

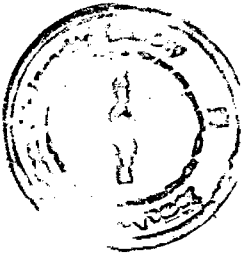
SOVIET PERCEPTION OF MRS. INDIRA GANDHI'S POLICIES

**Dissertation submitted to the Jawaharlal Nehru University
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for
the award of the Degree of
MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY**

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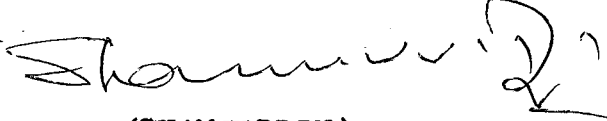
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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled "Soviet Perception of Mrs. Indira Gandhi's Policies" submitted by Pramod Kumar Singh in fulfilment of six credits out of total requirements of twenty four credits for the Degree of Master of Philosophy (M.Phil) of this University is his original work according to the best of our knowledge and may be placed before the examiners for evaluation. This dissertation has not been submitted for the award of any other degree of this or any other University.


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PREFACE

India has lost in the death of Indira Gandhi one of her greatest leaders of modern times. Indira Gandhi was at the helm of affairs at a most crucial phase of political and economic transformation of independent India. During this period she was engaged in the task of nation building, of transforming an ancient civilization into a modern political society, of evolving a secular, nationally integrated and democratic India, which guaranteed freedom, equality and social justice to all its citizens without discrimination of caste, creed, religion and sex. She was deeply conscious of many dangers, both external and internal, which India faced, and which threatened to destroy its unity and integrity. She was perforce driven to take hard decisions, which she did, and in the process lost her own life.

Indira Gandhi was adored and deeply loved by the people but yet was a much misunderstood and misrepresented person. This happened probably because of the strong political reactions which her leadership and policies created among the vested interests and her political rivals.

By and large the Soviets had a very sympathetic attitude towards her policies and consequently they rendered her full support. During the period of her rule Mrs. Indira Gandhi faced many hurdles and crises. The Soviets firmly stood behind her.

(ii)

This dissertation attempts to portray Soviet perception of Mrs. Indira Gandhi's policies, internal and external, and her role in building a strong and united India. It is hoped that the subject matter of this work will be of abiding interest.

I feel beholden to Prof. Shamsuddin for initiating me into this subject and offering expert supervision. I had the privilege of exchanging my views on many important aspects of this study with the eminent Professor. I record my profound gratitude to him for his valuable suggestions and comments which have proved rewarding in many ways.


The co-operation and inspiration received from my parents has been of immense value.

I have benefited adequately from the encouragement received from Padmaja Avasthi, Aparna Rajan, Aradhna Kumar, Anupriya, Shyam, Manoj, Arun, Chandra Pratap, Prashant, Anehas Shaswat, Hemant, Prem and Ajay Gupta.

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Last but not the least Ranjana (Rani) has made her contribution to the success of this study in numerous ways. I lack words to express my gratitude to her.


(PRAMOD KUMAR SINGH)

Chapter I

I N T R O D U C T I O N

- i) Soviet Understanding of the Role of Leadership
- ii) Impact of Russian Revolutions on India's Freedom Movement
- iii) Lenin's Assessment of Indian Freedom Struggle
- iv) Soviet Influence on Indira Gandhi.

i) Soviet Understanding of the Role of Leadership

History has seen many famous and charismatic personalities who have contributed in the making of history. One can remember a number of such personalities, in our own times.

As a matter of fact, scholars and opinion makers have been debating over the role and functions of such personalities - Monarchs, generals, social and political thinkers and leaders of revolution and mass movement.

Marxism and Leninism has also debated over this question. For the Soviet Union this debate had been of crucial importance. The role of Lenin as the leader of Russian Revolution and the Soviet state and later that of Stalin has further sharpened this debate inside and outside the Soviet Union. It is interesting to note that in recent years quite a few leading Soviet Indologists, e.g., R.Ulayanovsky have begun to emphasis the significance of role and functions of leaders of developing countries in national liberation movement.

Concept of Marxism and the Role of Leaders

In this study we are concerned with investigating a framework for Soviet view of leadership in the developing countries; hence we propose to confine ourselves to specific aspects of the debate.

Marxism does not accept the view that history is made by "great personalities" - kings, military leaders, statesmen, while the people, the working people, have no role at all to play in the development of society. Marx ridiculed the understanding of the motive forces of history on these lines and analysed this question on the basis of historical materialism. Proceeding from the Marxist understanding that the mode of producing material good is the foundation of society is life and development and that the working people are the main production force, historical materialism maintains that the working people are the actual makers of history.

This understanding does not mean to ignore the individual's role in history. Masses should not be viewed in isolation with individuals. The masses consist of millions of people, of concrete individuals. Every person has his individuality; i.e., his own character, temperament, psychology, perception and attitude towards his surroundings. Social quality of a person is more important than his biological or physical, as the "essence of a "particular personality" is not its beard, its blood, its abstract physical character, but its social quality."¹ A person's individuality, his qualities, his perception depends much on the

1. K. Marx, Contribution of the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law, in K. Marx and F. Engels, Collected Works, Vol.3 (Moscow, 1975), p.21.

society and his environment; the totality of diverse social relations is reflected in an individual's qualities.

"The essence of man", wrote Marx "is no abstraction inherent in each single individual, in its reality it is the ensemble of the social relations".²

Though Marxism gives prominence to the activities of the people in historical development; it has never rejected or derived the role of really outstanding personalities in history. Lenin observed that the idea of historical necessity does not in the least undermine the role of the individual in history, all history is made up of the actions of individuals, who are undoubtedly active figures".³

Lenin while maintaining that the masses play the decisive role in history, knew that in order to be successful in class struggle, masses form their organizations and parties which are headed by their most experienced and energetic representatives. This prompted Lenin to say that, "Not a single class in history has achieved power without producing its political leaders, its prominent representatives able to organise a movement and lead it".⁴

2. K. Marx and F.Engels, Collected Works, Vol.5, p.4.

3. V.I. Lenin, Collected Works, Vol.I, p.159.

4. V.I. Lenin, The Urgent Tasks of Our Movement, Collected Works, Vol.4, p.370.

Hardly any one can deny the role of Marx and Engels who turned socialism from an utopia into a science with profound socio-economic analysis. Lenin, on the other hand, translated socialism into practice and established the first socialist state. Engels very rightly noted about Marx: "Marx stood higher, saw further, and took a wider and quicker view than all the rest of us - without him the theory would not be by far what it is today. It therefore, rightly bears his name".⁵

While discussing the role of an individual or leader in Marxist framework one cannot ignore Plekhanov's writings about this question. He was one of the leading Marxist who paid great attention to this problem. While reacting to a reply given by M.K. Mikhailovsky to the publication of Kalbitz's article in his "Literary Notes for 1878", Plekhanov wrote about his attacks against dialectical materialism, wherein, "he (Mikhailovsky) saw a doctrine which sacrificed to the economic factor" all the others and reduced to nil the role of individual in history".⁶

Plekhanov after following this debate admitted that individuals can influence the fate of society by virtue of definite traits of theirs.

5. K. Marx and F. Engels, Selected Works, in three volumes, Vol.3, p.361.

6. G.Plekhanov, Selected Philosophical Works (Progress, 1978), pp.283-84.

However, like Marx and Lenin, he cautioned that "an individual's character is factor in social development only where, when and to the extent that social relations permit it to be. He further said that whatever the qualities of a particular individual may be, he cannot eliminate the given economic relation of the latter corresponding to a definite state of the productive force.

However, "individual's personal qualities make them more or less fit to meet the social needs which spring from definite economic relations or to present their being met".⁷ He gave the example of France, where at the end of eighteenth century the replacement of absolute political institutions by new ones was of urgent social need and those public figures were the most outstanding and useful at the time who were more capable than others of helping meet the pressing need.

The essence of his article "Individual and His Role in History", "can be summarised as that the personal qualities of the leaders determine the individual features of historical events and the elements of chance always has some part to play in the course of these events whose direction is always determined by what are termed over all causes, i.e. the productive forces.

7. Ibid., p.306.

8. Ibid.

It is to be noted here that Soviet Union itself faced a phase wherein role of a personality; i.e., of Stalin generated debate. The 20th Congress of the CPSU categorically warned against "personality cult", a tendency noticed during Stalin's positive role in the building up of socialism in Soviet Union, his negative traits and disregard for collectivity in decision making were denounced.

In brief one can say that Marxism-Leninism attaches no less importance to the leadership and role of personalities in history.

Impact of Russian Revolutions (1905 and 1917) on India's Freedom Movement

When the Russian people were fighting against the tyrannical and despotic rule of the Tzars and the Indian people were engaged in a bitter struggle against British imperialism, the people of those two countries had developed a peculiar type of emotional attachment with each other, primarily because of their cause being similar. There has been a close interaction of developments in these two countries on their respective movements.

However, the initial victory of the first Russian Revolution in 1905 provided a new enthusiasm to the Indian freedom struggle. The immediate cause which precipitated the struggle in India was partition of Bengal in 1905. It aroused

universal indignation, the boycott of foreign goods was proclaimed on August 7, 1905.

Mahatma Gandhi noticed the developments in Russia with keen interest. Gandhiji was aware of the socio-economic life of Russia and the various currents and cross-currents flowing there, mainly through the writings of Leo Tolstoy and Maxim Gorky. In their writings Gandhi sought answers to the various questions agitating his mind about the freedom struggle. At the beginning of his social and political activity in South Africa, Gandhiji was closely watching the developments in Russia because he was leading a movement against the cruel oppression and racial discrimination practised by the South African White rulers. In this process Gandhiji drew closer to Tolstoy. However, Gorky's works made a tremendous impact on his mind. He wrote on July 1, 1905, that "Gorky's works stir up against the tyrannies and that there was no other writer in Europe who is as great a champion of the people's rights as Maxim Gorky".⁹

The October Revolution left much impact on Gandhiji's thinking and from this Revolution he came to the conclusion that if the "dumb millions" were reawakened, they could be transformed into a mighty force... He wrote: "We too can

9. Mahatma Gandhi, Collected Works, Vol.5, 1961, p.154.

resort to the Russian remedy against tyranny..." He further said: "If the Russian people succeed, this revolution in Russia will be regarded as the greatest victory, the greatest event of the present century".¹⁰

In the last decades of the 19th century and the beginning of 20th century, Indian and Russian took keen interest in each other's affairs. The advanced Russians closely watched the various anti-imperialist movements in the last century, mainly India's first war of Independence in 1857 attracted them the most. They were really disheartened when the widespread risings in 1857, which the British called as "mutiny" were brutally suppressed.

However, Russian scholars did not lose their interest in Indian affairs, notable amongst them was Ivan Pavlovich Minaev, Professor of Comparative Grammar, at St.Petersburg University, who visited India during 1874 and 1886. It is important to mention that Prof. I.P.Minaev attended the Indian National Congress meeting in 1885 as an observer. He mentioned this important event as significant attempt for the development of the feeling of nationalism in India, for the unification of India.

10. Ibid., pp.131-32.

When the Russians marched towards Central Asia, the English were all the time apprehensive of a Russian attack of India. The English used every possible means to stem the advancement of Russian power in areas in proximity or adjacent to India and most of the time used it as a pretext of regular invasion or intervention as in Afghanistan.

It should be noticed that Indian people thought differently from the British. They did not consider Russian advancement as threat to India. On the opposite, a feeling started growing ⁱⁿ India that the Russians would help India in throwing off the British colonial rule. The National Congress did not accept the British allegation of "Russian threat" and consistently opposed excessive military expenditure by the British in pursuance of their forward "policy".

