CHAPTER - I
THE CONCERNS OF SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY AND
INDO-SOVIET RELATIONS BEFORE 1967

The fundamental thrust of the Soviet foreign policy at the end of the Second World War—and remained so till the final collapse of the Soviet Union—was its obsessive preoccupation with the West and its arbiter, the United States. Though innumerable books exist on Soviet foreign policy and so do scores of analyses on the evolution and changes of Soviet strategy, very little was actually known as to the real working of the Soviet political mind—of the way Soviets perceived and interpreted contemporary international relations. In the United States, particularly, few in either governmental circles or in the academic world took seriously what Soviet political analysts said about the world at large. Except for William Zimmerman's pathbreaking study of the Khrushchew period, little was known about how Soviet foreign policy intellectuals viewed the structure and tendencies of contemporary world politics. Conceivably, the ideological imprint of Marxism-Leninism was so strong on Soviet political thinkers, that hardly could one view Soviet ideas on contemporary international relations to be free from prejudices. Though there has been a shifting away from the determinism of Leninist doctrine, by recognising the underlying stability of capitalism in the West they maintain that the world still remains dominated by
conflicts of interests and deep ideological antagonisms, thus staying within the fundamental teaching of Marxism-Leninism. On a broader perspective, therefore, one could discern a certain enduring pattern of thought in the working of Soviet politics between the Soviet approach to international relations in its Stalinistic phase to the days of Khrushchevian revisionism and the days of Brezhnevian liberalism. There was apparently a great change, but it was essentially a change in continuity. The goal remaining constant - strategic and global parity with the United States - the methods had changed from the dogmatic, straight-jacket concept of class-struggle between the forces of capitalism and communism to peaceful co-existence and detente. Thus, Stalinist political behaviour did not altogether die with Stalin, and in a different vein Khrushchev and Brezhnev continued a sustained competition with the United States.

The rise of the Soviet Union after 1917, but especially since 1945, as the representative of an alternative socio-economic system, as also the second global power compelled a realignment and international political relations from an inter-capitalist to a Socialist-Capitalist one. Having emerged from the Second World War with an unprecedentedly powerful international position, Soviet leaders felt vindicated in their
analysis. The tenacity of the belief was reflected in Stalin's 1952 Economic Problems of socialism in the USSR in which he maintained the thesis of the inevitability of war between capitalist states and between capitalism and socialism. The ideas of world communism which had been in hibernation for long, began to gather momentum and under Stalin, the Soviet Union showed a dogged determination to achieve the ends. Almost immediately after the Second World War, the Soviet Union and the United States found themselves locked in a struggle for influence that concentrated initially on Europe. The post-war Soviet expansion in Eastern Europe, so effectively demonstrated after the Yalta Conference, stimulated the creation of an American-centred system of alliances in Europe and Asia aimed at containing the further expansion of Soviet power and influence.

Significant, during this period was the domestic ferment that Stalin faced from the economist Yevgeny Varga, whose thesis not only gave entirely new dimension to a more sophisticated Soviet study of economics and international relations, but also challenged the very fundamentals of the Marxist-Leninist concept of class struggle and war. The fact that his book - Changes in the Economy of Capitalism as a result of the Second World War - received such a popular reading, can only be
attributed to the early post-war atmosphere where grappling with unprecedented opportunities and challenges, the Soviet state under Stalin could take no firm decisions of these points. Soon, however, Varga was compelled to publicly recant his strongly held and carefully formulated views. But his thesis has since been treated as accepted dogma by the Soviet academic establishment.

Stalin's influence on the Soviet study of international relations was indeed deep. Though preserving the traditional Marxist notion of the irreconcilable hostility between the forces of socialism and those of capitalism, Stalin refuted Lenin's ideas on international relations as a 'closed system'. The debate between Stalin and Varga over the prospects for the survival of capitalism do give us an incite into Stalin's conception of class-struggle and the inevitability of war. It centred on whether the capitalist economics could avoid an immediate post-war depression in light of their wartime experience with a substantial amount of state intervention, that is, planning in the economy, something which traditionally, Marxism held to be impossible. Stalin was, however, convinced of the imminent collapse of capitalism and the inevitability of war among capitalist countries because of their economic competition, thus portraying himself the dogmatic defender of the orthodox
Bolshevik conception of these subjects. Allen Lynch quotes Varga to show that he, on the other hand, lay emphasis on three points — that as a consequence of the wartime experience with government intervention in the economy, capitalism would stabilize itself, at least for ten years, that the nature of the political systems in the Western capitalist democracies, especially Great Britain and the United States, was such that socialist reforms could be introduced without violence, and that war both among capitalist states and between capitalism and socialism was not inevitable. The counter thesis advanced by Stalin and decisively established in 1952, held that on the contrary, capitalist collapse was imminent and that war among capitalist states was more likely than war between capitalism and socialism — in short, a substantial reversion to the traditional Bolshevik critique of imperialism. Stalin could by no means be convinced about Varga's contention that the improved productive capacity of the United States in particular, provided it with the foundation for good economic progress in the short term. Such economic development Varga elaborated could be relatively stable in as much as the capitalist governments were now seriously committed to 'capitalist planning both on domestic and international levels. Hence, it would be wrong to assume a repetition of the economic catastrophe that eventually followed the First World War. Conditions
had changed too much for that. In Stalin's Russia, Varga's embrace of the Keynesian analysis was blasphemy!

Nevertheless, the political implications of Varga's analysis were clear. The capitalist countries would continue to exist for the foreseeable future and in fact would even progress. 'War would not be the inevitable handmaiden of revolution.' This explicitly contradicted Stalin's view that war was among the most important objective conditions for revolution. On the question of what form would relations between capitalist and socialist states assume Varga maintained 'that relations of tension, not speak of war, were by no means a foregone conclusion—prospects for the peaceful development of relations between the USSR and the West including the export of capital to the Soviet Union for reconstruction purposes, would be reinforced by geopolitical imperatives. The capitalist governments considering the proof in the Second World War of the military might of the Soviet Union would not hastily decide to embark in a military confrontation. Hence, relations of the capitalist countries with the Soviet Union would not be like in the pre-war period and all efforts would be made not to permit different contradictions from spilling over into military struggle.'

Varga's later work was a further development of the
implications of his 1946 book and effectively removed the issue of the collapse of capitalism from 'the historical present' to a receding and distant future.\textsuperscript{11} In this later work he refuted a number of previously held dogmas and predicted a relatively stable and prosperous future for the capitalist economies. Hence, and this was the point which had created so much trouble for him a decade earlier, government intervention in the capitalist economy could and would continue to constitute an efficient tool for economic stabilisation. It was also unfair to allege that capitalist economics could not exist without vast military expenditures. On the contrary, political problems, Varga wrote were much more difficult for imperialism than economic ones.\textsuperscript{12}

The political implications of this analysis were hardly encouraging for committed revolutionaries. Varga emphasized that though the material preconditions for socialism and communism in the capitalist world were growing 'monopoly-capital' had experienced considerable success in spreading counter-revolutionary ideology among the masses. The new phenomena he said, was characterized above all by the growth of state-monopoly capitalism and this had occurred in peaceful conditions. Although there was a possibility of a global nuclear war by accident the struggle between the two systems did not necessarily have
to assume a military form. "Time," Varga wrote, "works for socialism, for communism" — concerning the end of capitalism, he merely said that the twentieth century was the last century of capitalism. Later works including a volume produced posthumously in 1965, essentially extended this scheme. His main thesis were defended and elaborated upon by his successor at the Institute of the World Economy and International Relations, A.A. Arzumanyan. Varga's theses continued to occupy an important place in the work of contemporary Soviet analysts of international relations. Unorthodox, though the contributions of later Soviet academics may seem, their basic viewpoint remains Marxist and therein lies the nub of the continuity with change idea of the Soviet foreign policy. It would be in place to remark as Jerry Hough has noted, "it is a Marxism fully accepts Varga's judgements about the ability of capitalism to survive for a long time." To Varga then goes the entire credit for not only challenging the Stalinist concept of the capitalist world, but also the challenge to the entire Stalinist Methodology for analysing politics and society. It was Varga's wisdom that liberated a score of Soviet academics from the sterile deterministic dogmatism of the Stalin era. Indeed, Varga's analyses was at work in Khrushchev's revisionism and Brezhnev's liberalism. Though neither had surrendered the basics of
Marxism-Leninism, yet both had approached the theme in a manner that was far removed from the traditional concept.

The theories advanced by Soviet academics were reflected in the working of Stalin's successors at the Kremlin. Stalin, however, too deeply committed to the traditional Marxist approach could never bring himself to reconcile to Varga's views on the apparent success and sustenance of capitalism. Perhaps the most effective proof of Stalin's hatred for the capitalist west and his conviction on the inevitability of war with capitalism, can best be demonstrated by a crucial statement by Stalin made available to us by Milovan Djilas\textsuperscript{18} — Stalin emphatically stated during the course of a dinner, "we shall recover in fifteen or twenty years, and then we will have another go at it," for, during this final phase of Stalin's rule the Soviets were more inclined towards reconstruction of their 'war-devastated economy and consolidation of their control over areas that had come under the control of the Red Army in 1946. Geoffrey Jukes\textsuperscript{19}, therefore sounds convincing when he says that the Soviet Union was bent upon creating a new balance of power\textsuperscript{20} in which the legitimate interests of the new global power would have to be recognized by the old. Given Stalin's views on international relations, his innate desire was to confront the United States in Europe.
In fact, during the final phase of his reign, Stalin determinedly fought against any change in his system. He did set his face against an international detente or any realignment policy. His concluding policy act (the Korean War), was a calculated effort to demonstrate and dramatise the impossibility of detente and the necessity of steadfastly preserving the cold war against the West.  

In his obsessive zeal for preserving his ideological purity from being diluted by the likes of Varga and in his determination for interpreting international relations in deterministic principles (socialism vrs. capitalism), Stalin closed his eyes to developments beyond the confines of the European continent. Hence the significance of the liberation of the former colonies of Europe in Asia, Africa and Latin America, were not given due recognition by Stalin. Stalin viewed these newly liberated states with contempt, for in his opinion they merely mirrored the class structure of their former colonial masters. Hence, no working relationship could possibly be entertained with them. And, if Varga's contention of the stabilising factor of capitalism were to be accepted, these liberated colonies could only work to the detriment of Soviet interests. Either way, Stalin showed little concern for these newly independent countries which were soon to be
referred to as the Third World and ironically enough his successor at the Kremlin sought to establish a sort of a symbiotic relationship with it.

Most observers, both Soviet and Western, seen the year 1956, the year of the Twentieth Soviet Party Congress and Khrushchev's 'secret speech' denouncing Stalin's 'crimes against the Party as the critical turning point in Soviet thinking on international relations'.

The two major developments that gave direction to the future formulation of the Soviet foreign policy, were the breaking of the capitalist encirclement—the cordon sanitaire—by the Soviet Union, and the other, the acceptance of the idea of non inevitability of general war were of special significance. "How", it was asked, "can one explain the intricacies of contemporary power politics exclusively in class terms"?

Brucan adduces the Soviet Yugoslav conflict of 1948 as an example—it is not explicable in class terms since the same structure prevailed in both countries. Hence arguments to the effect that international relations do not represent a strict zero-sum game, were to be heard for the first time in Soviet literature the underlying theme of most Soviet writings after Varga, is that the fundamental principles of Marxism–Leninism were inadequate for the study of international relations. Later, working upon Zimmerman's observations, contemporary Soviet analysts
went beyond the 'two camp' concept in identifying the basic structural elements of the international System—International relations, in their view, operated with a plurality of factors, with states as opposed to both the two camps of 'Capitalism' and 'socialism'. The quality of international relations had changed significantly and though the United States and the Soviet Union occupied the Central position on the world stage, each was challenged by forces emanating from other states and from the international system as a whole. The rise of nationalism in the former colonial countries and the increased military power of the Soviet Union served to hinder the ability of the United States to make its merit felt throughout the under developed world. Besides, the economic recovery of Western Europe and Japan after the Second World War together with the loosening of tensions between the Soviet and American blocs (with the receding threat of war) led to an assertion of national claims against American interests on the part of its allies. The challenge to the American position however, did not necessarily imply an enhancement of Soviet strength, since difficulties within the Soviet alliance system in the form of persistence of national interests and uneven levels of economic development, threw into question some of the 'achievements of socialism.' Indeed, to the degree that the same processes were at
work on both countries, the international standing of the Soviet Union was weaker in comparison to that of American power. Yet, however, what was important in Soviet view was that American power had diminished, for, whereas, once in the 1950s the United States was engaged in a diplomacy that could make a swift deployment of armed forces and could be said to occupy a 'hegemonic position', this was no longer so. Nationalism, the economic recovery of Europe and Japan, the recovery of the Soviet Union itself and its vastly increased military potential pointed towards a qualitative change in the position of the United States.

Having thus broken the encirclement and moving away from the isolation imposed upon the Soviet Union by the capitalist West, the post Stalin leadership under Khrushchev initiated significant changes in the overall policy of the Soviet state towards the outside world. In Europe efforts were made to reduce tension by advocating the idea of peaceful coexistence with the NATO alliance as a prelude to an eventual Western recognition of the existing political realities in the post-war East-Central Europe. However, the significance of the Khrushchev era lay in his grasping the opportunities provided him in the underdeveloped and developing countries of the Third World. A careful Soviet garnering of these vast
unexplored lands, in Khrushchev's views could provide a fertile ground for a confrontation with the United States. Hereafter, the new Soviet leadership having made innovations in the Third World, made it vital for the development of its overall global strategy. A consistent preoccupation after Stalin, therefore, were efforts by Khrushchev to establish a major presence in the developing world, which was directly related to security measures and global competition with the United States. The initial, immediate targets were countries along the southern borders of the Soviet state, where the United States in the mid 1950s had been successful in creating an alliance system aimed against the Soviet Union.

