the increase in Indo - soviet joint ventures, there has been a parallel increase in ceremonial bilateral relations, leading to the interchange and exchange of ideas and culture. This increased the sophistication of the soviet

analysis of India, and to develop their views along sympathetic and sensitive lines.

By taking into account a ' total picture ' of India, i.e. by viewing political developments as influenced by socio - economic structure, soviet social scientists have usually managed to get a fairly balanced picture of Indian politics and developments. They have shown more clearly than ever before, that the consolidation of national independence and attempts at social emancipation lie basically in the economic sphere strengthening the political system depends increasingly on the construction of national economy, and mainly by changing the system of social distribution.

Though their analysis is perceptive, there still remain certain theoretical contradictions when writing on liberation movements, and while analysing classes in Third World countries, the Soviets lay down the roles of the various classes rigorously. They show that, the role of the monopoly stratum, of the bourgeoisie is not progressive, because of its tendency to align with feudal land lords and imperialism. Soviet theorists, also stress on the dual nature of the national bourgeoisie as a whole, including the non - monopoly sections. ¹⁹⁰ However when writing on Indian political events, though they point to the increasing strength of the monopoly bourgeoisie, yet they have not delineated the effects of this change in the balance of class forces on the

190. See Chapter 1

government (Congress) leadership.

This is especially clear in the works of H.A. Ulyanovsky and V.I. Pavlov, who are now, the leading Indologists of the Soviet Union. In their works, Asian Dilemma, and Socialism and the Newly Independent Nations, the negative features that are shown in their analysis of India's economy are blanked out when political developments are discussed.

Thus, though Soviet writers are aware of the growing pitfalls of following the capitalist path, yet the characteristics of the bourgeoisie as a class is ignored, while the ideas of individuals representing that class are constantly brought up and praised. Thus Nehru's ideas on socialism and the policies of Indira Gandhi, are highly lauded in their articles and books. 191.

Besides this one can detect^a certain sectarianism in their approach. Though there have been ~~many~~ numerous articles on INC policies, and the CPI statements have been duly reported in Soviet Press, as also the Rightist parties are subject to criticism, yet other left parties namely the CPI (M) have never been explicitly mentioned. Also, whereas on some issues there are a spate of articles, yet some issues, are just briefly

191. See G. Shirikov, V.I. Pavlov, Rastianikov et.al., India Social and Economic Development (180 to 20 C), Moscow, Progress Publishers, 1976, Afterword, by H.A. Ulyanovsky and V.I. Pavlov, where the term 'Nehru lines' is used. This is merely an explicit statement of formulations already implicit in their works of the period under study.

reported, e.g. Naxalite Movement had just one article, at the end of the movement.

There is also some difference of opinion amongst the Soviets on the concept of the ' non - capitalist path '. Thus even when Soviet theorists make clear that capitalism cannot lead to the social and economic change, desired by the people yet ' non - capitalist ' path is ~~in-often~~ mentioned in Soviet books as a " possibility " ¹⁹² thus a slight lag continues between the dominant Soviet approach, that though they stress on the crisis of the capitalist path, yet they have not been pin pointing as to what effects this may have on the Indian political system. These effects are ^{largely} restricted to the economic structures, in their analysis of political developments.

These lags, however, are probably due to the exigencies of foreign policy. As their relations with India have reached a highmark, as never before, they would not like to reverse this direction, and are therefore inclined to be optimistic about the future course of political developments.

It is in this light therefore, that one must view Soviet formulations on India. However, one can conclude thus, that Soviet social scientists apply in a fairly valid way, a marxist methodology to their study of India.

192. Chapter II has dealt with this controversy.

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