Lenin's Outlook Towards Indian National Movement

The struggle of India's independence developed V.I. Lenin's profound interest. Truly, he was the first Russian to force the end of capitalism's so-called peaceful development and the beginning of new era of imperialism and proletarian revolutions. He visualised that the awakening of Asia, i.e., an unprecedented upsurge in the national Liberation Movement of the peoples of the East would turn the wheels of the history, Lenin mentioned "when a new source of great

world storms opened up in Asia" and this "era of storms and their 'repercussions' in Europe become a reality" the entire political landscape in the world would change.¹¹

After a serious study of the concrete socio-economic situation, cultural and historical traditions and ideological and political trends obtaining in the oriental countries, Lenin not only developed the old Marxist theory, gave it a new shape but was able to predict that the national liberation movements in future would inevitably throw up many specific and diverse features of its own in forms, methods, paths of social revolutions and above all, in building a new society.

India, one of the largest colonial countries of the world, attracted Lenin also from the point of view of theoretical analysis in the era of awakening of Asia.

In one of his articles in 1900, Lenin while examining the colonial policy of the European bourgeoisie, pointed out that the oppressed would step up their resistance to this policy. Deeply influenced by India's first war of independence of 1857-59 Lenin wrote:

"Every country in which capitalist industry develops rapidly...has very soon to seek colonies, i.e., countries in which industry is weakly developed, in which a more or less

11. V.I. Lenin, Collected Works, Vol.18, Moscow, p.584.

patriarchal way of life still prevails, and which can serve as a market for manufactured goods and a source of high profits. For the sake of the profit of a handful capitalists, the bourgeois governments have waged endless wars... and have driven the peoples in the colonies to desperate revolts or to death from starvation".¹²

In the year 1908 B.G. Tilak, one of the prominent revolutionary leaders of Indian National Movement (the man whom British feared most), was imprisoned to six years on the charge of publishing an article in his paper. The arrest of Tilak led to a general strike of the Bombay Textile workers - the first political action of the Indian working class. On Tilak's imprisonment Lenin viewed:

"But the popular India is beginning to stand up in defence of writers and political leaders. At the infamous sentence pronounced by the British jackals on the Indian democrat Tilak - he was sentenced to a long term of exile - it evoked street demonstrations and a strike in Bombay."¹³

This was a conclusion of great theoretical and practical importance because Lenin said that India's working class, though still weak, had begun to take first steps in the field of political activity and thus was ultimately destined to play a leading role.

12. Ibid., Vol.4, p.373.

13. Ibid., Vol.15, pp.182-84.

V.I. Lenin has pointed out that during the first World War "Britain sought regiments from India to fight the Germans ... They were formed into shock units and hurled into most dangerous sectors where they were mowed down like grass by machineguns".¹⁴ According to Lenin the Indian troops and resources in this way, were used for colonising other countries.

It is important to mention here that before the 1917 Revolution, V.I. Lenin had started devoting his attention to the theoretical and practical problems of the colonies and semi-colonies and Indian leaders had begun to learn from the world wide experience of revolutionary movements, particularly of Russia. The Soviet scholars also had intensified their efforts to understand India's history and cultural heritage.

Thus unlike West European countries, an interesting feature of Russian historiography has been that the countries of the East, including India have been an integral part of their general history course.

This reveals that interaction between India and Russia had many dimensions even before the Revolution of 1917. This in turn influenced the course of friendly ties between the two countries after the Great October Revolution.

The events of the First World War the exploitation of the Indian people by British and the Revolution of 1917 unleashed

14. Ibid., Vol.30, p.390.

unprecedented mass movements for national freedom in the post-war period. Just as the awakening of 1905 was generated by the world situation at large, even more so was the birth of the mass movements in India which shook the foundations of the British rule in the years succeeding 1917.

India, one of the biggest countries of the colonial rule, especially drew Lenin's attention from the view point of the theoretical analysis of the era of awakening of Asia. It was in India where people faced much exploitation, the British plundered India's national wealth, in India the conditions were ripening for the outbreak of a mass movement against foreign rule.

Seeing pathetic and miserable conditions of Indians V.I. Lenin wrote, "Nowhere in the world - with the exception, of course, of Russia - will you find such abject mass poverty, such chronic starvation among the people".¹⁵

In his notebooks on Imperialism, Lenin stated that Britain shifted industrialisation and emphasised that the British rule in India was dictatorial and autocratic and that India, with its population of nearly 300,000,000 was being plundered and harassed by British Bureaucrats.¹⁶

15. V.I. Lenin, "Inflammable Material in World Politics", Collected Works, Vol.15, pp.183-84.

16. V.I. Lenin, "Conference of the British Social-Democratic Party", Collected Works, Vol.17, p.175.

Lenin vehemently opposed British imperialism a rule over India. "The chief danger of the sepoy uprising (1857)", Lenin wrote, "lay in the native army going over to the insurgents".¹⁷

The Bolshevik Revolution in Russia gave a fresh impetus to the anti-imperialist movement in the colonial countries of the East. Lenin said that "weak as they may be, and invincible as may seem the power of the European oppressors who in the struggle employ all the marvels of technology and military art, nevertheless, a revolutionary war waged by oppressed peoples, if it really succeeds in arousing the millions of working and exploited people, harbours such potentialities, such miracles, that the emancipation of the peoples of the East is now quite practicable."¹⁸

Lenin was convinced that if the Revolution of 1905-1907 helped awaken Asia, the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 stirred the peoples of the colonial and dependent countries to a resolute action for their independence.

Lenin was very much shocked after hearing the Jallianwala Bagh massacre in 1919. On July 5, 1921, addressing the Third Congress of the Communist International, Lenin's comment on this incident was:

16. V.I. Lenin, "Conference of the British Social-Democratic Party", Collected Works, Vol.17, p.175.

17. V.I.Lenin, "Notebooks on Imperialism", Collected Works, Vol.39, p.498.

18. V.I.Lenin, "Address to the Second All-Russia Congress of Communist Organisations of the Peoples of the East," Collected Works, Vol.30, pp.153-154.

"British India is at the head of these countries, and there revolution is maturing in proportion, on the one hand, to the growth of the industrial and railway proletariat and, on the other, to the increase in the brutal terrorism of the British, who with ever greater frequency resort to massacres (Amritsar) public floggings, etc."¹⁹

Lenin maintained an objective and consistent approach to national liberation movements. The question of leadership in the national liberation movement began to draw attention from the Soviet leadership since the second Congress of Comintern held in 1920. For instance, Lenin differed with M.N. Roy on the role of Gandhi in the Indian National Movement. According to Roy, Lenin believed that Gandhi as the inspirer and the leader of the anti imperialist movement objectively, was playing a revolutionary role. In response Roy said that Indian Nationalism of the "Gandhi School" being anti-imperialist nonetheless was not objectively revolutionary in so far as it denied the inevitability of Capitalist Movement.²⁰

Further, from the corrections Lenin made in the Roy's supplementary thesis on the national and colonial questions, it is revealed that Lenin paid importance to bourgeois democratic leadership. Lenin said: "the revolutionary movement

19. V.I.Lenin, "Third Congress of the Communist International", Collected Works, Vol.33, p.455.

20. A. Reznikov, The Comintern and the East (Moscow, 1978), p.20.

in the colonies is essentially an economic struggle. The bourgeois-democratic national movement is limited to the small intermediate structures which does not reflect popular aspirations. Without active popular support the national emancipation of the colonies will never be attained. But in many countries, especially India, the masses do not follow bourgeois nationalist leaders."²¹

After the second world war the Soviet leadership was sceptical about the role of leaders of the newly independent countries, later, as the developing countries began organising themselves under the Non-aligned Movement and their role was felt in international politics, the Soviet leadership began to show interest in their leaders. Some important leaders of the Non-Aligned Movement during the fifties like Nehru, Nasery Sukarno were especially marked by the Soviet Union.

In the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, an old Comintern hand, Otto Kussinnen, expressed satisfaction that Khrushchev and Bulganin acknowledged the prominent role played in the history of the Indian people by Gandhi during their tour to India. He expressed, "By so doing comrades Khrushchev and Bulganin actually took the initiative in correcting these sectarian errors which have been found reflection in recent years in some of the

21. Ibid., p.62.

statements made by Soviet orientalists and in publication of the Communist International solely on the basis of criticism of Gandhi's philosophical views, as is known, are at great variance with the views of Marxism and Leninism. Some of our publications were so one-sided that they totally denied that Gandhi played a positive role in history".²²

In the same way, recalling the evaluation of the role of the national bourgeoisie of the colonial and semi-colonial countries by the Sixth Comintern Congress, Otto Kussinnen declared: "This evaluation had a tinge of sectarianism even when these theses were worked out under the changed conditions of the present day and now that the prestige of the Soviet Union has greatly increased this evaluation does not at all reflect the real situation".²³

Admitting the role played by Gandhi in politicising broad masses in a backward country, Rostislav Ulvanoskv opines "the most dangerous illusion in Afro-Asian societies is that the consciousness of an ordinary worker or any down trodden person is a black sheet on which the revolutionary propagandist can put any idea he likes... To draw him into the struggles for radical social transformations, he must be put in a situation of daily struggle for aims and ideals he already

23. Zafar Imam, Ideology and Reality in Soviet Policy in Asia (Kalvani, 1975), p.138.

24. Ibid., pp.138-39.

understands. This, incidentally, is something to be learned from Gandhi who had a deep understanding of ideals that were accessible and understandable to the common people".²⁴

Writing about the Gandhian concepts like Sarvodaya, Satvagraha etc., Ulyanovsky wrote that despite its already utopian character "it (Gandhian) inspired broad section of the rural and urban population with the belief that the struggle for independence from British rule was of vital importance, for it was at the same time a struggle for social justice, for a new society based on principles which they longed to see realized."²⁵

Early Soviet declarations such as the Decree of Peace and Land (November 8, 1917), the Leninist Declaration of the Rights of the peoples of Russia (November 16, 1917), the Appeal of the Soviet Council of Ministers to All Muslim Toilers of Russia and the East (November 20, 1917) and a series of other acts and measures had all proclaimed the Leninist principles and made a great impact upon freedom fighters in India and elsewhere. Both the national leadership and the common people in India could now see for themselves, in the light of actual deeds of the new Leninist government in regard

24. R.Ulyanovsky, Present Day Problems in Asia and Africa (Moscow, 1980), p.133.

25. Ibid., p.165.

to Iran, Afghanistan, Turkey, China etc., that the revolution led to a complete break of new Russia from the imperialist traditions of the Tsarist regime. In all these neighbouring countries the new Soviet government had voluntarily given up all the extra-territorial rights and concessions extorted in the past by the Tsarist regime.

Further in the appeal of Toilers of Russia and the East, a direct call was made upon 'Persians, Turks, Arabs and Hindus to lose no time in throwing off the yoke of their oppressors and making themselves the masters of their own lands. The appeal contained a pointed reference to the rising tide of nationalism in India and hailed the Indian people's struggle for freedom in these words: 'Even far off India, that land which has been oppressed by the enlightened European robbers for so many centuries, has raised the standard of revolt, organising its councils of deputies, throwing the hated yoke of slavery from its shoulders, and summoning the people of the East to the struggle and to the freedom. Such declarations convinced the Indian people and leaders that they had now got in the form of the new Soviet state a powerful ally in their fight against British imperialism and could count on it every stage till final victory.

Although British in India did everything they could to prevent the declarations from being widely known and to present a distorted picture of the Russian Revolution to the Indian

public, their efforts did not meet with much success.

V.I.Lenin, leader of the victorious Revolution and founder of the first Socialist state in the world, who had followed with keen interest all developments in India ever since 1900, considered India as "the citadel of the Revolution of the orient", and India's struggle for freedom as "a major link in the anti-Colonial and anti-imperialist struggle of the oppressed masses of the East".