Two potent developments during this period, running parallel to one another, which deeply influenced international relations, were the nation building efforts of the newly liberated colonies and the influence building efforts of the two super powers, representing the two world systems. Khrushchev sought to establish a direct linkage between the issue of international class struggle and national liberation movements. He came to regard the third world as the Soviet Union's 'natural ally' in their common fight against colonialism. The 'national bourgeoisie,' — in the new states were regarded as a temporary phase in their transition from feudalism to
socialism, for if Marx's tenets were to be accepted, "bourgeois democracy" was the intermediate stage between feudalism and socialism, which had to be cultivated for the eventual triumph of socialism, in these underdeveloped the developing countries of the Third World. Hence George F. Kenan rightly visualised in the 1960s that a struggle for influence and superiority was to be determined in the gray areas of the Third World.

Khrushchev thereby drew a qualitative distinction between internal politics—where class structure prevails—and international politics—where class compromise follows from the power structure of international politics. In other words, Khrushchev's policies were a clear endorsement of Zimmerman's findings that the primacy of states over classes and social forces in general, were the defining units of the international system.

The Third World, then, emerging as the main theatre of activity for the Soviet Union, Khrushchev sought to woo the developing countries with lavish economic and in most cases, military aid. No longer were countries such as India and Egypt referred to as 'mere appendages' of western imperialism but rather as independent states whose interests overlapped in many areas with those of the Soviet Union. More specifically, the basic Soviet objective in this region, was the wrecking of the ties
that bound the states of this region to the United States and the eventual removal of the United States from the area. In his famous speech, "For New Victories of the Word Communist Movement." delivered in Moscow on January 6, 1961, Khrushchev propounded the thesis that "the correlation of world forces" had shifted decisively and irrevocably, to the Socialist Camp. "All the World" he prophesied will "come to Communism". In view of this "fact" he had suggested at the Twentieth Party Congress in 1956 the doctrine of "capitalist encirclement" was no longer applicable. Thus at the Twenty First Party Congress, he said : The situation in the world has fundamentally changed. Capitalist encirclement of our country no longer exists." Khrushchev's confidence was apparently based on the growth in the economic and military strength of the Soviet Union and the success of the International Communist Movement, even outside the communist world, and on the difficulties which non-Communist countries of the West were experiencing in domestic affairs and in their dealings with one other with the developing nations of the Third World, and with the Communist states. However, the basic inconsistency of Khrushchev's enunciations lay in the fact that while talking of the struggle of two diametrically opposed social systems in an era of socialist revolutions and national liberation revolutions and an era of the collapse
of capitalism and the liquidation of the colonial system', he also repudiated the Stalinistic theses of the "fatalistic inevitability of war". Barrington Moore Jr. has sought to clarify the inconsistency of the issue of inevitable conflict versus peaceful coexistence. He is of the opinion the Communists believe that conflict is the normal relationship between the two orders but to them this does not necessarily mean an all-out of global war. They pretend to see a wide no-man's land between war and peace in which they can manoeuvre openly and in preparing for the final collapse of the capitalist order.

Inter-state conflict being a frequent feature of third world politics, border wars and other forms of local conflict provided avenues for Soviet involvement in the third world. For Khrushchev, such a policy was consistent with the theories of class and liberation since in his views the class structure of the former colonies were one that of the oppressed, who had to be liberated from the tyranny of the oppressor (the capitalist west) and in the process a sphere of influence could be created in an area which together with the Soviet Union could pose a challenge to the global supremacy of the United states. Thus, through offers of arms assistance and friendship, including diplomatic support, the Soviets demonstrated their reliability to the new Third World partners. A
willingness to offer military aid in conflict situations within the third world helped the Soviet Union cultivate long term relationships with specific third world countries. It is significant to note, however, that such aid was intended as an inducement to the third world state in question. Indeed, Khrushchev's concepts of peaceful co-existence were by no means intended to promote tranquility, on the contrary, his policies were aimed at promoting tension and conflict. They were, in fact, dynamic concepts meant to shift the balance of power in Moscow's favour to help the Soviet Union attain a strategic parity with the United States and a global power position commensurate with the military potential of the Soviet Union.

Zimmerman's findings that Soviet interpretation of international relations had been moving away from the rigid determinism of orthodox Soviet political economy, the predominant pattern before 1956, toward conceptions that accorded a greater importance to such ideas as politics, the state, and the very system of international relations, continued and grew beyond the ouster of Khrushchev. The phase during which the new Brezhnev leadership dominated the Kremlin was one when several theorists made stupendous contributions to the study of the Soviet view of international relations. In many ways
the working of the new Brezhnev team was but a reflection of the views expressed by the groups of academics who followed the direction shown by Zimmerman. Dmitri Tomashevskiy, Georgi Shakhnazarov, Nikolay Inozemtsev, Vladimir Gantman and Dmitri Yermolenko, to mention only a few, rejected the traditional Soviet ideas on international relations by emphasizing upon the primacy of the political sphere over economic and class forces in the conduct of foreign policy. The Marxist interpretation that the 'international system is divided not according to the criteria of power but rather according to the levels of economic development', was seriously challenged by these theorists. Yet, however, the Marxist disdain for the prevailing international order was not surrendered.

Tomashevskiy argued in a 1971 book for the establishment of a new formula and the revision of familiar concepts since many new facts and phenomenon no longer fit within the old framework.

Georgi Chicherin criticised Soviet foreign policy for its excessive ideological zeal.

In a 1970 Article Modrzhinskaya asserted that in spite of the influence of class forces, international relations should not be regarded in class-determinist terms.
Soviet theorist Georgi Shakhnazarov in a 1977 article emphasized upon the primacy of the State. The most important activity carried on by the state from an international perspective is its capacity to apply armed force in defence of its declared interests. The logic of self-help extends to all states regardless of their socio-economic character. Thus 'patriotism' Shakhnazarov writes (and not class struggle) will remain the major principle of communist doctrine - as long as national statehood remains a political form of social development. "Military Power", in his opinion, 'is the key element in international relations and world politics has always revolved round the axis of great military powers.40 Thus, in his view, the state and with it its military potential represents the central defining category of international relations. It is interesting to observe that Brezhnev gave a strong boost to the military potential of the Soviet Union, for by 1967 the Soviet Union had caught up with the arms race launched by the United States.

Yet, though Brezhnev had succeeded in forcing the United States to grant a strategic parity to the Soviet Union it had by no means acquired a global parity which it had been aspiring for. As Shakhnazarov remarked that 'although the correlation of forces is constantly changing in favour of socialism, there is still no basis for
speaking of its decisive superiority over imperialism. The shifting of the corelation of forces signified not that the Soviet Union had reached some degree of politically meaningful superiority in the balance of power, but rather the unprecedented American hegemony in the early post-war years had considerably diminished.

The United States, thus was compelled to treat the Soviet Union as an equal instead of merely relying on the political effect of its military forces for the conduct of its diplomacy.

Nevertheless, the Soviet Union was acutely conscious of the special position of the United States. It was to be found in the fact, that the United States stood astride the two critical axes of world politics - the strategic military axis comprised the United States, Soviet Union and China and the political economic axis comprised the United States, Western Europe and Japan.

In this economic-military-political constellation, the United States disposed of formidable leverage, first in its own right as a great power with greater mobility of power, second as the leader of a great alliance system which 'incidentally incorporated the two most powerful agglomerations of economic powers in the world after the United States and the Soviet Union. Besides, the United states was the privileged beneficiary of the Sino-Soviet
tension. Furthermore, the United States and its allies stood to profit more than the Soviet bloc from the application of the fruits of the increasingly important scientific technical revolution.

However, the course of national liberation struggle in the underdeveloped countries did register some initial and marked successes for progressive and even pro-Soviet forces during these years. But even then, the very strength of the imperialist economy worldwide provided the capitalist alliance system with a powerful economic potential in its policies towards the underdeveloped countries. "One the whole, victories for progressive forces in the Third World have tended against imperialism rather than directing in favour of the socialist bloc." Indeed there is a real question as the continued validity of the Soviet model for the developing countries. At best, those developing countries that have started on the road of non-capitalist development only find the prospects for socialism opening up before them and they represent a minority still. In short, imperialism's ability to influence events in the developing world, though certainly not what it once was remains quite considerable.

The Brezhnev leadership substantially modified the main features of Kurushchev's policies in the Third World.
Primarily the policy of fomenting tensions were replaced by one that relied more on a search for stability. This, however, did not mean any withdrawal from less developed countries. Far from it, the Brezhnev team still aimed at drawing the less developed countries away from the West. The third world of the newly independent nations were still viewed as an arena of competition between the two systems as a favourable factor in international politics that could be used to enhance the influence of the Soviet bloc. Thus, the final strategic goal of the Soviet Union remained the replacement of the imperialist order with a socialist one and as such it became imperative on Moscow's part to detach as many key third world countries from the capitalist camp and each third world state was deemed a potential ally for the struggle against imperialism.

Soviet third world strategists demarcated a geographical demographic national liberation zone for intense involvement. This zone ran from the Northern coast of Africa through the Middle East and the sub-continent to Southeast Asia. Besides being adjacent to the USSR, the belt was supremely important in raw materials, human resources, commercial and communication lifelines. It was within this zone that most local conflicts of the post-war period were fought and more important, it was within this zone that national
liberation struggle was in operation. In Soviet perception, this national liberation zone provided the 'main link' in the chain of anti-imperialist struggle during the current period and the outcome of the conflict within this zone was expected to lead to further imperialist retreats from the third world. As per the Marxist-Leninist view, the struggle against imperialism was essentially dictated by the necessities of nation building and in their struggle against imperialism the newly-liberated nations would be compelled to seek Soviet assistance. This Soviet participation in the nation-building efforts of the third world countries would give Moscow an opportunity to further influence the domestic development and programme of these countries.

During the early Brezhnev period, the Soviets clearly indicated their preference for 'progressive social change' in the third world countries. By no means, however, did the Soviet Union pressurize these countries to communist revolutions. What the Soviets broadly prescribed was a national democratic united front comprising the progressive section of the bourgeois working in tandem with the communists to build a national democratic state. In fact, local communists were urged to work for the national democratic front, with or without their separate identities and were frequently cautioned
against adventurist actions. The principal ally, therefore, in the third world was not the local communist party, which was weak or ill-organized, but the anti-imperialist national bourgeois.

A notable change witnessed during the Brezhnev years which fundamentally differed from Khrushchev's approach to the third world was that the period reflected a serious effort to grasp the causes for different types of conflict in the third world. The Brezhnev leadership inferred that not all conflicts were essential tussles between the East and the West. Many of the third world conflicts had their genesis in their local circumstances within the third world itself. Hence, unlike the unilateral lavish aid to the third world during the Khrushchev years aid during the Brezhnev period was given to a particular third world country depending upon the nature of the conflict it was witnessing. Such an assessment did contribute initially to Soviet optimism that the U.S.S.R. could make foreign policy gains in the third world through involvement in local conflicts by judging each conflict on its merit. In other words, Soviet policy in the third world during this phase was essentially reactive, for it depended heavily on the developments in the third world and it responded to some of the opportunities provided to it.

Considering the success with which the Soviet Union cultivated major third world countries particularly in Asia
during the early phase of the Brezhnev leadership certain basic factors strike one's mind. One of the fundamental causes which helped Soviets to gain access to a substantial number of third world states was the inevitable drive towards independence in the developing world where economic backwardness and political instability combined to bring to power a group of governments that were strongly anti-capitalist and anti-western. It is interesting to note that though the Soviets had not overtly relinquished the idea of an ultimate fusion between Marxism-Leninism and national-Liberation movements, significant modifications can be detected in the realm of theory and action during the period. Instead of relying purely on radical states, Moscow broadened its base for friendship on a more even-handed basis. Socio-political compatibility with the USSR was no longer the basis for extending its hand of friendship. In its zeal for expanding its sphere of influence to the detriment of the United States relations with such 'reactionary' states as Malaysia and Nigeria, were welcome to Moscow. Thus, the success of the Soviet strategies in the third world in the late 1960s and the early 1970s were primarily due to the strategic concepts of the Soviet foreign policy, its ability to cultivate the right kind of regimes and the right kind of leaders and its ability to fuse rather purposefully its own.
influence-building efforts and the nation-building toils of the developing nations.$^{58}$

The relative diminution of American power in comparison to its unchallenged supremacy of the early post-war years, though gave vent to the meaning of the slogan that the correlation of forces was shifting in favour of socialism, the fact remained that the U.S. was still the singlemost powerful state in international relations. The fact that Soviet theorists from Varga and Zimmerman to a host of others had all attested to the vitality of capitalism and had been successful in extricating the study of international relations from the grip of dogmatic Marxist-Leninist mould not only brought about a rethinking of capitalism afresh in the Soviet Union, but had also brought about great changes in approach to the far more important idea of international class-struggle. From Stalin down to Brezhnev the change in perception was too obvious to skip notice.
More important than ideology, at this stage, however, was the overriding Soviet concern matters pertaining to security, that kept Moscow on the tenterhooks, particularly after Stalin. Catching up with the arms race and to attain a strategic parity with the United States became an imperative for Moscow, which it could hardly overlook. Explosion of the first nuclear device was soon followed by the testing of the first hydrogen bomb in 1953 and this emboldened the Soviet Union to spurn all western proposals for disarmament. By maintaining its opposition to international intervention in its internal affairs, Moscow seemed resolute in preserving its advantage in non-nuclear armaments. Talks on disarmament between the two superpowers were futile as there were wide gaps between what was acceptable to the United States and what to the USSR.