Lenin viewed manifestations of religious unity in the campaigns of mass civil disobedience led by Mahatma Gandhi as a precedent and a sign of the working people's unity not only in India but in all the countries of the East. Lenin wrote: "The organisation and discipline of the working people and their preservance and solidarity with the working people of the world are an earnest of ultimate success. We welcome the close alliance of Muslim and non-Muslim elements. We sincerely want to see this alliance extended to all the toilers of the East. Only when the Indian, Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Persian, and Turkish workers and peasants join hands and march together in the common cause of liberation - only then will decisive victory over the exploiters be ensured."²⁶

26. V.I. Lenin, "To the Indian Revolutionary Association", Collected Works, Vol.31, p.138.

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Lenin, even in his death bed, turned his attention again for the last time to India in his famous article "Better Fewer, But Better", which was published in the Pravada of March 4, 1923. He wrote: "In the last analysis, the outcome will be determined by the fact that Russia, India, China etc., account for the overwhelming majority of the population of the globe. And during the past few years it is this majority that has been drawn into the struggle for emancipation with extra-ordinary rapidity, so that in this respect there cannot be slightest doubt what the final outcome of the world struggle will be. In this sense, the complete victory of socialism is fully and absolutely assured."²⁷

From the above discussion it can easily be seen that the role and function of the leaders in the national liberation movements is considered by the Soviets as crucial. These are viewed as interlinked and dependent with the very nature and socio-economic structure of the national liberation movement. The leaders are seen not above and out of national liberation movements, but arising from it. They are deeply influenced by the very nature of national liberation movements and yet they set the pace of its development, progressive or otherwise.

27. Pravada, March 4, 1923 (Moscow), p.2.

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Soviet Influence on Indira Gandhi

The year of Indira's birth was historic one. The world was in the middle of a cataclysmic war. Jawaharlal Nehru recalled on her thirteenth birth day in his letter to her from the Naini prison, that it was one of the memorable years of history when a great leader with a heart full of love and sympathy for the poor and the suffering made his people write a noble and newer-to-be forgotten chapter of history. In the very month that you were born, Lenin started the great Revolution which has changed the face of Russia and Siberia".

Independent India's first Prime Minister, the great humanist Jawaharlal Nehru was largely responsible for shaping the world outlook for his daughter. It was not a Marxist, Leninist, but in his own words his studying of the works of Marx and Lenin made a tremendous impact on his intellect and helped him to see the contemporary world in a new light. Nehru linked the realization of his lofty philanthropic ideals with the struggle for social and political liberation of the individual and the people with the development of the national liberation movement. Nehru sought to teach his daughter Indira Gandhi to see the world in the same way.

Indira Gandhi greatly resembled his father Jawaharlal Nehru. Like Nehru who had been deeply respected by the people,

she compared her thoughts with the ideas of the great October Socialist Revolution in Russia. Indira was born on November 19, 1917, just a few days following the revolution in Russia, and Indira used to call herself a contemporary of the Great October. The Soviet people knew and loved Mrs. Indira Gandhi. Indira Gandhi visited Russia for the first time in 1953. For Soviet people Indira personified the image of a great friendly country, of a new India, young and vigorous but also sagacious and self-confident, kind hearted and sincere with her friends, as also unflinching and irreconcilable to evil, violence, national and racial oppression.²⁸

Indira Gandhi was a consistent votary of Indo-Soviet friendship and cooperation. Indira opined about Russia: "But from the very beginning, the Soviet Union's understanding and sympathy for the struggle of colonial and newly free nations was evident. There has been a similarity of outlook between our two countries regarding such questions and other inter-related issues, and the area of mutual understanding has steadily enlarged. This association was consecrated in the Treaty. We concluded in 1971, providing a comprehensive framework for our relationship".²⁹

The impact of Soviet Indian co-operation has long transcended the bilateral framework. Active international cooperation of the USSR and India in averting the threat of

28. V.M.Rykov, "Indira Gandhi: Champion of Peace, Social Progress and National Liberation Struggle", Soviet Review, (New Delhi), No.47, 1984, p.4.

29. Ibid., p.5.

war, promoting universal peace, protecting the political and economic interests of the newly free countries against the imperialist encroachments has been wielding a major influence on internal politics. Indira Gandhi said, "The USSR and India blazed the trail for a solidarity front of socialist and non-aligned countries, which opposes the imperialists and frustrates their designs against peace, freedom and independence of peoples. The USSR is a friend of non-alignment which welcomes its role in safeguarding peace".³⁰

Jawaharlal Nehru most of the time drew attention of his daughter, Indira Gandhi towards Russia. It was the impact of her father Nehru that Indira took keen interest in Russia and her people and Russian culture. But Nehru used to be very analytical in his letters. Jawaharlal Nehru remarkably observed in the course of a letter to his daughter "the imperialist powers, like England, we're often put in false position by the generosity of Soviet Russia, and the eastern countries made comparisons, which were not to the advantage of England and other powers".³¹

From the above discussion it becomes very clear that Indira was highly inspired by Russia since her childhood. October Revolution shaped her ideas. While making foreign

30. Ibid., p.6.

31. J.L. Nehru, Glimpses of world History, Bombay, 1962
2nd edition, p.681.

policy of India, Indira got inspiration from Russian theory of peaceful co-existence. She understood that only through socialism poverty of India could be controlled but her socialism concept differed from Russian socialism. Though Indira did not adopt complete theory of Soviet socialism yet she borrowed larger portion from Russia.

Chapter II

SOVIET CRITIQUE OF MRS.INDIRA GANDHI'S
DOMESTIC POLICY

Much of the acclaim which India commands today could be attributed to the fact that this country is the second most populous nation on the earth. Besides, the compulsions of geo-political realities are such that India cannot be ignored. But all the 'clan and shine' that the country has acquired abroad is to be wholly and safely attributed to one single largest factor - the humbleness and sense of self-confidence with which Indira Gandhi had directed nation, according to International Affairs, Moscow Magazine. There is a sea-change between where the nation in January 1966 when Indira Gandhi first assumed office as the prime minister and October 1984 when her second tenure had been abruptly cut short by the assassin's bullets.

Indira Gandhi had worn the mantle of leadership in India at a time when nation was passing through a tempest. With a big challenge from the conservative leadership of elders in the Congress party, which she inherited as a legacy of the post Jawaharlal Nehru era, Mrs. Gandhi had to gear up on a variety of fronts.

Mrs. Indira Gandhi's illuminating leadership in the sixties, both on the national and international plane, has to be viewed in a broader perspective. Indira Gandhi once said that even though the world is moving towards the 21st century, the thinking in many parts of the world smacks of an impression as if we are groping for light and awakening in the 19th century.

Now before discussing Indira Gandhi's domestic policy we would like to focus on two aspects (i) internal crisis which Indira faced several times during her terms as prime minister of India; and (ii) her social and economic policies.

Soviet Attitude During 1969 Crisis

During Mrs. Indira Gandhi's about 15 years rule, India faced serious internal crisis but Indira Gandhi solved the problems tactfully and intelligently. India continued to receive Soviet goodwill even in the wake of serious political instability in the country which was caused by a split in the rank and file of the Indian National Congress (INC) towards the end of 1969. The polarization of the political forces in India had enveloped her into unprecedented turmoil. The Soviets could not remain unconcerned. They came out to hail the various progressive measures taken by the government of India and commended the victory of V.V.Giri in the presidential election as a great triumph of democratic forces in the country.¹ Leading articles in Pravda and Izvestia apprised the Soviet people of the various socio-economic changes, brought about by the government of India, and expressed their deep friendly concern over the extremely complex political situation in the country.²

1. New Times, No.30, 25 July 1969, pp.3-4.

2. Pravda, 14 November 1969.

The Soviet press and media remained fully alive to the serious political situation in India. New Times blamed the syndicate leaders for joining hands with the Jana Sangh, Swatantra and other right wing elements.³ S.K. Patil, Atulva Ghosh and Morarji Desai were criticized for their "right wing views and close links with big business".⁴ While referring to Bombay and Ahmedabad sessions of the divided Congress, New Times correspondent, A.Iverov observed that even the Congressites, who had rallied round Indira Gandhi were "not a homogenous mass either ideologically or politically. There were a few reactionary elements among them who would try to prevent the government from carrying out progressive measures".⁵ This journal criticized supreme court's judgement regarding bank nationalization and noted that "the court's stand aroused the indignation of the democratic forces".⁶ Several special articles were published in this weekly, which referred in detail to the acute political situation in India and lauded

3. Izvestia, 14 November 1969; Pravda, 26 January, 1970; An article by A.Usvatov, "Split in the Ruling Party", in New Times, No.46, 19 November 1969.

4. An article by P.Kutsobin, "The Indian Confrontation", in New Times, No.47, 26 November 1969, p.7.

5. New Times, No.2, 13 January 1970, p.23.

6. Ibid., No.8, 24 February 1970, p.15.

some of the progressive measures taken by Indira Gandhi's government.⁷

Leading dailies of the USSR representing the views of the government and the CPSU expressed friendly concern on the complex political situation in India caused by the consolidation of right-wing political forces in the country towards the end of the year 1969. *Izvestia* wrote about the "rightist manoeuvre" behind the removal of the president of the Indian National Congress from the office of the party.⁸ While writing on the eve of the 8th birth anniversary of Jawaharlal Nehru, *Pravda* correspondent, V. Mayevsky paid tributes to Nehru, lauded his achievements and observed: "Right wing parties like the Jana Sangh, Swatantra and rightist forces in the Indian National Congress have stepped up their attacks on the domestic and foreign policies of the country, depending on support from monopoly capital within and outside India."⁹ Mayevsky made frontal attack on the opponents of Indira Gandhi's government. *Izvestia* commentator V. Kydryavstsev wrote an article entitled "A Blow to the Plans of Reaction in India" in which he blamed imperialist circles rightist elements like the Jana Sangh,

7. (a) An article by Kutsobin, "India: New Phase of the Struggle" in *New Times*, No.11, 17 March 1970, p.8.
 (b) An article by Kalvagin, "On the Indian Political Scene" in *New Times*, No.3, 1 September 1970, p.9.

8. *Izvestia*, 13 October 1969.

9. *Pravda*, 14 November, 1969.

Swatantra and Conservatives in the Indian National Congress for creating recent troubles in the country, while paying tributes to Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, Kydrvavstsev observed: "India's progressive forces can continue to rely on support from all progressive circles in the world".¹⁰ Pravda also came out in defence of the progressive measures of Indira Gandhi's government and laid stress on "the unity of all leftist, democratic and progressive forces" in India.¹¹ Izvestia continued to write on the deteriorating political situation in India in several issues.¹²

Throughout the year 1970, Pravda and Izvestia gave wide coverage to the grave political crisis in India, wrote extensively on the activities of the rightist parties in the country and lauded the progressive steps, which were taken by the government of Indira Gandhi.¹³ Both the newspapers appreciated the abolition of the privy purses of the Indian princes. Pravda considered it as "an important step in the further democratization of the Indian society",¹⁴ and observed that this step put "an end to feudal anachronism" in the country.¹⁵ Izvestia called it a defeat of princely lobby.¹⁶

10. Izvestia, 15 November 1969.

11. Pravda, 24 November 1969.

12. Izvestia, 23 December 1969.

13. Pravda, 6 August 1970; Izvestia, 2 August 1970.

14. Pravda, 6 September 1970.

15. Ibid., 9 September, 1970.

16. Izvestia, 6 September 1970.

Soviet Concern Over Emergency Problem

The second major internal problem Indira Gandhi faced during 1974-75. In the year 1974 when the political situation in India started deteriorating as a result of the combined onslaught of the rightwing forces, the Soviet media increasingly focused attention on the subject, when reporting about India. Pravda and Izvestia criticised the rightwing political parties for their activities in the states of Gujarat, U.P. and Bihar. These dailies blamed the politicians for "fomenting unrest among students and inciting communal feuds".¹⁷ Later, in the wake of the Allahabad High Court's judgement in the election case of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, Pravda wrote that the judgement would only safeguard the interests of the rightwing political parties.¹⁸ Reporting from Delhi, Tass referred to CPI's support to Mrs. Indira Gandhi's decisions not to quit the Prime Minister's post and file a petition in the supreme court. It blamed the right wing political parties for "creating chaos in the country by subverting the progressive measures of the government".¹⁹ It also referred in detail to the various meetings and demonstrations held in Delhi in support of Mrs. Indira Gandhi.²⁰

17. Pravda and Izvestia, 4 April and 13 June 1974, respectively.

18. Pravda, 13 June 1975.

19. Ibid., 17 June 1975.

20. Ibid., 21 June 1975.

Pravda covered the news of the promulgation of internal emergency in India on 27 June. It attributed this situation to "the threat of internal disturbances caused by the Indian reactionary circles", described the history of Raj Narain's election petition, and referred to the killing of Lalit Narain Mishra (union Railway Minister) and attempt on the life of A. Ray (Chief Justice of India). It expressed its apprehension that "the threat would have ended the progressive transformations in the country". "The steps taken by the President and the government are aimed at the protection of the progressive gains," Pravda observed.²¹ Quoting at length from the statement of the CPI Central Secretariat in support of emergency, Pravda gave out the details regarding the arrest of Java Prakash Narayan and other prominent leaders of the opposition parties. Referring then to the expulsion of Mohan Dharia, ex-minister, Chandra Shekhar, member of the Congress Working Committee and Ram Dhan, Parliamentary Secretary of the Indian National Congress, it observed that everything in the country was "normal".²² "Measures that have been taken in the country since the promulgation of Emergency, are yielding positive results."²³ Radio Moscow offered similar comments and alleged

21. Pravda, 27 July 1975.

22. Ibid., 28 June 1975.

23. Ibid., 2 July 1975.

that "while trying to discredit the socio-economic reforms carried out by Indira Gandhi's government...the most shameless forces of Indian reaction and the Maoists are working in a united front with imperialist forces for the protection of the reactionary circles." Beginning with 1973, the leaders of the reactionary parties tried to introduce in India the ill-framed pattern of Chilean Junta," it added, charging Java Prakash Narayan with "demagoggy". New Times observed that, "Mao-Tse-Tung provided Narayan's inspiration of his total revolution, who was supported by Fascist Rashtriya Swavam Sewak Sangh and Anand Marg Organizations". "Narayan even urged the army not to carry out the decisions and orders of the Central Government", it alleged and added that the Allahabad High Court's decision was just to serve "as a signal for a coup d'et at".²⁴

The Soviet press reacted sharply to the adverse comments in the Western and Chinese media on emergency in India. In an article entitled "Anti-Indira Campaign", Pravda commentator V.Shurvgin, alleged that the Western press and the People's Daily were not giving "objective analysis" of the Indian situation in clear support of the right wing opposition in the country.²⁵ An article in Izvestia noted that "the Western and

24. New Times, No.27, July 1975, pp.10-12.

25. Pravda, 4 July 1975.

Chinese apologists of Indian reaction were expressing regrets because the international forces of reaction, courted by Peking, had a hand in the conspiracy."²⁶ New Times blamed the leading Western and Chinese dailies for supporting Java Prakash Narayan.²⁷ Criticising the People's Daily and New China News Agency (Hsinhua) bulletin on the Indian situation, Radio Moscow beamed a special feature on the promulgation of emergency in India on 30 June. It assailed the Indian "agents of Peking, who got both arms and finance" from China and referred to Prime Minister Mrs. Gandhi as saying that the "reactionary forces in India were getting foreign support".²⁸

Pravda welcomed the ban on twenty six "Fascist-oriented para military and left wing extremist groups".²⁹ If offered similar comment on the imposition of press censorship.³⁰ Radio Moscow welcomed the twenty point economic programmes announced by the government.³¹ New Times brought out a number of cover stories on the expression of "people's will", "fruitful results of emergency", "changes in the Indian countryside," "time of reform" and "stabilization in India".³² In a

26. Izvestia, 4 July 1975.

27. New Times, No.28, July 1975, pp.12-13. An article by D.Volsky entitled "In Hypocracy".

28. Summary of world Broadcasts, BBC, London, Part I, 2 July 1975.

29. Pravda, 7 July 1975.

30. Ibid., 16 July 1975.

31. Summary of World Broadcast..., n.28, 19 July 1975.

32. New Times, Nos.29,31,32 and 33 of July, August 1975.

commentary the Tass observed that in a short period of time, India's image had altered due to favourable changes brought about by the twenty-point programme of Mrs. Indira Gandhi.³³ Pravda also appreciated the "anti-feudal direction" of this programme and noted the increasing cooperation between the Indian National Congress and the CPI.³⁴ Izvestia welcomed the Supreme Court's decision in favour of Mrs. Indira Gandhi.³⁵

The report presented at the 25th Congress of the CPSU, held in February 1976, referred to the "recent campaign by the rightist circles against the government of Indira Gandhi". It wished the people and government of India complete success in their struggle and observed that the "Soviet people felt solidarity with India's peace loving foreign policy and the courageous struggle of that country's progressive forces to solve their different social and economic problems."³⁶

In an article entitled "India's stride", Pravda commentator A. Rosleyev observed that "the declaration of state emergency on 26 June 1975 and the subsequent measure of the Indian government made it possible to repulse one of the fiercest onslaughts of the combined forces of the reaction

33. Izvestia, 14 August 1975.

34. Pravda, 6 September, 1975.

35. Izvestia, 23 November, 1975.

36. Pravda, 24 February 1976.

in the history of independent India. "Supported by imperialism, these forces toiled hard to overthrow the government of Indira Gandhi, terminate policy of social and economic reform and thereby change India's independent course of foreign policy." The author then referred to the ban on strikes, "an important means of workers' struggle for their rights", and added that as a consequence of the "stoppage of bonus" and "freezing of wage-increments to offset inflation", the living standard of the Indian working people had been adversely affected.³⁷ New Times observed that the rightist forces had started "gaining strength in the rural areas and some Congressmen were against cooperation with the CPI". It suggested "vigilance, reliance upon the broad masses and cooperation with all the national and patriotic forces".³⁸

USSR expressed its support to Indira Gandhi's government and its emergency measures. Pravda lauded the ever growing Indo-Soviet relations and referred in detail to the appreciation of India's role as mentioned in the report of the Central Committee of the CPSU.³⁹ Izvestia observed, "much has been achieved in the last 19 months... The state has dealt a blow to black-marketeers and smugglers. It has managed to

37. Pravda, 6 June 1976.

38. New Times, No.30, July 1976, p.24.

39. Pravda, 1 November 1976.

to stabilize the process of necessary commodities... There have also been successes in carrying out the agrarian reforms.⁴⁰

Towards the last phase of Emergency, New Times wrote in some details about "certain disagreement" that had arisen between the Indian National Congress and the CPI. It observed, "the attacks on the CPI are opposed by all those who regard the unity and cohesion of the democratic and progressive forces as an earnest of success in the struggle for socio-economic reforms... disunity would be fatal in the face of the intrigues of the internal and external reactionary forces, the real enemy of India's economic and social progress", it added.⁴¹ Izvestia criticised the "monopoly press" for attacks on the CPI and observed, "millions of Indians know perfectly well that the Communist Party has always moved in the vanguard of fighters for the Country's independence and for the interests of all working people".⁴² Referring to "attack of rightist forces on the progressive measures" of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in recent past, Izvestia lauded several steps of the government such as stabilization of the economy, check on inflation, control on agrarian reforms and maintenance of food-stock".⁴³

40. Izvestia, 5 February 1977.

41. New Times, No.4, January 1977, p.7.

42. Izvestia, 5 February, 1977.

43. Ibid., 13 March 1977.

1977 Election and Soviet Reaction

News regarding holding of general elections in India and the formation of the Janata Party elicited diverse elements in the Soviet Press. Pravda noted that the announcement of elections was aimed at restoring the political processes which were slowed down during Emergency and that the government was now relaxing some of the earlier regulations to allow legitimate political activity of the recognized political parties.⁴⁴ New Times referred to the formation of the Janata Party which, it alleged, was supported by reactionary Jaya Prakash Narayan.⁴⁵ Referring to the Janata Party, Izvestia noted, "the reactionaries are trying to consolidate their ranks as the elections approach... the leaders of the Janata Party are driven together only by their desire to remove Indira Gandhi's government from power at any cost." It alleged that "the rightist forces hoped to divide the patriotic and democratic forces and create conflicts between the Indian National Congress and the CPI."⁴⁶ Later it observed, "the Janata Party lacks a common positive programme that can arouse the broad masses of voters". Izvestia noted in a commentary: "...a number of rightists parties, having different sorts of reactionary viewpoints, have united into a pre-election block under the name of Janata Party, in the interest of big capitalists and landlords."⁴⁸ It again assailed

44. Pravda, 19 January 1977.

45. New Times, No.6, February 1977, p.21.

46. Izvestia, 5 February 1977.

47. Ibid., 1 March 1977.

48. Ibid., 13 March 1977.

the Janata Party as a conglomeration of the supporters of Rajas and Feudal lords.⁴⁹

As a matter of fact, 1977 election was Waterloo for Mrs. Indira Gandhi. Truly it was ^{an} acid test for her political career. The political scenario in India presented a somewhat complex spectacle, because the Janata Party which had undergone recurring criticisms by the Soviets almost until the day of elections, had come to form the government after recording the grand success at the polls. The manifesto of the Janata Party was "committed to genuine non-alignment free from attachment to any power bloc." It was largely understood from this that close relations with the Soviet Union would not be entertained, if the Janata Party will come to power.

The March 1977 election resulted in the victory of the Janata Party and a crushing defeat of the Indian National Congress with its all notable leaders losing. From the Soviet perspective such results were unexpected. However, keeping strictly to the norms dictated by more than two decades of close friendly relations between the two countries, the Soviet media refrained from any such expression of views which could be misunderstood. The governments of both the Soviet Union and India moved cautiously.

49. Ibid., 15 March 1977.

On 22 March 1977, Radio Moscow, announced in its domestic service in Russian that the Indian National Congress, which had been in power continuously since independence, suffered "palpable losses". It ascribed Mrs. Gandhi's defeat to the "disunity of the democratic and patriotic forces".⁵⁰ In its English Language broadcast beamed for countries in South and South-East Asia, Radio Moscow observed that the loss in the elections was "due to mistakes, excesses in applying measures that stemmed from the laws adopted after Emergency in 1975."⁵¹ Referring to the Tass report in Russian, Radio Moscow analysed the reasons of the debacle of the Congress and ascribed it to the family planning programmes of the government and activities of the youth Congress. It observed that "time will show how the new leadership of the Lok Sabha will respond to the mood and needs of the Indian masses and to the development of India". "A change may occur in the political life of the country", it added.⁵²

Return of Indira Gandhi (1980)

With the return of Indira Congress to power in New Delhi early in January 1980, the political scenario of the country

50. Summary of World Broadcast..., n.28, second series, 23 March 1977.

51. Ibid.

52. Ibid., 26 March 1977.

underwent a radical change. Pravda which had cautiously reported on the conduct of elections in India, informed its readers about the election results on 10 January. Referring to the multi-faceted economy of India and her unique socio-economic structure, the Soviet daily ascribed the reason of Janata's defeat to its inner conflict and the fact that it did not fulfil the hopes of the Indian peoples.⁵³ Further, it expressed the hope that "the new balance of forces in Parliament and throughout the country as a whole will create favourable conditions for the restoration of political stability".⁵⁴

In response to Soviet greetings on her grand victory in the elections, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi expressed her keen desire for having closer ties with the Soviets.⁵⁵ Pravda prominently referred to Indira Gandhi's statement in New Delhi portraying the Soviet Union as India's trusted friend who supported her on many important international problems.⁵⁶

We would like to mention that Russia's growing concern on the spell of political instability in India came to an end with the installation of a strong government at the Centre.

53. Pravda, 10 January 1980.

54. Ibid., 15 January 1980.

55. Hindustan Times, 24 January 1980

56. Pravda, 29 January, 1980.

The Soviet media devoted considerable attention to India's mounting internal problems and expressed friendly concern on the rapid increase in the activities of the extremist forces. It expressed the hope that the democratic and nationalist forces of India will be able to pool their efforts with a view of resisting the intrigues of internal and external forces, which were working against the unity and territorial integrity of their nation.