Central to the Soviet policy was the issue of security and the threat perceived by the nation, whether by real or imaginary aggressors. It was apparent to the leadership in Moscow, that the Soviet Union itself was a consequence of external aggression, for had the Tsarist Empire not been undermined by the Triple Alliance, especially Germany, the Kremlin would never have fallen to the Bolsheviks. Germany's imposition of a harsh peace at Brest-Litovsk in March 1918, though forced Lenin to cede much of the empire's European territories, the land and influence, therein, could only be retrieved through a far more costly, though successful encounter with Germany in the Second World War. Soviet post World War II policy in Eastern Europe was thus dedicated to the defence of the homeland and to the "deeply held position that the soil..."
the Slavic people will never again be abused by Teutonic or other invaders.

The opportunities that opened up before the Soviet Union were, however, overtaken by the profound challenges it now had to face from the other social system, represented by capitalism under the driving leadership of the United States. With the defeat of the Fascist forces in the war, it was evident that Moscow now had to join issue with the United States for the realisation of the Marxist—Leninist prophecy of the victory of the world communist movement under the leadership of Moscow, leading to the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The collapse of capitalism seeming imminent the conception of international class struggle was propogated with full vigour. The idea of an inter systemic (capitalism versus socialism) struggle continued to be echoed in various forms from Stalin down to Brezhnev. Whereas Stalin remained till the very last, an uncompromising advocate of the theme, Khrushchev and Brezhnev, though were convinced of the futility of war and were much diluted in their approach to the ideas of class struggle, had by no means surrendered the idea. In fact, during the Brezhnev period 'peaceful co-existence, between the two systems, was trumpeted consistently as an active form of class struggle.
The intrinsic strength and vitality of the capitalist system, however, proved far more sustaining and effective than the Soviet Union had anticipated. Much to Soviet discomfort, the United States emerged from the war with more vigour, wealth and industrial capacity. As a point of fact, its position, both economically and militarily, was unique in world history as it was the only country which had not suffered any devastation in the war. The initiative lay in American hands, which through the policy of 'containment', had not only created new spheres of influence, but had also started hemming the Soviet Union from all sides with the creation of a network of military alliances. As the chief economic and military underwriter of Western Europe, the U.S. sponsored military alliance NATO was a direct threat to the security of the Soviet Union and its satellites in Eastern Europe. The impasse in Berlin, having ended with the successful airlifting of food over the heads of Soviet troops through the 'Operation Vittles', proved beyond doubt the military superiority of the United States.

The southern periphery of the Soviet Union, however, presented a different picture. Here, especially in the Post World War II period, Moscow projected concern as well as power. With all the Kremlin's talks of anti imperialism and anti colonialism, the expansion of
the Tsarist empire in the direction of the Turkish Straits and the warm waters of the Indian Ocean, could hardly be described as defensive policy. The Soviet Union did not repudiate Tsarist conquest in the region of Central Asia, nor were older quests in the direction of Asia Minor, Iran and the Indian Ocean abandoned. On the contrary all the expansionist policies of tsardom were adopted by the new rulers in Moscow. The 'Great Game' for Central Asia and Afghanistan was perpetuated in the name of security but that justification was difficult to sustain in the aftermath of World War II. The British retreat from empire following the war exposed Soviet ambition. It also removed the one formidable bulwark against Soviet advances. This Soviet expansionist tendency had, but a threatening impact upon the new and revitalised post world War II states on the southern margin of the Asian continent. These countries, though acknowledged the might of their super power neighbour were not willing to come to terms with Soviet interests or demands. Fearing another 'Colonial phase' a number of these states saw benefits in associating with a more distant United States, and they were either identified with Washington or sought alliance with it. Thus, Turnkey and Iran in South West Asia and Pakistan in South Asia became members of American sponsored military alliance systems, while their relations with the Soviet Union were either indifferent or
temporarily ignored. The United States 'Containment' policy in Asia was conceived to replicate earlier British performance, that is to prevent the forcible entry of the Soviet Union into the region. Out of this conviction grew the necessity of creating such military alliances in Asia as the SEATO and CENTO, to ward off the spectre of international communism. For other states like India, in the region, they opted for a more benign posture of equidistance from the two super powers.

Despite Soviet involvement in the southern fringes of its borders and its efforts at expansion in other areas, the security concern of the Soviet Union was in no way mitigated, for United States, having consolidated its position in Western Europe had made deep inroads into areas where Soviet Union was virtually isolated. A bolstering of its security only lay in responding to the arms race initiated by United States. The maintenance of the Soviet super power status thus depended upon its capability to match United States in the production of both conventional and non-conventional weapons. The successful operation of the Soviet armaments industry would not only enhance its security, but could also influence prospective buyers in the international arms market to look towards Soviet Union for assistance.
third world countries were inclined to lean on United States, there was a distinct possibility that these countries could be tempted by the bait of sophisticated arms to look towards Moscow for help and assurance. Such a scheme Moscow believed would be mutually advantageous. Hence began an era of arms race between the two super powers inevitably leading almost all countries to be sucked into its vortex. In Kokoshin's analysis therefore, of the changing correlation of forces in the late 1960s and early 1970s for example, 'the import of the growth of the Soviet economy from 1950 to 1965, lies not in the exemplary effect of the Soviet mode and level of production on other nations, which Khrushchev had emphasized at the Twenty-Second Party congress in 1961, but first of all, in strengthening of the foundation of the defence capacity of the country, the existence of the necessary resources for the successful development of strategic nuclear forces as well as conventional general purpose forces 64.

But in the 1960s a new development in international relations was the political multipolarity in place of the bipolar political structure which had been in operation since the end of World War II. The economic resurgence of Japan, the political military influence of Western Europe, the demand by the newly liberated states for a more active
role in international politics and finally the emergence of China as a hostile critic of the Soviet Union, made Soviet security concerns all the more enhanced. The diversification of power and influence to various zones of the world were far too complex for the Soviet conception of the structure of international system. In one sense, as Lynch observes, the Soviet conception of the structure of the international system has always been a bipolar one, and strictly so. The correlation of forces in the global arena was said to reflect the struggle between the two world socio-economic systems, capitalism and socialism. What fundamentally caused concern to the Soviet Union was that despite the multipolarity and the shifting of the correlation of forces, it would not for the near future affect the position of United States — and by extension Western Europe in the dialectic of World politics.

The threat perceived to its security, was further compounded, by the split with Communist China particularly after the Cuban missile crisis in 1963. The Chinese insistence in the 1950s that Soviet Union place its nuclear force at the disposal of Chinese foreign policy led Moscow to distinguish sharply between the national interest of the Soviet Union and China and their nominal class solidarity. In support of their position Soviet leaders advanced the thesis that the catastrophic
consequences of nuclear war nullified any gains to be won by the annihilation of capitalism. Furthermore, responding to the Chinese taunts for a more aggressive Soviet global posture, Khrushchev argued that international conditions had changed so much that global war was no longer an inevitability. Over time as the ideological dispute between Soviet and Chinese Communist parties grew into a political and then military confrontation between the two, Soviet theorists were led to admit explicitly the possibility of war between communist countries. The Soviet response to the split with China, alone then brought into question and dealt a decisive blow to such critical Leninist tenets as the predominance of class as opposed to national factors in explaining international behaviour, the inevitability of war in an international environment riven by class schisms and the impossibility of war between communist states.

"Soviet theorists have thus, conceded the independence of the political sphere from the economic base. Such a conclusion necessarily follows the admission that a socialist state can pursue a reactionary foreign policy."

Wessell is of the opinion that China was seen by the Soviet Union as a threat to international stability,
driven to dominate the smaller nations on its periphery, intent on becoming a nuclear power and unalterably opposed to Soviet Union\textsuperscript{69}. Indeed, Chinese foreign policy, which had entirely been at odds with the interest of socialism, had for quite sometime been entertaining the idea of a possibility of war between socialist powers, that is between Soviet Union and China. Many Soviet commentators perceived a Chinese desire to construct a 'Sinocentric system' of international relations, based on the probability of a Soviet American war whose aftermath would witness a world ruled by Peking. This is said to reflect the supercession of 'class criteria by China in favour of 'nationalistic and geopolitical criteria'\textsuperscript{70}. Further, these commentators emphasize, that the Chinese calculated,' global hegemony was to be achieved through regional domination, which signified the neutralisation of Soviet power at least in Asia\textsuperscript{71}.

Certainly, the bitter dispute with communist Yugoslavia after 1948 and especially the Sino-Soviet schism emphatically demonstrated the contradictions inherent in the ideas of class struggle. Yet, however, Soviet Union responded to the confrontation with Communist China, not by denying the class essence of the Peoples' Republic of China, but by claiming that a gang of renegades had acquired control of the state apparatus and
was executing a reactionary, pro imperialist foreign policy\textsuperscript{72}.

On the question of how far actually had the correlation of forces shifted in favour of Moscow, it became evident that if there had been such a shift, it had resulted in a Sino-American understanding, as a response to the changes that were imminent on account of the shift in favour of the Soviet Union. Even if there was a shift, the central position of the United States in the politico-economic relations between the state of the capitalist world (i.e. the United States, Western Europe and Japan triangle) and in the strategic triangle (of China, Soviet Union and the U.S.), left the United States in an advantageous position, than otherwise. Hence the explosion of the 58mega tonne bomb by Khrushchev, may have been too good for propaganda, but that in no way altered the strategic balance in favour of the Soviet Union. The Kennedy McNamara team having launched the greatest arms race in the history of mankind\textsuperscript{73}, incited the new Brezhnev team to respond to it with full vigour. A later Pravda reference criticized the Brezhnev action as, 'In our bid for military strategic parity, we occasionally failed to use opportunities available to attain security for our nation by political means, and as a result, allowed ourselves to be lured into an arms race, which could not but affect
this country's social and economic progress and its standing on the international scene.  

By 1965, though the position of the USSR in the non-communist international system was significantly stronger than it had been a decade earlier and though its intents and commitments had expanded beyond the confines of Stalin's empire, its capabilities were still inadequate and severely limited. The Soviet Union was acutely conscious of its strategic inferiority to the United States and the NATO alliance. Despite the Soviet wooing of the third world, unlike the United States, which had a number of reliable third world allies, the Soviets were not only selective in picking their allies, their number was far less in comparison to the United States. Soviet assurances to its third world partners notwithstanding, it could hardly fulfil the ever increasing security demands of its partners. The alternative between losing a third world ally and a confrontation with the United States, often left Moscow with little room to manouevre but to opt for the former course in several cases. The problem of dealing with the influence of the United States and the NATO alliance remained Moscow's most vital concern. There was a renewed vigour by 1968 with which the Brezhnev leadership undertook a programme of military build up in both nuclear and non nuclear arms that till then were
outside the range of Soviet military capabilities. The Soviets responded to the American arms build up by emphasizing upon their strategic nuclear capabilities in order to offset the superiority of the United States. By the mid 1960s, the Soviets made progress in increasing their own strike capabilities and by the end of the decade had reached something approximating strategic parity with the United States. Among other important developments on the Soviet side were the construction of an ocean going navy and a worldwide merchant fleet that also engaged in military related reconaissance. By the end of the decade, alarm at the spread of nuclear weapons was accompanied by alarm at the development of weapons technology. The deadliness of new missiles inclined the two super powers to talk about the control of the use and development as well as proliferation of nuclear weapons. Strategic arms limitation talks were begun in 1969. During the cold war the two protagonists had developed an increasing sobriety in relation to one another, and even a sort of fearful intimacy. The idea that the two super powers had more in common than the need of mutual annihilation was further fortified by their common interest in their own superiority. Thus, the American recognition of a political multipolarity but a continued existence of military bipolarity made it adapt to changing global circumstances.
Soviet analysts, reluctantly, but inevitably concede the favourable shift in the balance of power toward socialism though indisputable, was not a relentlessly smooth transition toward the establishment of socialism as a world system. Considerable uncertainty in the United States in no way helped the Soviet Union which was itself increasingly insecure about the main directions of international political process. Undoubtedly, of greater urgency for the Soviet Union was the evolution of China from an ally to ideological, political and ultimately security threat to the general growth of the might and influence of the socialist community. The Soviets evidently came to fear the fragile nature of their strategic equality with the United States and from this fear grew the plea for the establishment of a detente based on long term co-operative engagements between the Soviet Union and the United States in a variety of fields. Detente, however, did not imply the achievement by the Soviet Union of a politically meaningful military superiority as the attainment of a status of global equality with the United States. As Vernon Aspaturian has observed, "Soviet leaders are exceedingly conscious that through the process of detente the United States was prepared to grant strategic but not global equality to the Soviet Union."
The Soviet search for areas of influence from where it could perpetuate its policy of confrontation with United States soon drove Soviet Union to an area which was initially of little consequence to both United States and Soviet Union. But the anti-imperialist, anti-colonialist call of the newly liberated colonies of Asia and Africa seemed to provide an enormous constituency to Soviet Union particularly at a time when the Americans were firmly planting themselves in countries such as Israel and South Africa. Soviet involvement with the less developed neutralist countries attained a significant degree of importance in its overall global strategy. Such an involvement, as per Soviet calculations was consistent with the theories of class struggle and liberation.

Philosophically, though the notion of neutrality or a third alternative did not fit the ideology of Marxism-Leninism, yet, even in the straight-jacket world of Stalin, based on the maxim-he who is not with me is against me - there was always some degree of tolerance for such neutral countries as Austria, Finland and Switzerland. There could hardly be any doubt, however, that Soviet involvement with the less developed, non-aligned countries was born more out of convenience than out of conviction. As Vladimir Gantman remarked in September, 1969 after the crushing of the Prague Spring by
the armies of the Warsaw Pact—‘some students of
international relations in the socialist countries have
succumbed to the influence of the bourgeois schemes of a
new polycentric world and have begun to talk about the
advantages of a 'neutralist', extra bloc policy. They
fail to consider the point that this policy has been made
possible only by the existence of the world socialist
system.\textsuperscript{84}

Initial indifference towards the idea of
non alignment, indicated by Moscow was largely attributed
to Yugoslav dissidence. For Stalin, Tito remained a
renegade and the movement for 'non alignment a 'freak', if
not a manifestation of the so called contradictions in the
capitalist world.\textsuperscript{85} Thwarted in his post-war expansion
first in Iran and later in Korea and increasingly occupied
with problems within his empire, Stalin expended
relatively little Soviet effort in Asia and virtually none
in the Middle East, Africa and Latin America in the period
from 1948 to 1953.

Stalin's successors changed Soviet policy to
something closer to 'he who is not against me is with me',
and gave the status of neutrality in international
relations official respectability. On the theoretical
level this was done without causing much damage, to
Marxism-Leninism by treating the condition of neutrality as a transitional phenomenon and a product of the decomposition of colonial empire\textsuperscript{86}. The Marxist term for it coined by Lenin many years ago was 'the struggle for national liberation', and this applied mostly to former colonies.

It was for the first time in the 1950s that India's Prime Minister Pandit Nehru speaking for millions of Asians and Africans, demanded his voice be heard in the international circles. Determined to maintain their respective identities, these nations favoured the idea espoused by Nehru. The choice was simple either to keep away from the cliches of the cold war or become a camp follower of either power bloc and sacrifice one's freedom of action.

At a time when monolithic communism was in search for allies and avenues and was longing to demonstrate its flexibility in international relations, Nehru's rejection of military ties with the West, came in handy for the Russians and made it much easier for them to cultivate the friendship of less developed countries like India\textsuperscript{87}. In fact, the Russians never ceased to be grateful to India for not joining the SEATO and CENTO\textsuperscript{88}. On the Soviet view of the Indian state, S.Mehrotra remarks that
'Bibliographical studies show that India has a central place in any discussion of Soviet development theory. India happens to be the Soviet Union's most analysed LDC (less developed country). India was one of the first post colonial countries with which the USSR established diplomatic relations and, besides, diplomatic relations have remained consistently friendly since Stalin's death. By 1955, the Soviet Union was absolutely clear in its perception that India was essential, not only in the regional context, but also in Moscow's overall global strategy. A large, friendly and divergent country, India, for the Soviet Union was not just another third world under developed country. It was much more than any other non-capitalist country that was beyond any comparison with even Nasser's Egypt and the two together presented a massive expansion of the Soviet sphere of operation beyond the confines of the socialist world. Not surprisingly, therefore, Nehru, once the 'running dog of imperialism', was by 1955 considered an 'outstanding statesman, and Gandhi, for years criticized by Soviet spokesmen, whose death was hardly taken notice of by Soviet leaders and Pravda Published the news of his death in barely two sentences, was described by Bulgari in November, 1955 as the distinguished leader of the Indian National Movement. According to R.A. Ulianovsky, 'India has attained a middle level of capitalist development and the
Soviet Union viewed the ruling Congress Party in India to be playing a 'progressive' role in the Indian economic and political development. It is anti-monopoly, anti-feudal and anti-imperialist. By labelling the Indian state as a 'national bourgeois regime', the Congress was endorsed as 'progressive' and the Soviet Union advocated a non-revolutionary perspective for the country's future.

The doctrine of Non-alignment was in every sense a brainchild of Jawaharlal Nehru. As it happened, he enunciated it on September 7, 1946 in a broadcast over All India Radio when India was not even fully free and Nehru was only the Vice-Chairman of the Viceroy's executive council. There were no two thoughts in his mind about what free India should do while stepping on to world stage. A great impetus to the movement was provided by the Afro-Asian solidarity conference held in the Indonesian hill resort of Bandung in 1955. The theory of non-alignment thus found a natural 'catchment area' in the newly liberated areas of Asia and Africa.

Tito, the Yugoslav leader, however, seized upon non-alignment as an instrument for freeing Yugoslavia from the Soviet stranglehold. Together with Nehru and Nasser of Egypt, he took steps to convert non-alignment from a
declaratory policy of individual nations into an international movement. The three leaders met at Tito's island town of Brioni in 1956 and five years later the first Non Aligned Movement Summit took place in the Yugoslav capital of Belgrade.

The expression 'non-alignment' first came into vogue in the early 1950s largely as a result of India's and Nehru's insistence with the West for misrepresenting or misunderstanding non-alignment as 'neutralism', which John Foster Dulles the U.S. Secretary of State denounced as 'immoral'. Nehru pointed out sharply that whereas neutralism was a passive concept, non-alignment was a positive and a dynamic one. The non-aligned movement being essentially a product of the prevailing international situation, manifestly dominated by the cold war, emphasized its dynamic potentialities by declaring its intention of supporting international issues on merit. It was but, coincidental, that on a large number of issues the NAM found itself closer to the Soviet Union than the United States.
Not for a moment did the leaders of non-alignment wish to create an alliance or anything similar to it and they made this clear on many occasions. Nehru emphasised that the non-aligned wished to be non-aligned in relation to other non-aligned countries as well. It is however, easy to understand why the non-aligned countries consistently rejected any ideas of becoming a third bloc, and it is hardly necessary to try and explain this. No single country held such a dominant position as to be able to claim to be centre of the bloc and it was difficult to imagine an organised bloc without a centre similar to the central superpowers in the two existing alliances. Furthermore, a bloc was an organisation based on power politics. It was unlikely that the non-aligned countries could impress the outside world with their material power either military or economic and so the creation of a military-political alliance based on material might would have been entirely unconvincing. Thus there were no real grounds for forming a bloc even if these countries had wished to. It was this rejection of a 'third bloc' concept that made the non-aligned movement attractive to the Soviet Union.

What apparently made an impression upon Soviet Union during the mid 1950s was that not only had the new non bloc states become a numerically significant component of a new international order, but some of them had firmly
rejected any military political integration with western sponsored alliances. In 1961 when the movement was finally launched the Soviet leaders welcomed it and promised an all out support to it. The fervent appeals for peace made by the non-aligned states endeared them further to the Soviet Union. Khrushchev emphatically declared 'when the cardinal problem of our day, that of war and peace is at issue, these countries advocate peace and oppose war'. By 1963, Moscow perceived the foreign policy objectives of the non-aligned states to confirm largely with the political course of the socialist states. Hence Soviet identification of a 'vast zone of peace' between the two ideological systems, was particularly intended not only to encourage the new sovereign Afro-Asian states to resist the pressure of Western imperialism, but also to incline them towards support for Soviet proposals in the international arena. Through political and diplomatic support inside and outside the U.N., the Soviet Union did not waver from supporting the non-aligned states. In particular, the Soviet Union regarded the NAM as of special significance for the countries of Asia. It therefore, encouraged Asian socialist states as well as Cuba to take an active part in the movement and criticised China for quarrelling with non-aligned Asian states like India. Soviet theorists came to regard NAM as a part of the overall process of
social development of the third world—a manifestation of the national liberation movement directed against imperialism and colonialism. This national liberation movement in tandem with the world socialist system was regarded as an integral part of the conflict between the two world social systems, and this identification further convinced Moscow, that NAM represented a firm citadel of anti-imperialist struggle.

Testimony of an identification of interests could be had from their joint condemnation of colonialism and their coincidental approach towards issue of total and universal disarmament, and the elimination of foreign military bases. The objectives of the NAM spelt out at Belgrade in 1961—decolonisation, disarmament, detente and development—received tremendous encouragement in Moscow. Besides the NAM’s call for an end to the Cuban missile crisis was appreciated by the Soviet Union as another example of the NAM’s peace promoting efforts. However, Soviet atmospheric tests on the eve of the first NAM summit did cause serious misgivings in the movement as regards the intentions of Moscow. It was evident, that Soviet strategic interest being paramount, it would after all act as a customary great power, even at the risk of alienating its new found allies.
Nevertheless, in the 1960s, the USSR expected the non-aligned states to further detach themselves from the capitalist west, in their economic planning, just as they were deemed to have done in their political and ideological relations. Soviet strategists worked on the premise that with the eventual structural socio-economic change in the third world non-aligned countries, a greater rapport with the Soviet Union would emerge, which would be militarily advantageous to Moscow. Though Moscow was careful not to deny the non-aligned the option of turning to the Soviet Union for assistance, military or otherwise, it was quite emphatic in stating that joint manouevres of armed forces with imperialist powers amounted to a violation of the principle of non-alignment.

In the 1960s, there were areas of convergence where the Soviet Union and the non aligned states fused their interests, such as the 'zone of peace' concept which aimed at conflict prevention. Roy Allison is of the opinion that Moscow's encouragement of the idea of creating zones of peace leading to demilitarisation in the Third World, would by implication bring about the dissolution of western military alliances. The Soviet proposal for extension of nuclear free zones in Europe to third world regions was readily acceptable to non aligned states which
adopted resolutions for creating a nuclear free zone in Africa in 1964 and ten years later advanced the same idea to the Middle East. The non aligned initiative for declaring the Mediterranean a zone of peace, was promptly seized upon by the Soviet Union, for not only was the zone adjacent to Soviet borders, but, being militarily at a disadvantage in the region, it became a particularly sensitive security concern for Moscow. In this sense, it was apparent, that there were regions where the formation of the so called zones of peace met genuine and mutual interests of the USSR and the Non aligned\footnote{99}. Such a pattern annoyed the Western countries, particularly United States which kept them at a distance from the movement and this was a major source of satisfaction for the Soviet leaders.
Guided by the conviction that international affairs was based on the idea of a continuous struggle between two divergent and irreconcilable socio economic systems, Stalin's Russia had made it abundantly clear that emergence of a large number of non-committed third world states made no difference to the Soviet Union and that Moscow would not be deflected from its basic postulate of an inevitable struggle with the West. But, with Soviet theorists in the post-Stalin era carving out an identity of interests and goals between and USSR and key states of the third world, courting their friendship became a major imperative of Soviet foreign policy. Such a policy was indeed in confirmation with Soviet strategy for the developing world. Soviet goals in the developing areas have been formulated within a maximum-minimum range of prospects since the early days of the Russian Bolshevik regime. At the maximum end of the continuum, the optimum outcome for the Soviet Union, stands conversion of the people and incorporation of the developing areas into the communist party state system. At the minimum end of the continuum, stands depriving the imperialists of the assets of these areas. In between are the promotion of socialist political and economic regimes and active support for the Soviet international posture vis-a-vis the imperialist west. There is nothing new in this continuum of goals. What has changed over the years is the immediate priority
awarded them and the strategy and tactics by which they are pursued. Being convinced of the unacceptibility of war as an instrument of social change, the post Stalin leadership emphasized upon the idea of peaceful but competitive coexistence for the achievement of the communist goal of world revolution. The USSR assigned a new role for the 'national bourgeoisie' in countries of the peace zone and in the process it revised the fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism by innovating the thesis of peaceful coexistence of the capitalist and socialist world systems. It sought to develop the theory of peaceful transition to socialism in the new nations—Socialism was to be achieved through a transitional phase described as a 'national democracy' under the leadership of the national bourgeoisie and these countries deserved diplomatic and economic support from the socialist countries. This national bourgeoisie would execute the historic transformation from feudalism and colonialism to pre-socialist capitalism. Accordingly, it would be the role of the Soviet Union to help third world countries to come up from their economic backwardness which then would have proved to them the superiority of the socialist system. For the time being, however, Soviet objective in the third world were to encourage them to develop their non-capitalist economies under the leadership of the national bourgeoisie and with the use of
diplomatic skill, keeping these countries disengaged from the West. In other words, when the battle of world revolution would be won by the socialist countries, the third world would automatically fall into the lap of socialism, for, of the ultimate triumph of socialism, Soviet leaders were convinced. Thus, the emergence of concepts such as 'peaceful coexistence' and the 'peaceful road to socialism', suggests that ideology had become an instrument of Soviet foreign policy towards the less developed third world countries. The Soviet way to gain access into the Third World capitals were through the massive use of economic aid, leading to a flourishing trade between the Soviet Union and the recipient of that aid.

The roots of Soviet trade and aid policy in the under-developed countries were embedded in Marxist-Leninist theory, which has claimed that a basic identity of interests between the Communist countries and the Third World called for a special relationship. This special relationship rested on a mutual antipathy to colonialism and neo-colonialism a term covering the more sophisticated methods used by foreign capital to retain control over the economic and financial life of the former colonies.
Lenin and his successors viewed these areas as necessary adjuncts of the advanced western economics, as territories where, in Lenin's words, 'imperialist monopolies would struggle for forces of raw materials, for the export of capital, for spheres of influence, i.e. spheres for profitable deeds, concessions etc'. Therefore, to help weaken the imperialists influence in formerly dependent territories was considered a blow at the foundations of imperialism itself.