The Punjab Problem and Assassination of Indira Gandhi

In view of the complex and sensitive nature of the problem about which so much is being said and written, there is little need to say much on the subject except to state that is the most complex internal problem, having the greatest bearings on national security, that Indira faced during her regime.

It is to be noted here that Indira Gandhi had to face internal problems in the country and political instability throughout her rule since the beginning and ultimately she sacrificed herself in solving internal problems of the country.

In Moscow the news of Indira Gandhi's assassination on 31 October 1984 was received with utmost grief and sympathy. "Great are the services of Mrs. Indira Gandhi, a champion of Non-alignment, in the struggle to strengthen world peace and security, to curb the arms race and avoid the threat of nuclear

catastrophe", wrote Red Star on the eve of the 67th birth anniversary of Indira Gandhi.⁵⁷ Remembering her as "a great friend of the Soviet Union" and "a leading architect of unbreakable friendship between the Indian and Soviet peoples", the Soviet daily maintained that the cause for which Indira Gandhi gave her life should triumph. It expressed the confidence that Indo-Soviet friendship would further develop.⁵⁸ The Soviet Union has been and will remain a reliable friend of India", noted the Politbureau of the CPSU at its meeting.

At her death Soviet writer V.Georgiev remarked:
 "Perhaps never before in the thirty five years of its independent existence has India been confronted with such a threat to its unity and national consolidation as it has recently. The forces of inter community and national strife have assassinated Indira Gandhi, the outstanding daughter of the Indian people, who did so much for the country's all round advancement and unity. The reactionaries at home and abroad expected that the death of the most authoritative stateswoman in modern India who had been called "the hope of the nation" would cause disarray in the ruling party and destabilise the situation in the country. Those calculations

57. Red Star, 19 November 1984.

58. Ibid.

however fell through. In those grim days of trial the prophetic words uttered by Indira Gandhi on the eve of her death came true: "Should I die, every drop of my blood help to strengthen our country."⁵⁹

Soviet Assessment of Indira Gandhi's Economic and Social Policies

Whereas India and the US are considered to be "unfriendly friends" India and the Soviet Union are regarded as "unfailing friends".

Impressed by the successes of Socialist construction in the Soviet Union, Jawaharlal Nehru as early as 1936 arrived at the conclusion that capitalism had exhausted its progressive potentialities and that the future belonged to socialism. "I am convinced," Nehru said, "that the only key to the solution of the world's problems and India's problems lies in socialism ...Socialism is, however, something even more than an economic doctrine it is a philosophy of life... If the future is full of hope, it is largely because of Soviet Russia and what it has done."

What was particularly significant during the late 1950s was the growing assistance by the Soviet Union ... words India's

59. An article by V.Georgiev, "India: A Milestone on the Path of Independence", in International Affairs, Moscow, April 1985, p.42.

economic development. The assistance was given in financial and technical forms and was particularly developed towards the development of India's heavy industries, exploration of its power and fuel resources and establishment of pharmaceutical plants.

It would seem that there was a concerted effort on the part of the Soviet Union to counter the heavy assistance given by the USA. India welcomed this assistance, since it complemented some of India's needs in the five year plans and the terms for repayment - rate of interest, time of repayment and currency - very favourable.

During Mrs. Indira Gandhi's era India received maximum economic support from USSR and other socialist countries. Until the time, Mrs. Gandhi stressed when the fight for economic independence is won, there will be outside pressures on the emerging nations - on the developing countries - which they must resist.⁶⁰

Even the western commentators have been obliged to acknowledge the significance of Soviet aid in India's economic development. The Russians, said the Observer "are first gaining the confidence as providers of economic aid and defenders

60. Pravda, July 15, 1966.

of independence. They have spectacularly succeeded".⁶¹

However, it is to be noted that our dependence on the Soviet Union has been steadily increasing over the years. In the 1950s India has been dependent on the Soviet Union for political support on Kashmir, in 1960s and 1970s for military assistance. Thus the three dimensions of dependence are political, economic and arms trade.

By lending a hand in India's industrialisation-cum-militarisation programmes since 1963, the Soviet Union has emerged not only as the biggest arms supplier but as growing rupee market for Indian goods and trusted political ally to a guarantor of peace in the sub-continent and a custodian of Tashkent spirit. The 15-year economic and trade agreements, cooperation between Indian Planning Commission and the Soviet Gosplan and the Consular Convention signed in Delhi (November 1973) to achieve in the economic, technical and cultural fields what was accomplished in the political field by the Indo-Soviet Treaty. No doubt this interlocking in the economic field gives leverage to the Soviet Union vis-a-vis India.

E.Gayaznov opines about Indira Gandhi's economic and social policies: "By having long term planning as the basis of its economic programme, Indira Gandhi's government has been

61. Observer, June 1, 1961.

trying to combat the haphazard nature of private capital in the economy. India's plan is a well based effort to ensure the planned growth of production, to carry out social changes on a vast scale and develop science and technology, the transport system and foreign trade. Suffice it merely to touch upon the main trends of India's development envisaged in the fourth Five Year Plan to see what prospects its fulfilment opens up for the country.⁶²

At the conference of chief ministers of states, held in September 1970, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi emphasised that without radical changes in the use of the land, the "Green Revolution" would only widen the gap between the rich and the poor in the countryside. She also pointed to the need for reducing the "ceiling" because it had been set in conditions of lower prices and small labour productivity in agriculture.⁶³

A.M. Kosygin, Chairman of the USSR Council of ministers, pointed out in his report at the 24th CPSU Congress that India was one of the developing countries whose trade and economic co-operation with the Soviet Union "are entering a stage where we may already speak of firmly established mutually advantageous

62. International Affairs, December 1971, pp.52-57.

63. Ibid., p.54.

economic ties." Trade and economic co-operation between the USSR and India, based on the principles of equality and respect for mutual interests, is acquiring the nature of a stable division of labour opposing the system of imperialist exploitation in international economic relations.⁶⁴

The signing of the treaty of peace, friendship and co-operation once again confirmed that friendship between the USSR and India is not based on transient factors, but on a long standing interest of economic and social progress. It is not surprising that the signing of the Treaty has been heartily approved by the Soviet and Indian people. The Soviet newspaper "Pravda" pointed out that the Soviet Union extended the hand of friendship to the Indian people in the interest of strengthening peace on the Asian continent and throughout the world.

The visit of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi to the Soviet Union at the end of September 1971 was an important step in implementing the provisions of the Indian Soviet Treaty which envisaged periodic joint consultations on questions of interest to both parties. In a joint statement both sides stated their conviction that co-operation between Soviet Union and India in the political, economic, trade, scientific, technical, cultural and other spheres" acquires a still stronger political

64. Ibid., p.56.

and legal basis in the treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation between the USSR and India, signed in Delhi on August 9, 1971."⁶⁵

To sum up, it is worthwhile to recall here that Nehru was impressed by what Soviets had done by planning their economy. In a letter to Indira, his daughter, Nehru wrote, "The argument about success or otherwise of the Five Year Plan is rather a pointless one. The answer to it is really the present state of the Soviet Union. And a fuller answer is the fact that this plan has impressed itself on the imagination of the world. Everybody talks of planning now, and of Five Year and Ten year and Three year plans. The Soviets have put magic into the world."

65. Ibid., p.57.

Chapter-III

SOVIET OUTLOOK OF MRS.INDIRA GANDHI'S FOREIGN
POLICY

Foreign policy is an important key to the rational explanation of international behaviours. It is not possible to understand inter state relations without understanding foreign policies of states.

The objectives of a nation's foreign policy are:

(1) maintaining the integrity of the state, (2) promoting economic interest, (3) providing for national security, (4) protecting national prestige and developing national power, and (5) maintaining world order. The sum total of the goals and objectives of a nation's foreign policy constitute its national interest. National interest is the "key concept" in foreign policy. The starting point in foreign policy making is the national interest. As long as the world is politically organised into nations, the national interest is indeed the last word in world politics. Indeed it is the key note of international politics.

Although national interest in its details differs, the core of national interest is the same for different countries. The minimum essential components of the national interest of any modern state are security, national development and world order, all interrelated to each other. All nations desire and continuously search for national security, political independence and territorial integrity. Second to security comes the promotion of economic interest, which includes the preservation

or acquisition of favourable conditions and terms of trade. While security and economic prosperity are core components, the national interest of a country may include other elements also. For instance, the maintenance of international peace, the promotion of international law, or the establishment of global organisation may also be one of the objectives of foreign policy of some states, especially great powers. Finally some countries believe it to be their national interest to serve some kind of world mission such as "world revolution", "Containment of communism", "defence of frontiers of freedom" etc.

The above discussion would lead us to infer that there are certain dangerous consequences of regarding the national interests as supreme. A nation's claim of primacy of its national interest may run above of the interests of other nations.

As a matter of fact, in the present day interdependent world each nation has to accommodate its interests with those of others. Today national interest is being challenged by competing interests such as regional, global and even sub-national interests.

The foreign policy of a nation is conceived in the minds of men who subscribe to certain fundamental beliefs relating to the distribution of power in society; the proper

function of government and a particular way of life. Policy is expressed in these beliefs and behaviour, though custom and tradition is conditioned thereby.

There is considerable speculation as to whether ideology constitutes one of a nation's vital interests. At times a leader makes the use of ideology merely to justify his policy or behaviour in familiar terms which is acceptable to his countrymen. But on the other occasions a nation goes to war not for national defence but only to force others to accept its ideology. The realistic view on this matter is that ideology alone is not a policy goal. This is evidenced by the fact that nations professing opposite ideologies live in peace with each other for a number of years. It was only realpolitik which led to the signing of the Russ-German Pact in 1939 although they were ideologically poles apart. However, the contrary evidence is also available. Foreign policy of the Soviet Union cannot be fully explained if we do not take into consideration "World Revolution" as one of its objectives. In her case expansion of communism is a bona fide goal. Russian aggrandisement since 1945 aimed to achieve the establishment of communism as much as her political domination.

However, importance of the ideology in the components of foreign policy should not be exaggerated. Often they are used simply to obscure the real facts of a situation or real

motives of ambitious rulers. Sometimes governments stand for certain ideas only to command popular support at home and preferably abroad also. The foreign policy of India despite its ideological overtones cannot be explained except in terms of national interests. All the prime ministers from Nehru to Rajiv Gandhi have repeatedly stated that national interest is the goal of foreign policy.

It is safer to maintain that values and ideologies do not fully determine foreign policy objectives although they influence their directions. While long range objectives can be deduced from an ideology, the shorter the time scale the less necessary correlation between the aspirations and actual policies.

It is important to mention here that Indira Gandhi while following her foreign policy, attached due importance to national interest and its related ideologies.

Thus we believe that national interests play a more significant role in the formulation of foreign policy than ideological or philosophical consideration.

It was the realisation by the leaders of the two countries (Russia and India) in mid fifties that there are many areas in which their national interests converge which finally led to the development of friendly relations. Since then the Soviets have characterised India's foreign policy as progressive.

If we review the situation during Second World War, we would find a reasonable and satisfactory answer of Indo-Soviet relation. The Second World War ended and it sounded the death-knell of colonialism and imperialism, which, however, were yet unwilling to give in. The historical experiences of both India and the USSR by this time had given them some common understanding of the basic world problems lying ahead. Despite turbulent political and military situation prevailing in Europe, the events of far-reaching magnitude taking place in the Indian Sub-continent and the gradual emergence of India on the political scene did not escape the attention of the Soviets.