In 1952 Stalin published his famous thesis on the disintegration of the single world market and the appearance of the USSR, China and Eastern Europe as a 'new, parallel world market,' which would reduce the sphere of exploitation of world resources by the major capitalist countries as communist countries increasingly would 'dispose their own surplus goods'. Five years later at the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Khrushchev carried this thesis a step further, declaring that the recently liberated countries struggling for independence need not go begging to their former masters, but can draw on the achievements of the socialist world to meet their needs. Khrushchev also asserted that the very existence of the Socialist camp forced the colonialists to make concessions to the less developed countries.
The general objective of the USSR's trade and aid activity in the underdeveloped areas was stated in terms of ideology in a resolution of the Twenty-Second Party Congress of 1961.

The CPSU considers fraternal alliance with the peoples who have thrown off the colonial or semi-colonial yoke to be a cornerstone of its international policy. The CPSU regards it as its international duty to assist the peoples who have set out to win and strengthen their national independence, all peoples who fight for the complete abolition of the colonial systems.  

Within this broad ideological framework the Soviet trade and aid programme had three main objectives. The first was to help the less developed nations to attain political and economic independence of the industrialised west. Soviet economic aid helped 'lay the material foundation for the genuine (i.e. economic) independence of the ex-colonial peoples', while Soviet military aid was justified as being given to peoples waging an armed struggle against colonialism. As purveyors of aid in support of the new national regimes, the Russians hoped that Soviet influence would supplant that of the West.

The second was to induce the emerging nations to
take the non capitalist i.e. Socialist path of economic development. This goal was to be achieved partially by example, as Soviet aid 'stipulates interest in socialism and engenders a desire to use Socialist methods in order to build a thriving economy', and partially as a result of the operational guidelines of the aid programme itself. Soviet assistance was dictated toward stimulating the growth of the public sector, to encourage national planning, and to build large scale heavy industry, which Soviet economists had long considered to be the only firm foundation for an independent economy.

The explicit objective of Soviet aid was to promote the growth of revolutionary social and political forces in the new states. The USSR was willing to sacrifice local communist parties to the more immediate goal of solidifying its ties with the new national regimes.

The creation of industry in the less developed countries would facilitate social advance. As industry grew, the working class would becomes larger and its unity and solidarity would be affirmed. These were conditions which were necessary for the transformation of the working class into a guiding progressive, revolutionary social force.
The growth potential for the Soviet economic ties with the less developed countries have been treated as a function of the growth of the Soviet economy. The weakness of its economy in the early post-war years were cited as the reason for the USSR's late start in the foreign aid field, while the soaring economic growth envisaged under Khrushchev's Seven Year Plan (1959-55) led to optimistic projections in the early 1960s of a rapid growth in Soviet trade and aid. While asserting an important role for Soviet trade and aid in the economic, political and social transformation of under-developed nations, Soviet analysts, nevertheless have consistently acknowledged its subordination to the role of domestic activity in each recipient country. This was particularly true of foreign economic aid, which always was viewed as a supplement, although a vital one, to internal saving. Moreover, trade not aid, was stated to be the most important and mutually advantageous type of economic tie between the socialist and underdeveloped worlds.

In representing itself as the champion of national liberation the Soviet Union had all the cards stacked in its favour and Khrushchev's astute propaganda made the most of it — Asia and the Middle East received first attention. Ever since the middle of the 1950s, when the Soviet Union under Khrushchev embarked on an active
third world policy, the Middle East and South Asia have been the regions of greatest interest to the USSR. The shift in approach to foreign policy under Khrushchev, indicated a considerable degree of flexibility in the overall Communist Party apparatus in managing the foreign policy process. As Melvin A. Goodman suggests that major events in the Middle East and South Asia since the 1950s have demonstrated that party institutions and not government organisations, have dominated the Soviet foreign policy process, and Khrushchev in his capacity as the General Secretary of the Party, gave direction to Soviet foreign policy. Moving away from the continental based strategy of Stalin, to a global one, Khrushchev sought to demonstrate not only the military capability of the Soviet Union, but also evinced a great interest in exploiting the diplomatic opportunity which was most evident in the USSR's involvement in the third world. It was in this arena, made up of two thirds of the world's nations, that the Soviet Union sought to engage the United States in a low cost relatively low risk and highly intensive pattern of classical imperial competition. Whereas Europe and the Far East had relatively stable political and military constellations that coincided generally with established territorial boundaries and spheres of influences shielded by security agreements, Southern Asia, the Middle East, Latin America and
Sub-Saharan Africa, were characterized by transient alliances and systemic instability and so attracted super power rivalry. Gains or setbacks in these areas of contention were not likely to have a significant effect on the fundamental balance of power in the short run. Yet the implications for the long term were enormous and for ideological and strategic reasons, Moscow considered the prizes worth the effort.\textsuperscript{115}

Two strategically vital areas with the potential of emerging as regional power centres, cultivated by the Khrushchev leadership in the 1950s were Egypt and India. Nasser's Egypt had incurred American displeasure when the former bought defence equipments from Czechoslovakia. That was reason enough for John F. Dulles, the U.S. Secretary of State to abrogate the U.S. Egyptian deal on the construction of the Aswan Dam in Egypt. In the circumstances, Nasser not only turned to the Soviet Union for help, which was readily forthcoming but also seized the Suez Canal, leading to its nationalisation. In the ensuing Suez crisis of 1956, the Soviet Union saved Egypt from the combined Anglo-French and Israeli attack, to the great disappointment of the United States. Soviet-Egyptian friendship struck firm roots during the sixties when Nasser's successor Anwar Sadat had to give up alliance in 1976 under the most testing conditions.
The early basis of Indo-Soviet relations was, however, dictated by India's unilateral anxiety to be friend the USSR. Symbolic of the Indian desire to cultivate good relations with Russia was the insistence by Nehru in early 1947, that an ambassador be appointed to the USSR and the appointee be his sister. Symbolic of the Soviet attitude to India in these years was the inability of the ambassador to have even one interview with the Soviet dictator during her term of office. It was only after the communist leader had discovered that his strategy in Korea had misfired that he took note of India and indeed accepted a Nehru proposal that a peaceable approach be brought to bear in dealing with Korea. The change in Stalin's attitude was perceived when the new Indian ambassador Dr. S. Radhakrishnan achieved the distinction of being received by Stalin—a rare event in those days when foreign ambassadors in Moscow were received personally by Stalin.

Nehru's Fabian socialist background made him get drawn towards the Soviet Union, which according to him had made great strides in heavy industry, agriculture and basic economic planning. What particularly impressed Nehru was the Soviet model of Five Year Economic Planning and successful functioning of the Public Sector. It is important to note that even before becoming Prime
Minister, Nehru often referred in his speeches and writings to Soviet experience as a model for India\textsuperscript{118}. The acceleration of industrial development through state investment and planning was thus conventional wisdom for the political and economic leaders of post colonial India. The influence of the Fabian socialist elite of Nehru resulted in a belief in industrialisation based on public investment and in an ideological position against the market mechanism. The essence of 'socialist planning', according to the Second plan, lay in tilting investment in favour of public investment. It was conceived as a strategy for creating a 'socialist pattern of society'\textsuperscript{119}. Nehru, in fact admitted, 'the influence of the Soviet revolution, which gave a powerful economic turn to our thoughts'\textsuperscript{120}. The Soviet influence on the Indian planning system not only popularised the general idea of planning but it actually went a long way in shifting the investment allocation in the Second Five year Plan to heavy industry. Despite Soviet influence on Indian economic planning, however, it is pertinent to remember that Nehru did not bring about an abandonment of the idea of private enterprise. While emulating the Soviet model of economic planning, Nehru allowed the functioning of the big business houses and thus launched a unique experiment of a mixed economy where both the private and the public sectors could thrive. It was not surprising, therefore,
that the USSR was among the first few countries to offer economic and technical assistance for the planned development of India.

Coincidental during this period was the deterioration to the lowest point of Indo-American relations. The consequence of several policy moves from Washington was interpreted in India as an attempt to curb her. Without challenging the good faith of the United States, it was pointed out by India that moves such as the extension of U.S. aid to Pakistan could result in a serious arms race in the subcontinent and the creation of an acute security problem for India. Although Pakistan ostensibly joined SEATO and CENTO to ward off the spectre of international communism, there could hardly be any doubt of its real intentions. In allying with Pakistan Washington tried to play down Indian fears of a militarily strong Pakistan and held to the belief that its help was meant to defend the subcontinent from their common enemy. In so far as India was not considered an enemy of Washington, it refused to acknowledge that its military support to Pakistan posed a threat to India. A series of mistaken moves from both sides and the use of invectives in public pronouncements further indicated to the world that India and the United States were less than close friends. In the final analysis, however, Washington's
aid to Pakistan pressed India into a closer embrace of Moscow. It would not be far fetched to say that India's Soviet connection was dictated more by the realities/necessities of the subcontinental politics than any exaggerated ideological appreciation of Soviet socialism.

What seems to have made an impression upon Soviet leadership of the time was the independent line taken by India at international gatherings, particularly in the meetings of the Security Council and the General Assembly of the United Nations. 'Moscow took immediate note of the situation and by April 1954, Malenkov in an election speech spoke of India in glowing terms and in the slogans of the following.— May Day, for the first time, included a reference to the Soviet people's desire for friendship with India. From the Indian point of view, however, preconditions of friendly relations were much more than a mere acceptance of her foreign policy for the cause of peace. India hoped that the Soviet Union would accept the fact that a great deal of progress was occurring in India and that the Indian state did not deserve to be overthrown by a revolution. India hoped also that as a country with a huge industrial base, the Soviet Union would be ready to assist India in her primary need— industrialisation.
In February, 1955, Soviet Union agreed to extend credit and technical assistance to India for a steel plant at Bhilai during the period of the First Five Year Plan. This was the first major project of economic assistance by the Soviet Union to a non-socialist country. At the time the only other donors were the United States and the World Bank, but the main usefulness of the Soviet aid lay in their willingness to give aid for particular projects that were regarded as high priority investment and to give such aid for public sector investment at times when other major donors such as U.S. showed an extreme reluctance to do so. The whole of 1955 was a year of great Indo-Soviet amity, when Nehru accepted the Soviet invitation and arrived in Moscow to a tumultuous welcome from the Soviet leaders and people.

Khrushchev's views on India were detailed in his speeches in India in late 1955 when he laid down the extent to which he was ready to go in evolving a more stable basis for Indo-Soviet relations—the promotion of aid, the endorsement of India's unity, acceptance of the Indian national leadership as a progressive and desirable phenomenon, the promotion of India's status in the world, the acceptance of the desirability of India's friendship with the United States and of American aid to India and finally the use of Soviet influence to prevent the
irresponsible functioning of its followers in India. Modeste Rubinstein, the Soviet economist, even went to the extent of envisaging the possibility of India's achieving socialism through the existing framework.\(^{125}\)

Ideologically, however, the Soviet position regarding India was not unequivocal at this time and in fact a Soviet writer indulged in polemics with Nehru on his basic approach.\(^{126}\) But, for the Khrushchev team, the progressive character of the national leadership in India was just about enough to forge a healthy partnership. Khrushchev was of the opinion that the Russian experience was not necessarily suited to India. 'It is impossible to force the buffalo to eat meat, it is impossible for the tiger to eat grass.'\(^{127}\) The advice from Soviet Union to the Indian Communist Party was on the side of moderation and Soviet newspapers welcomed the results of the elections of 1957 and 1962.

On the Kashmir issue, the Soviet Union was the only major power which was forthright in its assertion. Khrushchev emphasized that disintegrating tendencies were harmful to India, and India's unity and integrity were important. Kashmir was an integral part of India and the Soviet Union would consider it to be so.\(^{128}\) In the Security Council, the Soviet delegate Sobolev, opposed the
draft resolution on Kashmir, sponsored by Australia, Columbia, Cuba, United Kingdom and the U.S. for its failure to take into account the real situation in Kashmir. He regretted that instead of laying stress on a direct agreement between parties some countries were still attempting at a plebiscite with supervision and interference from outside. He further alleged that the powers were guided primarily in their own interests which were aimed at penetration into this region as one of great strategic significance. Referring then to the series of actions taken by the Constituent Assembly of Kashmir with regard to the integration of this state with the Union of India, he declared that the Kashmir question was thus settled by the Kashmiri people themselves. In December 1961, during the liberation of Goa, India received firm support from Moscow. Incidentally, the Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, Leonid Brezhnev was on a visit to India, when events in Goa took place. While speaking at a civic reception, held in his honour at Bombay on December 17, he confirmed the step that was taken by India and viewed in with full understanding and sympathy. Soviet support to India on the issue of Goa became more pronounced in the meetings of the Security Council held on December 18, 1961. Zorin, the Soviet delegate raised objection against the very adoption of the agenda. The situation in territories which are part of
sovereign state cannot under the Charter be a subject for consideration by any UN body, including the Security Council, the Soviet delegate observed. Further, it was stated that 'the present matter is one which falls exclusively within the jurisdiction of India'.

During these years a very substantial amount of economic aid was rendered to India by Soviet Union. Apart from financing and helping the construction of India's pride steel project at Bhilai, the USSR gave farm machinery, agreed to set up a heavy machine building plant, a drugs manufacturing unit, an optical glass manufacturing factory, a plant to manufacture coal mining machines. It also rendered technical and financial aid in oil exploration and production. The total volume of credit extended to India during the course of the two plans, when Soviet aid began to flow in was to the order of Rs.3.8 billion. In comparison with the aid from Western countries and the United States, however, the Soviet aid was not very large, yet, the most beneficial aspect of the existence of the USSR as an alternative source of imports and aid was that it encouraged donors from the advanced capitalist world to extend more aid than they had done hitherto and at more generous terms. "Moreover, it strengthened the bargaining position of the Indian Government in relation to large firms from the
advanced capitalist countries. One aspect of Soviet aid made it one of great symbolic significance for India. It was large compared to the aid rendered by the USSR to China. Some say it was even larger, and it continued to flow in large quantities after India became the target of a Chinese military-political and ideological offensive.