In April 1945, the Soviet delegate supported India's demand for full independence at the San Francisco Conference of the United Nations Organisation. The Indian and the Soviet delegates held friendly and fruitful consultations with each other at Paris Peace Conference. Prayda criticized the divide and rule policy of Cabinet Mission Plan.¹

In the General Assembly Meeting, the Soviets firmly supported India on the issue of racial discrimination against the Indian's in South Africa and decried the Fascist theory of racial superiority. Andrei Vyshinsky of the USSR strongly supported India's view point in this matter. Soviet Foreign Minister Molotov spoke fervently in support of India's just

1. Prayda, 21 October 1946.

demands on this issue. Later, Soviet delegate Andrei Gromyko alleged that the South African Government violated both the Cape Town Agreement (1927) and UN Charter in discriminating against the Indians. The Indian and the Soviet delegates further cooperated with each other on the issue of universal reduction of armaments. India voted for Soviet draft resolution in the Security Council, which demanded withdrawal of foreign troops from Greece. While referring to co-operation between the Indian and the Soviet delegations on vital issues in the UNO, Mrs. Vijay Lakshmi Pandit, head of the Indian delegation, welcomed it as an encouraging "sign of understanding and friendship".²

India, however, differed with the Soviet Union on three important issues - on Palestine and the issue of veto-system and the "Little Assembly".

Differences on some minor issues or cooperation on problems of mutual interests notwithstanding what is more important to note is the fact that during a very short period of acquaintance both India and the USSR started to have, by and large, sympathetic considerations of each others view points.

In view of the ever-growing friendly relations between India and the USSR, the governments of both these countries

2. Hindu, 26 October 1946.

considered it fit to cement their already existing ties in the form of diplomatic relationships on 14 April 1947. Laying stress on the importance of this event, New Times wrote that India was moving towards independence".³

It is, however, important to note that the Mountbatten plan did not find favour with eminent Soviet commentators like A.M. Dyakov and E.M.Zhukov. Dyakov alleged that the Mountbatten plan was first aimed at dividing the country as a result of which India would be an arena of constant clashes.⁴ Izvestia also criticized the plan of India's partition.⁵

Before proceeding further we would like to discuss the attitude of Stalin towards India which needs special attention.

Until 1949 Stalin charged India as a camp follower of Anglo-American imperialism and dubbed Nehru as its lackey. India's decision to stay in the Common Wealth (1949) further confirmed his doubts about India. Stalin was opposed to Indian neutrality. Zhadnov castigated the idea of "third force" supposed to be implicit in the policy of non-alignment championed by India.

The reasons of initial Soviet misgivings about the policies adopted by India both in domestic and foreign affairs

3. New Times, Vol.3, 18 April 1947, p.3.

4. Ibid., No.24, 13 June 1947, pp.12-15.

5. Izvestia, 5 July 1947.

in the beginning of the post independence period are not difficult to discern. That was the period of the First Five Year Plan which was mainly an agricultural venture and in the sphere of foreign policy India quite often sided with the West. India's membership of British Commonwealth was critically viewed by the Soviets.

But the era of misunderstanding was short lived. Gradually the Soviet Union became impressed by the Indian stand on the Korean war, on Indonesia and her support on the question of Peking's seat in the United Nations. Russia began to realise that India was capable of pursuing an independent policy and rejecting the imperialists. Soviet Union also came to note that India has emerged as a factor of consequence. The non-aligned group led by India was growing Soviet Union now felt that her anti-Indian policy was counter productive. India's denunciation of military pacts for the containment of Communism, specially in Asia, was highly appreciated by the Soviet leadership.

Signs of growing closeness between India and the Soviet Union had started appearing during the last phase of the Korean war. India's contribution to the restoration of peace in Korea was, however, largely appreciated in the Soviet Union. G. M. Malenkov, the prime minister of USSR observed, "the position of such a considerable state as India is of importance for the strengthening of peace in the East".⁶ President Voroshilov

6. Pravda, 9 August 1953

hailed India's peace-making efforts in the Korean war.⁷

India's role in the settlement of the Korean problem brought her nearer to both the Soviet Union and China.

It is to be noted that Stalin changed his attitude towards India during the later phase of his rule. Stalin commended Pandit Nehru's efforts for peace. In 1952 when Graham Report was presented before Security Council (on the Kashmir issue) Soviet representative Jacob Malik criticised the report and alleged that the Kashmir problem was not being solved because of the interference of Anglo-American bloc which was supporting the imperialistic policy of Pakistan. Soviet Union also opposed the idea of sending forces to Kashmir and thus adopted clear friendly postures towards India.

Stalin died on 5 March 1953, a few months before the Korean armistice was signed. His death was followed by many important changes in the life of the Soviet people, more especially in the domain of home and foreign policies of the country.

The relations between India and Soviet Union took a new turn after the death of Stalin. Bulganin and Khrushchev who succeeded Stalin tried to improve relations with India. They showed greater appreciation for Indian policy of non-alignment. Malinkov in his funeral speech gave a call for co-existence,

7. Ibid., 6 November 1953.

better standard of living expansion of trade, consolidation of peace and liberalization. Vyshinsky asked the West "to meet half-way in the tunnel of friendship and Khrushchev gave the slogan of peaceful co-existence at the 20th Congress.

The reasons why the strategy of peaceful co-existence was adopted by Stalin's successors were: (1) Nuclear weapons require avoidance of war at all costs and so war was not fatalistically inevitable, as Lenin thought; (2) though no revolutionary potentialities exist in industrial nations they are susceptible to a policy of division and detente; (3) the neutral force is a favourable factor in international politics as they can augment the influence of the Soviet bloc.

Khrushchev based his policy on three fold assumptions: (1) capitalism can be liquidated by peaceful competition; (2) National bourgeoisie has progressive potentiality; (3) with economic and technical assistance the Third World can adopt non capitalist way of development.

If we just re-count the numerous instances of the developments in relations between India and the USSR during the year 1954, it shall be obvious that the beginning of a new phase in Indo-Soviet relations was very much round the corner. In April 1954, the Soviet Union proposed the inclusion of India in the UN Disarmament Sub-committee although Britain opposed it tooth and nail.⁸ Further improvement in Sino-Indian

8. Hindu, 20 April 1954.

relations leading to the conclusion of the Tibet Agreement and their co-sponsorship of the principle of Panchsheel was welcomed by Pravda which applauded the Tibet Agreement as "a veritable charter of peace".⁹ India received overwhelming support from Pravda on Goa.¹⁰

It is important to mention here that close cooperation between the Indian and Soviet delegations at the Geneva Conference on Indo-China also further brought India and USSR close to each other. It was Andrei Vyshinsky who proposed India's name for supervising cease-fire in Indo-China on behalf of the three Neutral Nations' Control Commission.

Among the factors that brought India closer to the USSR during this period was India's refusal to be drawn into the US sponsored network of military alliances, which confirmed her credentials as an ardent champion of peace.

Seen in the light of the preceding discussion it becomes clear that by about the end of the year 1954 and the unfolding of the year 1955 there started a new phase in the Indo-Soviet relations. The peace making efforts of India in the Korean war, her role in the Geneva Conference on Indo-China, her refusal to join the military alliances aimed at the USSR, her

9. Pravda, 30 April 1954.

10. Pravda, 31 May 1954.

ever increasing influence among the non-aligned countries and her proven capacity to prepare a common ground, where East-West differences could be narrowed down, these were the pertinent factors, which helped the process of India and the Soviet Union coming close to each other.

By about the beginning of the year 1955, as somewhat new phase was ushered in Indo-Soviet relations, based on mutual understanding and common desire for co-operation. Pravda lauded the peace-loving foreign policy of India on the eve of her Republic Day. While praising India's role in the Korean war, the Soviet daily projected the image of Nehru as an "outstanding statesman" - a rare compliment for any non-Communist world leader.¹¹

Thus from 1955 we find progressive improvement in Indo-Soviet relations. After the Bandung Conference their relations developed rapidly. The 20th Congress of the CPSU removed ideological impediments. Significantly, it marked the end of Sino-Indian friendship and the beginning of Indo-Soviet collusion. There has been hardly an international issue on which India and the Soviet Union have not agreed. For example, both had identical views on Kashmir, Goa, China, Korea, Suez Canal, West Asia, Indo-China and disarmament. The USSR used her veto

11. Pravda, 26 January 1955.

power in 1957 and 1962 on the Kashmir issue to favour India and gave full support to her on Goa.

The Chinese aggression on India (1962) was a testing point of the newly acquired friendship. This episode did not affect the friendly relations in spite of the fact that Indian dispute was with a Communist power. Khrushchev openly condemned the Chinese military action. Again, though neutral in Indo-Pakistan war of 1965, the USSR helped India indirectly by warning China against intervention on behalf of Pakistan. Khrushchev declared "the Soviet people would share the last loaf of bread with the Indian people".

It is to be noted here that Nehru attempted to combine idealism with national interest. At times he did adopt an approach to foreign policy which would delight the most diehard realist. Nehru tried to present a synthesis of idealism and realism in foreign policy and proposed to look after India's interest in the context of world cooperation and world peace. On the other hand Khrushchev also stood for world peace, peaceful co-existence and disarmament. It was against this background that Indira Gandhi assumed power at the Centre. She had a shaky and inauspicious start. She picked up the thread where it was left by Shastri in Tashkent. In her first Republic Day broadcast Indira pledged to follow her father's policy of promoting friendship among nations to

implement Tashkent Declaration, to maintain friendliest relations with neighbours, to resolve all disputes peacefully and uphold the policy of non-alignment.

The underlying philosophy behind her foreign policy is implicit in her statement, "where there is friendship we must enlarge it. Where there is difference we must blunt it. Where there is misunderstanding we must remove it (yet). National interest we cannot compromise". According to Trevor Driberg, "Indira took particular care to emphasis that she is a believer of a firm base of Indianess as against Nehru's emphasis on internationalism. In other words, the days of moralistic non-alignment were over when Indira took over.

In the initial stages of her stewardship, Indira Gandhi was confronted with a large number of problems, internal as well as external. Through her own efforts she had to carve out a place for herself in Indian politics as an Independent entity. These indeed were days of turbulence. It is tribute to her skill and foresight that she was able to deal with these problems with alacrity and firmness.

Almost within a month after she had become the Prime Minister of India, the Chinese leaders started their pin-pricking through aggressive intrusions into the Indian territory. One of the reasons of this fresh turn towards aggressiveness

in the Chinese attitude was perhaps their attempt to worsen Indo-Pak relations which had slightly improved after the Tashkent declaration. The Chinese leaders were worried about the emergence of India as a leading Asian country.

In response to Brezhnev's call for the observance of the Tashkent Declaration in the course of his report to the Twenty Third Congress of the CPSU (29 March-8 April 1966), Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, during a brief stop over in Moscow, came forward to pay tributes to the Soviet Union for hosting the Conference and observed that India would implement the Tashkent agreement in spite of Pakistan's provocations.

During her first visit to Moscow as Prime Minister (12-16 July 1966), Indira Gandhi reciprocated Kosygin's sincere desire for the realization of Tashkent Agreement and observed that she considered it as "a manifesto of peaceful co-existence".

In an oblique reference to China, which was creating hurdles in the normalization of Indo-Pak relations in the spirit of the Tashkent Declaration, the Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi referred to "the narrow dogmatism of some power", which was hostile to peaceful co-existence and added that "there were countries, which did not like the detente achieved by the great powers" and which wished "to veto it by aggravating tension in Asia."

Indira Gandhi made a cautiously worded remark on China and her ever growing ties with Pakistan. She regretted "a major power should ^{not} have forgotten the pledge it signed at Bandung," and decried the use of aggressive force in the settlement of disputes by some countries, which "entered into opportunistic alliances with feudal and revivalist forces in Asia and Africa".

Indira Gandhi used her Moscow visit primarily to impress upon the Soviet leadership the various difficulties which India was facing in the implementation of Tashkent Declaration due to China's incitement of Pakistan and the latter's desertion of the pledges given at Tashkent. It is true that Indira Gandhi's visit to Moscow had become essential in view of her earlier visits to London, Paris and Washington (in April 1966). This visit was used by the Indian Prime Minister to keep Soviet interest alive in India as a reliable and strong neighbour.

Reiterating her commitment to the Tashkent Declaration, and expressing her apprehensions regarding China's adventurous postures in South Asia, Indira succeeded in allaying Soviet fears with regard to any shift in India's attitude towards America's role in Vietnam.

So far as India's attitude towards Brezhnev's proposal of collective security in Asia is concerned, this was also very encouraging. Initial approach of India on this issue was one

of caution, because there was every likelihood of China's sharp reactions to it. After some elaboration of Soviet proposal in the official circles of the USSR the government of India found itself in a better position to express its considered views on this matter.

While observing that the proposal of collective security in Asia was not aimed at creating a military alliance, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi proposed that economic cooperation and political stability should be given priority in Asia.¹²

Mayevsky spoke high of India's stand on Vietnam, Arab-Israel conflict and other issues of international significance. He made frontal attack on the opponents of Indira Gandhi's government.

Indo-Pak War of 1971

This event can be considered the outstanding event of Indira Gandhi's regime, earning glory not only to the country and its armed forces but to her personality. This event also stands out as having the maximum impact of her personality and leadership.

Political scene in the two major countries of South Asia, India and Pakistan, started changing fast with the unfolding of the year 1971. In India the remarkable victory

12. Pravda, 17 September 1969.

of the Indian National Congress in the polls held in March 1971, brought an end to political instability prevailing in the country since the Congress Split of 1969. With the installation of a strong government at the Centre, the Indian political scene underwent a sea-change.

In contrast to the Indian situation, Pakistan presented a rather complex scenario as a consequence of the breakdown of negotiations between Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, leader of the Awami League, and Agha Mohammad Yahya Khan, the president of Pakistan. In the elections held in Pakistan on the basis of universal suffrage on 7 December 1970, the Awami League emerged as the largest single political party having secured 167 out of 169 seats allotted to East Pakistan in a house of 313 members. Mujib had fought elections on a six point programme having main focus on regional autonomy, which he was propagating in the eastern wing of the country since February 1966. Naturally, the Awami League asked for the transfer of the power to the duly elected representatives of the people in the true spirit of the election manifesto of the party. This did not suit the whims of Z.A. Bhutto, leader of Pakistan people's party, and president Yahya Khan.

For a couple of months the military hawks of the Yahya regime and Bhutto stubbornly harped on "solidarity" and "unity of the nation", whereas Mujib and his followers demanded provincial autonomy in a loose-federative framework.

A reign of terror was let loose in East Pakistan. By order of the Martial Law Administrator, Awami League was proscribed, Sheikh Mujib was arrested. In a broadcast to the nation on 26 March 1971, the President Yahya Khan declared that Mujib and his party were the "nemies of Pakistan", as they "wanted East Pakistan to break away" completely from the country. "The crime will not go unpunished", Yahya Khan warned.¹³

Military breakdown in East Pakistan led to refugee influx into the neighbouring state of India. The consequent socio-economic and political convulsions arising out of the refugee problem thus turned this purely internal affair of Pakistan into an unprecedented crisis for India and the world community. The intransigent attitude of Islamabad and the open incitement that it received from its allies resulted in further estrangment of relations between India and Pakistan leading ultimately to all out war between these countries in December 1971.

What was the Soviet approach towards this crisis? This is one of the questions that merit consideration.

The USSR was the first major power which came forward with a clear-cut stand on the tragic situation in the sub-continent. In the course of his letter to the Pakistani

13. Cited in Pakistan Horizon, Vol.24, No.2, 1971, pp.107-110.

President dated 2 April, the Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR Nikoloi Podgorny appealed for a peaceful settlement of the complex problems which the people of Pakistan were facing.

Referring to the failure of talks in Dacca and to the "extreme measures" resorted to by the military administration of Pakistan Podgorny observed, "Soviet people cannot but be concerned at the numerous casualties, at the sufferings and privations that such a development of events bring the people of Pakistan". Podgorny expressed the concern of the Soviet people at the arrest and persecution of Mujibur Rahman and other politicians, who had received such overwhelming support of the population of East Pakistan at the recent general elections.

Podgorny further observed that the "continuation of repressive measures and bloodshed in East Pakistan will undoubtedly only make the solution of the problems more difficult and may do great harm to the vital interests of the entire people of Pakistan". Podgorny suggested a political solution of the problem without the use of force and appealed "for the adoption of the most urgent measures to stop the bloodshed and repressions against the population in East Pakistan".¹⁴

14. Pravada, 3 April 1971, pp.2-3.

Though measured and moderate in its general tone and tenor, Podgorny's letter minced no words about the overwhelming support enjoyed by Mujib and his followers and pleaded for a political solution of the problem in the vital interests of the entire people of Pakistan. In stressing the need for a political solution of the problem in the vital interests of the entire people of Pakistan, USSR took a stand which was similar to that of India.

At this crucial stage the USSR did not break her economic relations with Pakistan. At the end of April 1971 the Soviets expressed their readiness to undertake the project report regarding a steel-mill to be set up in Karachi with their help. Early in June 1971, the Soviet Union renewed some agreements which had been withdrawn in the wake of March disturbances.¹⁵

In June 1971, India's foreign minister, Sardar Swaran Singh, visited USSR for an exchange of views with the Soviet Union. The joint communique issued at the end of the Indian Foreign Minister's Moscow visit shared India's considered view that "immediate measures should be taken in West Pakistan for the stoppage of refugees and for their earliest return home under conditions of security".¹⁶

15. Hindustan Standard, Calcutta, 5 June 1971, p.5.

16. Izvestia, 10 June 1971, p.3.

Both the countries agreed to remain in touch with each other with a view to reviewing the serious situation.¹⁷

Izvestia further laid stress on the establishment of stability in the Indian sub-continent and urged both India and Pakistan to settle the issue peacefully.¹⁸ Pravda expressed resentment over the resumption of the US arms supplies to Pakistan.¹⁹

Pak President Yahya Khan reacted indiscreetly to Podgorny's letter. Making a dig at his reference to "Universal Declaration of Human Rights" President Yahya Khan wrote, "the open and unashamed interference by India in the present situation in my country has only one objective, that is to influence the situation further by encouraging and materially assisting a handful of people to create disturbances. For any power to support such moves or condone them would be a negation of the United Nations charter as well as the Bandung principles".

Yahya Khan further asked Podgorny to use his "undeniable influence with the Indian government" in order to impress upon it the need of restraining it from interfering in Pakistan's

17. Ibid.

18. Ibid., 10 July 1971, p.5.

19. Pravda, 20 July 1971

internal affairs or resorting any action that might aggravate the situation and lead to irretrievable consequences".²⁰

The Indo-Soviet Treaty

In the midst of one of the most serious crisis in the stability and security of the Indian sub-continent during the liberation struggle in Bangladesh, against hostile Sino-USA opposition, the Indo-Soviet Treaty of "Peace, Friendship and Co-operation" was signed on 9th August 1971.

The Indo-Soviet Treaty, contracted for a period of twenty years, has a preamble and twelve articles. Two articles (XI-XII) are related to procedural matters. The first four articles and the preamble deal with general matters of mutual and international importance. Article VI refers to economic co-operation and article VII is related to the expansion of cultural ties between the two signatories.

Articles V and VIII to X are more significant and relevant in the context of the crisis in the sub-continent. Article V says that both the contracting parties shall maintain regular contacts on major international problems affecting their interests. Article VII binds the signatories not to enter into any military alliance against the other party and not to commit aggression against each other. According to

20. Peking Review, Vol.14, No.16, 16 April 1971, p.9.

Article IX, both the countries have to abstain from providing any assistance to any third party, if it is engaged in an armed conflict with the other signatory. In case either party is being subjected to an attack, or if it is threatened, both the parties shall immediately enter into mutual consultations in order to remove such threat and to take appropriate effective measures to ensure peace and security of their countries. According to Article X, both the sides declare that any obligation incompatible with this Treaty does neither exist, nor shall be entered into between itself and any other state or states.²¹

After signing the treaty, Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko remarked that it "is a document of great international importance contributing to the consolidation of peace in Asia and elsewhere".²² In the same speech Gromyko said: "There are momentuous events in relations between states which come as fruits of dozens of years prepared by the previous development of these relations. The treaty is... one such most important landmark for the Soviet Union and India". He also expressed the optimism that "in this noble work in defence of peace in Asia, India and the Soviet Union are acting hand in hand and we are convinced that this will continue in future".²³

21. Times of India, 10 August 1971

22. Cited in Bimal Prasad, Indo-Soviet Relations 1947-1972: A Documentary Study (New Delhi, 1973), p.395.

23. Ibid.

India's foreign minister, Sardar Swaran Singh, presenting a text of the Treaty to the parliament reciprocated the Indian government's view that the Treaty provided "a stabilising factor in favour of peace, security and development not only of our two countries, but the region as a whole... In fact we hope that this treaty will provide a pattern for similar treaties between India and other countries in this region. Such treaties between countries of this region would stabilise peace and strengthen their independence and sovereignty. It is... in essence a treaty of peace against war".²⁴

The Indian press welcomed the Treaty but reacted very sharply with many reservations. While admitting that this was "not a treaty between a big brother and a client state", and conceding that it gave "most-favoured nation treatment to India as the Soviet Union gave to COMECON or India to Nepal," Indian Express editorially observed that "...in signing the Treaty India... departed from its policy of non-alignment"²⁵ The leading newspaper Hindustan Times alleged that this Treaty entailed alignment with the Soviet Union. It further mentioned that "India over-reacted to the prospect of an Indo-Pak conflict, the possibility and scale of Chinese intervention in any such

24. Lok Sabha Debates, 5th Series, Vol.7, No.59, 9 August 1971, Cols. 341-42.

25. Indian Express, 10 August 1971

event and American attitude towards Pakistan.²⁶ Several other daily newspapers of India expressed almost similar comments. It is important to mention here that on the other side the reactions of the Western Press were mostly unfavourable.

The Soviet reaction to events in the sub-continent in the months following the conclusion of the Indo-Soviet Treaty was one of utmost caution. The Official Soviet Press did not use the term Bangladesh. Izvestia reiterated that the Indo-Soviet Treaty was not against any country, nor will it bring about any change in the Soviet policy of Friendship with Pakistan".²⁷ The Soviet President, in no uncertain terms demanded due regard for the lawful interests of the East Pakistani population and the creation of suitable atmosphere and safe conditions for the return of refugees.²⁸

During the state visit of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi to Moscow, the Indian and Soviet leaders got a better opportunity to discuss the complex problems arising out of the East Pakistan crisis. While welcoming Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, Soviet Premier A.N.Kosygin assured Indira Gandhi that "the Soviet union would do everything possible to

26. Hindustan Times, 10 August 1971.

27. Izvestia, 14 August 1971.

28. Pravda, 16 September 1971.

maintain peace in the sub-continent" and observed that "never before the peoples of the Soviet Union and India had stood so solidly behind each other in struggle for peace and progress"

In response, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi termed the Indo-Pak dispute as an international problem and observed that Indo-Soviet co-operation was "not merely an agreement between the governments", but "a coming together of the two great and friendly countries." Stressing India's firm determination for the maintenance of peace, Indira Gandhi emphasised "the search for peace, calls for determined effort. Peace cannot be attained by waiting and hoping, but through action of perseverance".³⁰

In the Indo-Soviet joint communique, issued at the end of the Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's visit to Moscow, the USSR highly praised India's humane approach to the influx of million of refugees.