As a matter of fact, as Sino-Indian relations deteriorated sharply by 1958-59, Soviet-Indian relations showed an upward trend. During this period when signs of belligerence were becoming increasingly evident, China for the first time questioned the entire border issue between India and China and in September, the same year, after some border clashes, made a formal claim of 50,000 square miles of territory that India considered to be its own. There was a general feeling of apprehension that the Soviet Union would obviously support communist China against non-communist India. But the Soviet Union, through a Tass statement of 9 September 1959 adopted a line of neutrality, by deploring the Sino-Indian dispute and expressed the hope that it would be settled through peaceful negotiations between the two states. Nehru called the Soviet attitude 'unusual' and 'fair'.

The Soviet adoption of a neutral posture between a fraternal country and a 'bourgeois' government made
evident the fundamental divergence in perception of the two communist countries towards the developing, non-aligned countries of the third world. Where as the flexible Soviet policy towards the non-aligned world had been remarkably successful in establishing viable economic and political links which resulted in disengaging many third world countries from Western imperialist influence— a fundamental Soviet objective — the Chinese leadership showed increasing disappointment with the whole phenomenon of nationalist revolutions in the third world. There was considerable apprehension in China that the non communist national leaders of the developing world would ultimately slide back into the imperialist camp. 'It is out of question for these countries to pass to socialism, not is it possible for them to accomplish in full the tasks of the national democratic revolution.....there may emerge bureaucratic capitalism which gangs up with imperialism and feudalism for after all the bourgeoisie is a bourgeoisie'.

The Soviet Union, however, was by no means willing to give up its advantage with the third world countries to satisfy China, with whom differences had began to surface. Particularly Mao's tantrums were becoming increasingly irritating for Moscow after its refusal to place its nuclear option at the disposal of China. In November 1960 Deng Tsio-Ping, the General Secretary of the Chinese
Communist Party, reportedly stated that the Sino-Soviet dispute actually began with the publication of the Tass statement of 9th September 1959, when Moscow supported Nehru's 'expansionist philosophy of the Indian big bourgeoisie'. This according to Deng revealed to the whole world that there were differences between China and the Soviet Union.

In these years a number of Soviet leaders visited India—Khrushchev, Brezhnev, Kozlev, Voroshilov, Suslov, Kosygin, Furtseva, Gromyko, Mikoyan and Mukhitdinov. Among the Indian leaders who visited the USSR since 1959 were Prime Minister Nehru, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Morarji Desai and Jagjivan Ram. In their joint communique of February 16, 1960, Nehru and Khrushchev said— As between India and the Soviet Union, at no time have their mutual relations rested on a firmer basis of friendship and understanding than now.' Referring to this Khrushchev visit a western expert on Sino-Soviet affairs, G.F. Hudson observed, 'The insult (to China) was symbolised by the fact Khrushchev was in India on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the signing of the Sino-Soviet Treaty. The impression created by the Khrushchev tour was probably the last straw in making Mao lose patience with Khrushchev and embark on a systematic campaign against him.
In keeping with the Kremlin's chosen tool of economic assistance to emerging and key third world countries, the Soviet Union went far beyond the initial 1955 Bhilai offer to India. In September 1959 the Soviet Union signed an agreement with India providing aid for the construction of an oil refinery at Barauni. In the same month, an agreement was signed between the two countries to expand the Bhilai Steel Plant and the Ranchi Heavy Machinery Plant, to build a thermal power station and to construct a nuclear power plant. In June, 1960, Moscow and New Delhi signed an oil agreement which provided for Soviet technical collaboration in the exploitation, development and production of oil and natural gas in India.

However, the outbreak of military hostilities between India and China in October 1962, put the USSR in an unequivocal position. Caught in a difficult situation in Cuba, the Soviet Union at first took a stand that was widely regarded in India as a departure from its earlier policy. On October 25, Pravda editorialised on the issue with a markedly pro-China slant and even signalled the Indian Communists not to identify themselves with the Indian Government's position. This Soviet volte face was indeed the Russian way of cautioning India for its dubious role during the Hungarian crisis, when the
Government of India was reluctant to support Soviet atrocities in the Hungarian capital just as Soviet neutrality through the Tass statement of 1959 had been a reward to India for supporting the Soviet action in the Suez. Nehru, nevertheless, refrained from criticising Moscow, and in fact, went to the extent of stating that he appreciated Soviet difficulties on the question. He said 'But we have had their goodwill all along, even very recently and that is a consolation to us and we certainly have that in the future'.

The end of the Cuban crisis and the constant Chinese harping on Russian revisionism, made the USSR return to its neutral position by 5 November 1962, when an appeal was made to both sides to agree to a cease fire and to discuss the whole question without any preconditions. "The Soviet Union, at this juncture was reluctant to give any significant military assistance to India including the Squadron of MIGS it had promised but it made it obvious to India that Moscow would have no objections to India's seeking assistance from Washington 'provided this would not lead to any military alliance between India and the United States and provided that not much propaganda capital would be made out of it".
With further worsening of the Sino Soviet dispute, Moscow renounced its position of neutrality, and began openly to criticize China for her attitude towards India. Later at the Italian Communist party Congress of December 1962, the Soviet delegate F.Koslev, criticized China's India policy as 'adventurist'. In a series of articles, the Pravda denounced the Chinese aggression against India and the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party condemned the Chinese policy towards India and viewed it as having 'rendered a great service to imperialism and grave harm to the national liberation movement, the progressive forces of India and the entire front of the anti-imperialist struggle'.

It was at this time that the Soviet Union significantly stepped up aid to India, which for all intents laid the infrastructure of the future progress of Indo-Soviet relations. The most important economic agreement was the Soviet accord in January 1965 to construct the Bokaro Steel Plant which the United States had agreed to build but was forced to renounce later due to internal political pressure primarily because it was to be set up in the public sector. More important during this period, however, was the Soviet acceleration of military aid to India. Shedding its earlier inhibition, the Soviet Union sent all types of armed equipment needed
for mountain warfare, agreed to establish factories to manufacture MIG 21 jet fighters, and made available ground to air missiles, light tanks, mobile and fiscal launching installations and radar equipment which could be used on any part of the Indian frontier. The MIG 21 was chosen in preference to western alternatives because the Soviets were willing to make "available for licensed manufacture and also to extend credit for the manufacturing programme." While Lockheed was interested in selling the aircraft to India, the US government, sensitive to Pakistan's worries, refused to allow the firm to transfer technology to India. The significance of the MIG deal lies in the fact that the Soviets had refused the MIG 21 to the Chinese but were willing to license production in India.

The MIG deal with the Soviet Union was not without its usual pulls and pressures from the West and United States. The U.S. Secretary of State Dean Rusk was closely following India's proposal to buy Soviet MIGS. The British government too, advised India against the MIG deal for, they were deeply convinced over the fact that ground secrets of British war planes already supplied to India, might easily be passed on to the Soviet defence experts. Prime Minister Harold Mac Millan sent Secretary of State for committee Affairs, Duncan Sandays to explain to Nehru, Britain's misgivings regarding the MIG deal. Earlier,
already in March 1956, Mountbatten, the First Sea Lord in the British Navy, arrived in India on an official visit as head of the British Navy. In his private talks Mountbatten strongly advised Nehru against getting arms from Soviet Union. Nehru listened to him but made no comments. He made Government of India's position clear in a speech to the Lok Sabha on May 30, 1957. The Government of India he said, must be free to buy arms it needs, from the best sources available, thus keeping the options open. In fact no request for military supply of any kind was made to Soviet Union until 1961. By then the dispute with China had taken serious turn and there was considerable anxiety about the security of India's northern borders. Indian armed forces were in need of helicopters and planes which could operate on the Himalayan heights and the Soviet Union was the only possible source of supply. All the pulls and pressures exercised on Nehru were apparently aimed at retaining Indian's military dependence on the West. Though initially hesitant, but bowing to pressure exerted particularly by Defence Minister Krishna Menon, Nehru finally decided to go in for the MIGs supplied by Russia. The decision was hailed as pragmatic and one of 'utmost sophistication' by Nehru in the domain of foreign policy and military matters. It goes to Nehru's lasting credit that he brought Soviet Russia to India's side when
it could have become India's enemy on the North. By doing so, he shaped a fundamental diplomatic alignment which served Indian Security interests vis-a-vis Pakistan and the United States, which helped India engage two communist powers on its north and aided India in establishing an international presence by diplomatic means despite India's economic and military weakness.

After the Sino-Indian war, India accepted military aid from any country that was prepared to offer it. The military aid promised by the United States in May 1964 was cancelled after the outbreak of the Indo-Pak war of 1965. In the circumstances the Soviet Union was the only alternative India could turn to and the Soviet Union's own quarrel with China, made it more than willing to provide military and economic aid to India on very favourable terms. Perhaps the most outstanding fact of the MIG deal was the fact that India was one of the few countries outside the Warsaw Pact which was allowed to purchase Soviet Military know how. As the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute Yearbook of 1983 points out western arms manufactures are increasingly licensing their production to Third World countries, but the Soviet Union is not 'It had been expected when the Indian MIG 21 programme began, that this would start a new trend. This has not been the case: the Indian example
remains one of handful of exceptions to the rule. By May, 1964, the total military aid emanating from Moscow had clearly overtaken the aid given by the United States during the same period. In September, 1964, India was promised another 140 million dollars under which the Russians agreed to supply 44 MIG 21S, 50 ground to air missiles, 70 light tanks, 6 submarines and an assortment of various infantry weapons, and to finance this the Soviet Union provided a ten year loan at 2 percent.

Of major consequence to the Indian economy was the flexible Soviet attitude over the issue of repayment of Soviet credit. The repayment of Soviet (and East European) developmental and defence credits in the form of Indian exports, reduced the burden of repayment. For India, faced with foreign exchange constraints, the advantage of tying aid with trade was obvious. The automatic conversion of aid repayment into trade flows reduced the burden of debt servicing as long as India's export prices to the Soviet Union and East Europe, remained comparable to prices obtained from the rest of the world. In fact, but for the very rapid growth of exports to the USSR and East Europe from the mid fifties through the sixties, India's export growth would have been even lower. It could be argued that the availability of an easier outlet in East Europe through bilateral trade
agreements may have reduced the pressure on Indian exporters to sell in hard currency markets. The other striking and from Indian viewpoint the more important fact about India's exports in the sixties was the shift in their market distribution. The United Kingdom lost her traditional position as the largest market of Indian exports, an increasing proportion of which went to the USSR, eastern Europe and Japan. From the Soviet point of view, however, the tying of aid and trade was not a special concession to India alone but one which became a general practice in Soviet economic relations with the less developed countries.

Of interest at this point was the American concurrence with Soviet aid to India to the extent of welcoming it in the interest of the United States. Averall Harriman in a TV interview on December 9, 1962, welcomed the Soviet assistance to India by saying that 'it is in the interest in the United States and the further complication in Sino-Soviet relations consequent to this aid, would be of great interest to watch.' For Soviet Union, however, it was an emphatic reiteration of Kremlin's policy of influencing key third world countries through its chosen tool of economic and military assistance. The Indian and Egyptian aid offers proved typical of the Khrushchev era economic assistance programmes. Both were large scale 'showy projects' in the
public sector and both Bokaro and Aswan came on the heels of political and economic disputes with Western countries. New Delhi chose Soviet plans for Bokaro after an earlier U.S. offer was rejected. The Soviets offered a scaled down version which included the use of tools from a Czech, financed local company. In this way the Soviets could claim that two native industries would be built simultaneously and moreover that India would not be dependent on imported equipment.

Nehru bequeathed his successors the legacy of a deep bond of friendship between India and the Soviet Union. The new Indian leadership under Lal Bahadur Shastri showed the same inclination of perpetuating close Indo-Soviet relations. But, the outbreak of the second Indo-Pakistan war in September, 1965, put the Soviet Union in an awkward position for by this time a rethinking in the Soviet South Asian policy was in the offing. The Soviet Union had declared its intentions that Moscow's relations with Pakistan proceeded from the assumption that her good neighbourly relations with that country would not weaken her friendship with third countries. For the Soviet Union, relations, between it and Pakistan were a part of the Soviet general policy towards ensuring peace in Asia and the World. In the Indo-Pak war, the new Brezhnev team saw not only revised prospects of another Sino-Indian war but also the embarrassing possibility of
having to take sides between India and Pakistan. For Soviet Union, however, India was more important of the two countries as it was an useful adjunct in the Sino-Soviet conflict and more importantly, it was in receipt of Soviet military and economic aid. Though the USSR had good reasons for not offending India, it could by no means allow Pakistan to gravitate into the Chinese orbit. For the Soviet Union there indeed seemed to be a fair chance to finally wean away Pakistan from the imperialist camp since Islamabad showed considerable disenchantment with Washington. Pakistan had accepted SEATO and Washington's general alliance system, but when it came to the crunch in Kashmir, the Americans failed to give Pakistan the support which it supposed itself to have bought and paid for. Hence, the Soviet Union, using its restraining influence, sought to mediate between the two by inviting India and Pakistan to a conference with the Soviet Premier Kosygin at the Uzbek capital of Tashkent. In the Soviet perception the success of Russian diplomacy would lie in detaching Pakistan from the American and Chinese camps, without offending Indian sensitivities. The Tashkent meeting was indeed designed to project the USSR in the role of peacemaker and to clear the complex channels of Russian diplomacy in Asia. The Conference did well to boost Russian prestige, but produced no answer to the basic problem of Kashmir. Kosygin practically pressurized
the Indian Prime Minister to give up the strategic gains in Kashmir and to consider the idea of a plebiscite there, which Shastri repeatedly said he would never concede.\textsuperscript{151}

Later studies have revealed that Soviet mediation in Tashkent was primarily aimed at saving Pakistan from being overwhelmed by India. Despite the show of camaraderie, the Soviet Union, like Britain earlier, had no intention of creating a powerful South Asian neighbour. All that Moscow wanted was a balance of power between India and Pakistan and even a certain degree of instability between the two was welcome to Moscow for in that event it could benefit from the situation. Moscow was willing to provide aid to India in its fight against China or even against a coalition of Pakistan, China and the United States, but when the danger arose of Indian, military domination over Pakistan in 1965, Moscow intervened diplomatically against India to ensure the continuity of its balance of power diplomacy in this region and in this effort of Moscow it was warmly encouraged by Great Britain and United States. Nevertheless, for a brief period the Tashkent spirit was hailed as one of friendship, amity and goodwill and Soviet preponderance in South Asia was at least temporarily accepted.
Though Khrushchev was ousted, his successors shared the basic objectives of his strategy in the third world and only gradually brought about a new approach through a shift in tactics and the adoption of a more cautious and pragmatic style. The doctrinal assessment of third world regimes did not change overnight. In August 1965 Pravda reaffirmed the Khrushchev view that 'Communists and the working class would continue to give support to all progressive social forces that were sincerely striving to build socialism and that it would be sectarian to reject co-operation with adherents of non Marxist socialism. An article appearing in Kommunist at the beginning of 1966 written by the deputy chief of the Central Committee's International Department, reasserted the possibility of a gradual transition from the 'general democratic' to the socialist stage of revolution, beginning without a national proletarian dictatorship or even an organised Marxist-Leninist Party. But the article stressed that as the struggle developed further, some 'vanguard party would have to be created. Finally, the Central Committee's May Day and October Anniversary slogans continued to characterize several third world regimes as 'national democracies' said to be fighting for 'socialist development' or building 'people's democratic states.

But with Khrushchev's ouster from the Kremlin, the warmth and cordiality witnessed in Indo-Soviet relations
ebbed considerably. The new Brezhnev Kosygin team in
Moscow besides seriously exploring possibilities of
improving ties with China also aimed at putting Pakistan
at par with India, so as to maintain a balanced grip over
the South Asian region. Khrushchev's policy of spreading
Soviet influence through over committed support to one
side in a conflict, which had the inherent risk of
permanently alienating the other side was replaced by a
more cautious and even handed policy.

The Brezhnev leadership, though, showed no specific
disinclination to continue friendly relations with India,
in the changed circumstances the continuance of the status
quo seemed disadvantageous to Moscow. The structure of
Indo-Soviet relationship based on a sharing of common
enmity with China did not find favour with the new
leadership, which during its early phase made serious
efforts at befriending China. One of the charges the
Brezhnev team levelled against Khrushchev was his
unrestricted commitment of India after the Sino-Indian
conflict without looking at the long term consequences
of such a policy of antagonising a large fraternal power.
Indeed, apprehensions of change in the Soviet attitude had
been worrying India since Brezhnev took over as the Chief
of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, for China not
only tried to placate Brezhnev by congratulating him on the
assumption of the high office, but also stopped condemning Russia. Even though Ambassador T.N. Kaul was assured of perpetual Soviet friendship—Pravada, editorially stressed on 'friendship with India as an object of care with the Soviet Union'\textsuperscript{154}, there were enough signs to indicate that Moscow intended a steady improvement of relations with China. As if to make amends for past mistakes, upon Soviet invitation Chou Enlai visited Moscow to attend the forty seventh anniversary of the October Revolution and it appeared that the Sino-Soviet relations were on the way to normalisation again. Greetings were exchanged on the occasion of the fifteenth anniversary of the Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, Alliance and Mutual Aid. On the pretext of visiting North Korea and North Vietnam, Kosygin visited Peking twice the same month. Rather sooner than later, however, Moscow realised that the issue dividing the two countries were sharper than which united them and Kosygin commented after his visit to China that the 'difficulties and differences that have arisen in the international communist movement cannot be solved at once'\textsuperscript{155}. With Brezhnev's fraternal feelings for China turning sour, the new team reconciled to the existence of a hostile China and diverted attention to the strategically significant South Asian region where a stable, lasting relationship could be cultivated, with a long term policy planning
against China and the West. China remained the main security threat for Brezhnev just as the capitalist West was the chief enemy of Stalin and Khrushchev.

As long as Khrushchev perceived India to be a major third world non-aligned country, the Kremlin drew closer to India on vital political issues like Kashmir and Khrushchev never stopped pleading for a great power status for India in the comity of nations. But the Brezhnev Kosygin team apparently sensing a decline in the importance of the third world countries in general and of India in particular in world affairs, emphasized more on the growth of detente with the USA and the West. Soviet Union under the new dispensation was more conscious of its super power status and hence was not inclined to offer a favoured treatment to India in particular. The decisions of the Twenty-Third congress of the C.P.S.U. held in March 1966 was highly critical on the internal situation in India under the Congress rule and thus, sought to diversify Soviet interests from India to its hostile neighbour Pakistan. The overall change in the Soviet attitude towards India in the post Khrushchev period did help ease the movement of Soviet policy towards Pakistan and facilitated the adoption of an even handed posture between the two neighbours.
The basis of Soviet optimism for wooing Pakistan, during this period was the disenchantment of that country with western alliances sponsored by the United States. America's none too effective role during the Indo-Pak war of 1965 brought about a rethinking in Pakistan as regards the future prospects of this relationship. Besides, the American and British rendering of military aid to India during and in the immediate aftermath of the Sino-Indian war of 1962 in the name of helping a democratic country against an increasingly Communist China, was a grave cause for concern in Pakistan. Though Khrushchev had approved American military aid to India, the Brezhnev team viewed it with suspicion. What seems to be working upon the new leadership in Moscow at this juncture was that the influencer-influenced relationships could not always be applied with certainty to the Soviet Union and the third world countries. Soviet analysts pointed out that bourgeois leaders of the new nations were not always certain bets for, they tended to vacillate between the two systems and they were reluctant to break completely with the capitalist system. With little to choose between the bourgeois leadership of India and the military dictatorship in Pakistan, the Soviet desire to improve relations with the latter seemed congruous to Soviet policy makers. Moscow saw no special advantage in aligning itself too deeply with one country of the South
Asian region while totally ignoring the other. With the ebbing of the cold war in the aftermath of Cuba, Moscow speculated new opportunities did exist for reducing American influence upon treaty states such as Pakistan. In Moscow's perception a more balanced policy could help Pakistan in developing new alliances with Moscow when the former was actually in search of greater maneuverability among major powers. For India, however, this change in Soviet attitude put New Delhi in a difficult situation as by the end of 1965 India had developed a considerable degree of dependence in economic and political matters upon the Soviet Union, particularly after the U.S. decision to place an economic and military embargo on the subcontinent after 1965.

Moscow's neutral stance during the Indo-Pak war and subsequently its non-committal attitude over Kashmir, convinced the Pakistani leadership under Ayub Khan not to look upon Soviet Union as a possible protector of India. Pakistan's desire for improved relations with Moscow were initiated by Ayub's foreign Minister Z.A Bhutto who infused a sense of dynamism into the Pak foreign policy. Relations with the USSR were substantially improved despite Pakistan's more than friendly relations with China. Ayub's enthusiasm for improved Soviet-Pak relations were revealed when he stated that 'we were deprived of the opportunity to understand the Soviet Union
earlier', because of Pakistan's commitment to the United States. President Ayub's first visit to Moscow in April 1965 was an instant success as it was agreed to 'double or treble' the volume of Soviet-Pakistan trade within three years. The Kashmir issue was discussed though the discussion was not incorporated in the communique issued on the occasion. A change in Soviet attitude towards Pakistan was clearly perceptible, as, for the first time Pakistan found mention in a May Day slogan issued that year along with the wish for the growth of 'friendly relations between the Soviet and Pakistan Peoples'. In the changed circumstances India was relegated to a distant position and Pakistan came to acquire a position of respectability and was accorded a position which otherwise would have been India's. The establishment of broad understanding and cooperative relations with the Soviet Union laid the foundation for a new Soviet policy towards Pakistan which was underlined by evenhandedness and impartiality between India and Pakistan. As mentioned earlier this new policy was adequately reflected during the Indo-Pak war of 1965 and during the Tashkant conference hosted by Soviet Union in January 1966. The Soviet Union had clearly overlooked the Pak initiative in Kashmir to provoke hostilities with India. Hafeez Malik observes that this initiative was based on several misguided assumptions. Although the
Tashkent Declaration led to no real settlement and the decline in Indo-Pak hostility was too short lived to be of any consequence, it was nevertheless, obvious, that Moscow sought a stable South Asia where Soviet Policy might influence all states. Clearly taking advantage of the Western and American indifference to happenings in the subcontinent, the Soviet Union demonstrated the expansion of its sphere of influence and Tashkent made it apparent to all. Kosygin's non-partisan approach was guided by the Soviet interest of maintaining influence in both countries and thus keeping them attached to Moscow, rather than alienating the one as did Khrushchev, or both, as did Stalin.

Kosygin's plea to Indian leaders that a shift in Moscow's Pakistan policy would in no way be detrimental to Indo-Soviet relations and that it would act as a catalyst to improve Indo Pak relations, convinced very few in India. The beginnings of this shift, however, could be traced to India's humiliation at the hands of China in the border clash of 1962. New Delhi's weakness compelled Moscow to make a new assessment of its South Asian policy, whereby it was convinced of India being 'too weak a link on which to base Soviet regional interests'.

A fundamental imperative for the Brezhnev-Kosygin team was to wean away Pakistan from the influence of China before
such an influence became too preponderant. Changes in the Soviet policy were subtle but sure and the evidence of such a change was first to be seen in the Kashmir issue. Moscow's support for the Indian position was so diluted that the issue was not even mentioned in the joint communiques published after visits of Indian leaders to the Soviet Union in 1964 and 1965. Besides, Moscow showed great dissatisfaction with the internal problems and developments in India, particularly after the death of Nehru on 1964. The Soviet Union was greatly disappointed with the emergence to a position of leadership within the Congress of the Rightists who could replace the bourgeois democratic character of the Indian Government with a blatantly capitalist one.

However, the Brezhnev-Kosygin team was by no means thinking in terms of terminating India's dependence on the Soviet Union. By a clever manipulation of Soviet relations with Pakistan mainly on political issues, Kosygin deliberately shifted his attention from political to economic tools to sustain India's involvement with Russia. Thus in keeping with the Soviet policy of using economic relations as a political weapon, the Soviet Union continued with its economic aid programme to India. The Soviet show of distance notwithstanding and the old cordiality between the two being less in
though, the Soviet Union still remained India's major trade partner and the single most important supplier of defence equipment. During the period about 33 per cent of India's total foreign trade was with the East European countries, out of which 17 per cent went to Soviet Union. The Soviet Union stood third among India's foreign trade partners and became a major importer of her engineering and processed goods as about 40 per cent of India's exports to Russia consisted of such goods and these were the main expendable commodities in India's growing foreign trade, as her traditional trade items tea, jute, goods, spices, textiles had almost reached a saturation point on account of the slackness of demand and tough competition in the western market.

Since a large chunk of east European countries' foreign trade was with the intra-bloc countries, the socialist countries were comparatively in a better position to influence the politics of developing countries whose dependence upon the former was increasing without involving their own dependence upon the latter. Though the Soviet Union's share in India's total foreign trade was about 17 per cent during those days. Russia's transaction with India was not even 3 per cent of her global turnover and it was unlikely that any amount of growth of Indo-Soviet trade would create a sort of
dependence of the Soviet economy on its turnover with India, looking at the fast growth of Soviet foreign trade and its major intra-bloc transactions. Hence the Soviet leaders were in a better position to use the economic tool to influence the policies of developing countries like India. The further growth of Indo-Soviet trade was what seemed to have comforted Kosygin in his relations with India at a time when he had no support to offer for Kashmir.

Economic aid was supplemented with military aid which played a significant role in maintaining Soviet presence in the Indian subcontinent. The fact that the Soviet Union was prepared to transfer defence technology was largely a reflection of its geopolitical necessities which prevented the steam in Indo-Soviet relations from flowing out when China was turning increasingly hostile. From the Indian point of view, the Soviet connection was of great significance since the difference between American and Indian perceptions of global issues precluded a stable or a reliable military relationship with the United States. According to the SIPRI Year Book of 1971, between 1965 and 1969, 80% of all defence equipment imports came from the USSR. During the early 1960s, the Soviet Union had been one of the most important sources for getting weapons, but after 1965, USSR turned out to be
the only source for weapons since the West and the United States had placed an embargo on shipping arms to the subcontinent. With the Soviet policy of treating both India and Pakistan alike in political and economic matters Kosygin tried to maintain the Soviet presence in both countries, by supplying weapons to both, rather than stopping military aid to them. In any case, Moscow could under no circumstance have curtailed military aid to India for that would have only weakened Indian defence preparedness against the Chinese. The Soviets tried to work upon this policy with the impression that since both India and Pakistan had very little options under the circumstances, they would gradually adjust themselves to the Soviet posture. It is important to note, however, that Soviet feelers to Pakistan were made only after the initial Brezhnev overtures to China proved sterile. The failure of the sino-Soviet talks, however, turned out to be a boon for India, since Soviet arms supplies to India became a matter of principle of the Soviet foreign policy.