USSR took into account India's determination "to take all necessary measures to stop the further inflow of refugees and ensure the earliest return of those who were already in India". India and USSR declared their strong desire to preserve peace in the sub-continent and re-affirmed their agreement to maintain further mutual contacts as well as

29. Ibid., 29 September 1979.

30. Ibid.

exchanges of views on the serious situation.³¹

During this period some high ranking Soviet leaders and officials visited India and held important discussions with the Indian leaders. During his visit of India, the Soviet leader Podgorny referred to the "legitimate rights and interests of the people in that region" and offered "full Soviet cooperation to any such solution within the existing Indo-Soviet relations."³² The Deputy foreign minister of the USSR, Nikolai Firyubin visited New Delhi at the end of October where he expressed his full agreement with India's assessment of a threat of attack from the side of Pakistan.³³

V.Kudryavtsev, General Secretary of the International Relations Committee of the USSR Supreme Soviet said in India that the crisis in East Pakistan was a liberation struggle with elements of a civil war.³⁴

Important Soviet newspapers supported the demands of the Awami League and demanded the peaceful political solution of the problem. Pravda expressed deep concern over the

31. Pravda, 30 September 1971.

32. Ibid., 2 October 1971.

33. Patriot, 26 October 1971.

34. Times of India, 10 November 1971.

massacre in East Pakistan and observed that it was difficult to remain indifferent to genocide in East Pakistan.³⁵

Orestov, a leading columnist of Pravda criticised Joseph Alsop for writing in Washington Post that India was interested in attacking Pakistan. Orestov cited Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's statement asking for a political solution of the East Pakistan problem. The Pravda columnist contrasted war hysteria in Pakistan with India's restraint and humanitarian work in giving shelter to nine millions of refugees.³⁶

Pravda again asked for a political solution.³⁷ Expressing its concern on the tense situation in the Indian sub-continent, it referred to the refugee problem and demanded their safe return home and sought immediate end of the military repression in East Pakistan.³⁸ Victor Mayevsky, Pravda commentator, observed in a leading article that the Soviet Union was against calling the Indo-Pak conflict an internal problem of Pakistan.³⁹

Izvestia commented that the USSR stood for an early settlement of the problem of East Pakistan with proper

35. Pravda, 14 October 1971.

36. Ibid., 19 November, 1971.

37. Ibid., 21 November 1971.

38. Ibid., 23 November 1971.

39. Ibid., 28 November 1971.

consideration for the inalienable rights and legitimate interests of its people.⁴⁰

Expressing the views of the Soviet government, Izvestia urged President of Pakistan Yahya Khan to remain friendly with India for the sake of world peace and in the interests of his own country.⁴¹ It appreciated India's restraint and her recourse to peaceful means.⁴² Red Star the Red army paper, blamed Pakistan for seeking a military solution of the problem.⁴³

Second Term of Mrs. Indira Gandhi (1980 Onwards)

With the return of Indira Gandhi to power in New Delhi in January 1980, the political scenario of India underwent a radical change.

Pravda, the leading Soviet daily, which had cautiously reported on the conduct of elections in India, informed its readers about the election results on 10 January. Referring to the multi-faceted economy of India and her unique socio-economic structure, Pravda ascribed the reason of Janata Party's defeat to its inner conflict and the fact that it did not fulfil the hopes of the Indian peoples.⁴⁴ Further it

40. Izvestia, 14 October 1971.

41. Izvestia, 17 October, 1971

42. Izvestia, 30 November, 1971.

43. Red Star, 30 November 1971.

44. Pravda, 10 January 1980.

expressed the hope that "the new balance of forces in parliament and throughout the country as a whole will create favourable conditions for the restoration of political stability".⁴⁵

In response to Soviet greetings on her grand victory in 1980 elections, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi expressed her keen desire for having closer ties with the Soviets.⁴⁶ Pravda prominently referred to Indira Gandhi's statement in New Delhi portraying the Soviet Union as India's trusted friend who supported her on many important international problems.⁴⁷

The Afghanistan episode

Indira Gandhi took an ambivalent stand on Soviet action in Afghanistan. It was at Indira Gandhi's instance that when this issue was raised in the General Assembly of the UNO, India's permanent representative, Brajesh C. Mishra expressed his government's disapproval of attempts of the external forces to interfere in Afghanistan's internal affairs. In the third meeting of the General Assembly Mishra observed that India was "deeply concerned and vitally interested in the peace, security, independence and non-alignment of this traditionally friendly

45. Ibid., 15 January 1980.

46. Hindustan Times, 24 January 1980

47. Pravda, 29 January 1980.

neighbour."⁴⁸ He further maintained that "India cannot look with equanimity on the attempts by some outside power to interfere in the internal affairs of Afghanistan by training, arming and encouraging subversive elements to create disturbances inside Afghanistan".⁴⁹ Referring then to the Soviet assurances of withdrawal in the event of Afghanistan's request, Mishra said, "We have no reasons to doubt such assurances, particularly from a friendly country like the Soviet Union, with whom we have many close ties".⁵⁰ India hopes that the people of Afghanistan will be able to resolve their internal problems themselves without any interference from outside. India hopes that the USSR will not violate the independence of Afghanistan and the Soviet forces will not remain there a day longer than necessary, Mishra concludingly remarked.⁵¹ India abstained from voting on a draft resolution asking for immediate withdrawal of the Soviet forces. The draft was sponsored by 24 countries at the behest of Pakistan, China and the USA.

Mrs. Indira Gandhi opined that India judged Afghanistan issue "from the point of view of... national interest" and

48. GAOR, 1980, p.34.

49. Ibid.

50. Ibid.

51. Ibid.

from what she considered to be "in the interests of world peace."⁵² Indira Gandhi expressed her deep concern over "the training of armed bands, providing bases, entering of armed troops across the border and inhabiting another country". She then asserted that such activities do not create confidence among neighbours and India felt disturbed by the reaction of some powers over these developments in Afghanistan including the US commitment of aid amounting to hundreds of millions of dollars and the pledge of China "to provide arms and other necessary assistance to Pakistan".⁵³

USSR appreciated Indira Gandhi's stand on the Afghan issue. Pravda observed that India's fears regarding the US and Chinese attempts at the "encirclement" were justified.⁵⁴ Writing in the Soviet daily, V.Shirokov paid rich compliments to India for her true perception of the Afghanistan problem and underscored the significance of the Prime Minister's above mentioned speech in the Indian parliament in which she had criticised the US position in this matter and throw light on the circumstances which had necessitated the despatch of Soviet troops to that country.⁵⁵

52. Lok Sabha Debates, 7th Series, Vol.I, No.3, January 1980, Cols.156-157.

53. Ibid.

54. Pravda, 17 January 1980.

55. Ibid., 29 January 1980.

In view of India's ties with the Soviet Union, her adversary relationship with Pakistan and India's grave suspicious of US intentions, India had little choice but to take the stand it has taken on the Afghanistan issue. In any case this posture was in India's interest.

C O N C L U S I O N

Marxism and Leninism attaches specific importance to leadership factor and the role played by leaders in national liberation movements and nation building process. According to Marxism-Leninism leadership provides direction, guidance and dynamism to the mass movements. The success of which depends on the realistic understanding of the leaders and their personality. It is the leadership which determines and reshapes the future of country during the period of crisis. Undoubtedly the masses play important role but they are solely guided and led by leaders. Hence in the absence of strong and competent leadership the mission of the masses cannot be successful. In developing countries leadership plays crucial and vital role. A Soviet scholar Ulayanovsky has attempted to draw a clear picture in his writings about the importance of leadership.

The Soviet writers have given due importance to Indian Freedom Movement. They have depicted the Revolt of 1857 and other important events of the Freedom Movement quite objectively.

The Russian Revolution took place precisely at a time when the Indian Freedom movement had begun to acquire the status of a mass movement, though its objectives and goals were still only vaguely defined. It is also understandable that at this stage the mass sympathy for the Russian Revolution was generally articulated by the leaders of the middle classes, they being the main instruments of the developing national

movement. Hence, these were the people who were most influenced by the revolution. But as the efforts of the Soviet people for building a Socialist society began to unfold itself and the Indian National Movement started broadening its mass base, the convergence of the interests of the Soviet Union and the aspirations of the colonial and semi-colonial people against imperialism came to be widely accepted by the leading forces and personalities of the national movement in India and the Soviet Union.

Soviet writers gave wide coverage to the Indian leaders and their role in national movement. Nehru, Gandhi, Tilak, M.N.Roy were given special attention in Soviet writings and dailies. The Soviets appreciated the role of Gandhi and Nehru in National Liberation Movement. Stalin who initially opposed India and doubted her intentions ultimately praised Jawaharlal Nehru for his peaceful policy. After Stalin, Bulganin and Khushchev changed Soviet foreign policy towards India. They supported India at crucial movements. Soviets had high regard for Jawaharlal Nehru. They considered him the architect of modern India.

Mrs.Indira Gandhi received full support from Soviets since beginning of her rule in 1966 up to her death in 1984. Soviet media appealed to Indian masses to support Mrs.Indira Gandhi when she came to power. At the same time, the Soviet

dailies vehemently attacked her opponent syndicate leaders who were opposing her leadership. The acid test of ^{Indo-}Soviet relationship was 1971 Bangladesh crisis. Soviets came to her rescue when Indira Gandhi's position was at stake. This support undoubtedly made India pro-Soviet. Soviet support was extended to her both in internal and external crises which Indira Gandhi faced during her sixteen years of rule.

Soviet media wholeheartedly appreciated Mrs. Indira Gandhi's proclamation of Emergency in India in 1975. When the Western press was criticising her decision and policies Soviet acclaimed as a professional step. They considered it a right step in the interest of the country's progress. They not only praised her decision but also criticised rightist opposition parties and termed their action as reactionary and anti-democratic. The Soviet Union attached much importance to the 20 point economic programme of Mrs. Indira Gandhi. The debacle of Mrs. Indira Gandhi and her Congress Party in the 1977 elections came as a shock to the Soviet Union. The Soviet welcomed the return Mrs. Indira Gandhi in 1980 elections and gave her unflinching support till her death in 1984.

According to Soviet media Indira Gandhi made an outstanding contribution to the advancement of independent India, consolidation of its economy and strengthening the national security. The grandeur of her statesmanship went beyond the national frontiers. The Soviets believed that like her father

Jawaharlal Nehru she had a uniquely broad perception of international affairs she was concerned not only about the future of her own country but also the destiny of the whole world and human civilisation.

The Soviets hold the opinion that Indira Gandhi had played an outstanding role in strengthening the cause of world peace as Prime Minister of India and as Chairperson of the movement of non-aligned countries. The Non-Alignment according to the Soviets stands for peace, development, social justice sovereignty and territorial integrity of nations. To an extent she succeeded in achieving these objectives and India under her leadership played a constructive role in the world affairs. Being the outstanding activist of the national liberation movement and non-aligned movement and struggling untiringly for peace, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi made worthy contribution to the cause of struggle of the nations for peace, independence and overall progress. The non-Aligned Movement was given a new impetus under her leadership and in the process, a place of honour for the poor nations, euphemistically called the third world, among the world community, was assured.

Accordingly the Soviets felt that Indira Gandhi was acutely conscious that India could play a vital role in world politics if India was internally strong. The Soviets praised her progressive, social and economic policies. They particularly

hailed her decisions like abolition of privy purses, nationalisation of banks, recognising the commanding role of public sector in revitalising the Indian economy, strengthening the country's defence capability and preparedness, promoting the aspirations of states within the overall guidance and control of the Indian union without jeopardizing the unity and integrity of India. She firmly believed in the concepts unity in diversity, secularism, democracy and nationalism.

The Soviets opined that Indira Gandhi ardently believed that national integration could not occur unless the prosperity of nation was shared by all the people. Indira Gandhi provided a dynamic and creative approach to the concept of national integration. The fact that she often called attention to those factors in her addresses, speeches and discussions, also shows that her pursuit of building a nationally integrated society had not been fully realized and her quest to build a strong and United India was thwarted by political and economic crises which country faced during her rule.

After her death Pravda as also other leading newspapers reported on detail about what is described as the treacherous assassination of a world leader. Newspapers in Moscow front paged a black bordered photograph showing the Soviet leaders Mr.Chernenko, Mr.Gromyko and Mr.Solomentsev standing reverently before a photograph of Mrs.Indira Gandhi. The papers also carried the address to the nation by Mr.Rajiv Gandhi calling for restraint and calm.

Sovvestskaya Rossia a respected central newspaper described Mrs. Indira Gandhi as the glorious daughter of a great people. The Soviet people showed movie clips of the heartening scenes outside the all India Institute of Medical Sciences where Mrs. Gandhi breathed her last. The Soviet News Agency Tass called the assassination as perfidious and villainous.

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