Shortly after the Indo-Pak war of 1965, Moscow supplied India with T-55 medium tanks, S-7 fighter bombers, 100mm artillery, and mobile radar sets. In 1967, India was able to obtain about 500 Soviet and Czech tanks. Later, an agreement was concluded for the delivery of some 100 fighter bombers for the Indian Air Force. As per the figures in Military Balance, 1969-70, published by
the Institute for Strategic Studies, London, the military hardware supplied to India by the Soviet Union included 450 T-54 and T-55 tanks, 150 PT-76 light tanks, 140 guns of 130mm, 2F class submarines, one destroyer, 120 MIG 21 interceptors, 24IL 14, 32 AN 12 transport planes, 109 Ml 4 helicopters, 140 SU-7B fighter bombers and 50 surface-to-air-missiles. These defence supplies, however, did not come to India as aid, but on payment which was made on a long term instalment basis and adjusted against the trade account of the two countries maintained in rupees.

Thus, the progress of Indo-Soviet relations during the early Brezhnev years though not quite upto Indian expectations, the Soviet Union still remained India's chief economic and military benefactor. The need was reciprocal. For the USSR, Indian defence preparedness was most essential for keeping China at a distance and for India, the Soviet Union turned out to be its most vital security guarantor.

India's response to the shift in the Soviet attitude was cautious and restrained. Both, Lal Bahadur Shastri and M/s Indira Gandhi, after him, tried to retain the friendship with a minimum degree of damage rather than go away with the friendship altogether. As a matter of fact India's manoeuvring capacity during 1965 and early 1966 was so limited that India could hardly have contemplated
giving up its close relationship with Soviet Union. Internally, the situation was marked by food shortages, regional autonomy movements, communalist tensions and a generally growing instability and social discontent. Externally, the situation was made worse by the attitude of the United States.

In the early part of 1966, Mrs. Gandhi's priority lay in preventing India from being isolated in the regional as well as in the global sphere. Her first official visit as Prime Minister, consequently, was to the United States. An effort was made to impress upon the United States that India was not engaged in any moral or ideological crusade against capitalism. Besides, India was not opposed to NATO, 'on which Soviet fear and anger were concentrated', but took exception to only those American moves which impinged on India's national interest. India took strong exception to both CENTO and SEATO, both of which included Pakistan to India's anger. Mrs. Gandhi sincerely believed there was a possibility of a 'good working partnership between India and the U.S.' The prevailing circumstances in 1966 convinced Mrs. Gandhi that U.S. was the 'initial and continuing object of her approach to foreign affairs'. Indeed, her policy towards U.S. was consistent with India's policy of non-alignment which demanded friendly relations with both
U.S. and Soviet Union. Besides, another fundamental factor which provided an 'incentive to Mrs. Gandhi's initial overtures to United States, was an overwhelming demand by the Indian public opinion. The Chambers of Commerce acted as a pressure group and maintained a persistent pro-American lobby, emphasizing upon the advantages of private enterprise. 'Practically every educated or wealthy family in India had one or more members resident in America with vested interests in good relations with that country. A turn for the better in Indo U.S. relations was expected in March 1966, when President Johnson evinced a keen personal interest in Mrs. Gandhi and remarked 'I really want to give her the best visit ever.' The Johnson administration's sympathy for Mrs. Gandhi's Government was made apparent by its response to the Indian food crisis of 1965-66, which was indeed commendable. A massive transfer of food grains to India was authorised—eight million tons in 1965-66 and six million tons in 1966-67—sometimes at the rate of two ships a day. The unloading and distribution procedures in India were so rapid that Chester Bowles called it 'ship to mouth operation.' But for all its humanitarian commitment to India's food problem, the Johnson administration insisted upon and committed India to making concessions to Pakistan on Kashmir to internal economic reforms, and reassurance that 'it would deal more
forthrightly with the evidence of North Vietnames aggression, 'and would refrain from publicly criticising U.S. policies in South East Asia.' Mrs. Gandhi bowed to the World Bank pressure to devalue the rupee in June 1966 and she had to shift her emphasis from industry to agriculture, which resulted in granting major concessions to the United States on fertilisers. This was in clear violation of the 1956 Industrial Policy Resolution of liberalising of the licensing procedure and this led to the resignation of the Finance Minister T.T. Krishnamachari in early 1966. For a brief period, too, Mrs. Gandhi did modify her views on Vietnam and tried to appease U.S. by being more restrained in her criticism of the bombing raids on Hanoi. Parliamentary and press criticism of Mrs. Gandhi's 'sell out' to 'western pressures' was 'understandably harsh, particularly when liberalisation of imports and devaluing the rupee failed to stimulate the Indian economy and foreign exchange credits were not forthcoming. President Johnson, however, was unconvinced that India was exerting itself to the maximum to create a favourable climate for investment or making sincere efforts at overhauling its pro-public sector economic policies. Throughout 1967, the President maintained his pressure on India by delaying foodgrain shipments to India. Later he was suspected of retaliating against Mrs. Gandhi's refusal to support his
policies in Vietnam. Soon therefore, the Indian government awoke from its 'dithering' attitude and declared its unequivocal aversion to the insensitivity of the U.S. to the horrors of the bombing raids on Vietnam. Ho Chi Minh was undisputedly accepted in India as a nationalist leader of a united Vietnam. In Mrs. Gandhi's opinion a united Vietnam, communist or otherwise, rather than a divided war devastated country would be a more effective counter weight to Chinese power in Asia. She firmly rejected American military presence in Vietnam on the ground that problems in south East Asia were essentially political and economic and no amount of military force could solve them.

Consecutive U.S. administrations under both Johnson and Nixon were exasperated with India's views and United States never forgave Mrs. Gandhi for signing a communique later in Moscow in July 1966, which made reference to 'imperialists in South east Asia'. The brief upswing in Indo-U.S. relations were, thus, overtaken by events in Vietnam and Johnson's involvement in that hapless country precluded any interest in India. Furthermore, Washington rightly gauged that India's need of the U.S. in 1966 was greater than its own need for India's friendship and accordingly reduced its efforts to cultivate India.
For India, Mrs. Gandhi's visit to Washington gave clear signals to both super powers of her conviction to pursue foreign affairs in a manner that suited India's interest best. Extending a hand of friendship to Washington was an indication to Moscow of the flexibility inherent in India's approach to foreign policy. But a fundamental difference in the attitudes of the respective leaderships in Washington and Moscow, did weigh heavily on Mrs. Gandhi. She had imbibed from her father the trait of not accepting a position of subordination either in personal or public life — 'her pride was often hurt for she felt she was not offered equality by both President Johnson and his successor President Nixon.' Her later visit to the Soviet capital demonstrated the extra gracious ways of the Russian leadership in their treatment of Mrs. Gandhi—the entire CPSU politburo was present at the banquet in her honour.

Mrs. Gandhi's official visit to Moscow had become imperative after her tour of Washington, London, and Paris. Unlike Nehru's idealistic approach to foreign policy, Mrs. Gandhi from the very beginning showed herself to be a pragmatic follower of realpolitik. Though she never allowed her personal prejudices to colour her perceptions in foreign policy, she was nevertheless impressed with the role the Soviet Union was pursuing in
the world in support of peace, decolonisation and economic justice. People close to Mrs. Gandhi are of the opinion that there was an entirely honest, sincere streak in her personality which was pro-socialist. Being a product of the 1930s she had grown up with the basic, historic picture of a world moving towards equality—a whole aura of socialism was built into her, about that there was no doubt. "Yet, her view of socialism was not doctrinaire and she was well aware of the fact that socialism of the Soviet model was unsuited to Indian conditions. Hence in propagating her views on socialism, she would only go upto a point and not beyond that. In any case, it would be wrong to say that her pro-socialist ideas later, made her 'tilt' towards the Soviet Union. In point of fact, throughout her tenure as Prime Minister, Mrs. Gandhi 'tried' to avoid dependence on Soviet munificence, and looked for other options to newer centres of wealth and influence. Given the nature of India's requirements, and international commitments, she saw no reason to expand bilateral ties into full fledged membership of some sort of socialist commonwealth or to pretend an identity of interests with a superpower. Mrs. Gandhi's western upbringing, in fact, made her much more comfortable with the West. Had Great Britain and France been a bit more flexible in their dealings with India, Mrs. Gandhi would have been more than willing to establish closer ties with
them. An appreciation of the West was actually a condition with almost the whole of India — even the pro-left leaders and many members of the C.P.I. family like Krishna Menon, Nambiar, Kumaramangalam and a host of others had a Western educational background and were in no way allergic to the West. That explains Mrs. Gandhi's policy of keeping her options open and her channels of communication were both receptive and sensitive to Western overtures and criticisms.

Mrs. Gandhi's speech at the Moscow Banquet on 15th July, 1966 was a candid exposition of India's point of view vis-a-vis the Soviet Union and the world at large. She reminded her hosts of the advantages of perpetuating friendship with a country that had chosen the path of socialism, democracy, secularism and non-alignment. Continuing further she declared that though India would continue to be receptive to new ideas, the Indian concept of socialism and democracy was, and must remain an Indian concept with an Indian quality and consistent with Indian traditions, Indian circumstances and Indian aspirations. Elaborating further, she declared that in India's march towards socialism, it did not wish to be prisoners of dogma. "We repudiate the 'dogmatists abroad and in our own country': Such observations were obviously aimed at Soviet Union to remind it of the futility of the idea of
converting India into a dogmatic socialistic state. Simultaneously, however, she made a dig at the other super power without mentioning it, though, when she said 'the reactionary forces are struggling to retain their position, we do not underestimate their strength. However, this is a lost cause and the sharpness of their struggle is but a sign of their desperation'. She further emphasized upon the importance India attached to the Five Year Economic Plans which gave a key role to the Public Sector in granting adequate resources for independent growth. In an obvious reference to the pro-Soviet communist Party of India, she remarked that it was a fact that even the so called progressive parties together with others have sometimes abused this freedom and have resorted to strikes and violence which are against national interest. 'Non-alignment' she asserted 'was not a spent force and that it aimed at fostering peaceful co-existence to meet the new challenge of our time. Finally, as a reminder to the Soviet Union of the Chinese threat, she mentioned without naming China, that India regretted the rejection by a major Asian power the pledge of peaceful coexistence while justifying its dogmatic belief in the inevitability of war and the use of aggressive force in the settlement of disputes. Mrs. Gandhi's concluding words were aimed at the growing bonds of Indo-Soviet friendship' which is a bulwark of world
peace, overlooking the recent shift in Moscow's policy of placing Pakistan at par with India. In trying to expand her options and her manoeuvring capacity, Mrs. Gandhi sought to play her China card quite dexterously. Though the Sino-Indian camaraderie of the mid-1950s could not be restored, India sent out as many as twenty feelers to the People's Republic of China — as told by the Chinese to Pakistan — to see if some accommodation could be worked out. Indeed, Mrs. Gandhi of all Indian leaders was the least sensitive about the Chinese and she was quite emphatic during these years that India should have its very best with the Chinese. With Mr. P.N. Haksar's advice she stopped publishing the white papers on China. There were fourteen such white papers and by disallowing any further publication Mrs. Gandhi prevented an opportunity for the 'traditional China baiters in India to stop their annual debates on attacking China and their 'exercises in breast beating'. Normalisation of relations with China apart from eroding the Soviet base in South Asia, could well have led to its virtual isolation. Hence it was in the Soviet interest to see that India was not pushed too hard so as to make room for the Chinese. Mrs. Gandhi was well aware of the fact that from the Soviet point of view, India was crucial for the Soviet presence in South Asia.
and that the Chinese perceived the Soviet 'hegemony' was enhanced in South Asia largely through India. Therefore, there was practically no way the Soviets could have abandoned India. Besides, and more importantly it was India that provided Moscow with entry into the third world councils since the 1950s, apart from the fact that India also served as a useful model for the demonstration of the benefits of Soviet economic assistance. Moscow could but point with pride to the growing technical and industrial sophistication of India, and use Indo-Soviet economic relations as an example of the advantages that could accrue to all third world countries from collaborating with the USSR.

Mrs. Gandhi vehemently resented being dubbed a Soviet surrogate and very much like her father who had once remarked in the Lok Sabhā that, "there are people in America and may be some people here who think I have sold my conscience to the USSR". Mrs. Gandhi too emphasised that Indo-Soviet relations were complementary in many respects and nothing more should be read into it. Mr. Madhu Limaye, a leader of the opposition says 'I do not believe at all that Indira Gandhi was a surrogate of the Soviet Union. She had quite independent views and just as India was useful to the Soviet Union, the Soviet Union too was useful to India. The projection of a progressive,
radical image were essential primarily to boost her own as well as her party's electoral prospects and had nothing to do with India's relations with the Soviet Union. In fact, ideology or rather 'Socialism' had virtually no role in, the formulation of India's Soviet policy during Mrs. Gandhi's tenure as Prime Minister. Any 'tilt' if ever there was in her Soviet policy were essentially dictated by political expediency. Otherwise to speak of a pro-Soviet slant in Mrs. Gandhi's Soviet policy would be misleading. Mr. Limaye says 'there was no tilt in her Soviet policy'\textsuperscript{189} and later events did speak for themselves. There were large areas of divergence between India and the USSR and on several occasions India steadfastly adhered to its own views without in any way showing signs of being influenced by the Soviet Union. India's Soviet connection was primarily reflected in its economic and military spheres and Mrs. Gandhi's political acumen contrived to confine the relation to those areas only. But even in these spheres, there were instances when India sincerely sought to diversify its economic prospects and military requirements without depending exclusively on Soviet support.