Nehru was the generational bridge between the pre and post independence periods of Indian history. He was at the helm of foreign affairs during his Prime Ministership and attained for India an important stature in world affairs. He developed India's foreign policy to match the requirements of the situation. Some of the basics of Indian foreign policy were laid during the struggle for freedom which Nehru had always viewed as a part of the mighty world drama of the great struggle of political and economic forces that was going on everywhere, nationally and internationally. India took interest in the freedom movements of all subject peoples and stood for peace and liquidation of colonialism in any form. The urge for freedom in the pre-independence years further strengthened Nehru's belief in freedom for all. He articulated his foreign policy on the basis of the spirit of national liberation, opposition to racial arrogance and discrimination which required peace and maximum flow of foreign technology and capital for economic development, and related all these to the national interests. Nehru based his foreign policy on Indian nationalism because the goal of the policy was to safeguard and stabilise her freedom.

He evolved India's foreign policy at a time when inter-bloc rivalry and cold war had just begun to dominate
international politics. Having been a witness to the devastation during the World War II Nehru was keen to emphasise world peace, specially in the background of nuclear weapons. A keen observer of world situation he was quick to grasp the implications of the efforts of the superpowers to divide the world into two rival camps. Non-alignment was the solution to the cold war.

The communists on the other hand had a different world view. Their perception and conception of India's foreign policy was based on Marxist - Leninist principles as interpreted by international communist movement. Their partiality to the socialist bloc and hostility to the western bloc was a natural outcome of their ideology. They wanted India to shun the latter and patronise the former. Initially when Nehru patronised the western bloc and kept away from the socialist bloc, they criticised him. But when he patronised and drew closer to the socialist bloc, they supported him. There is thus both convergence and divergence on foreign policy issues between Nehru and the Indian Communists. This chapter analyses some foreign policy issues that highlight these points, like India's relationship with the Commonwealth, the U.S. aid to India and Anglo-French invasion of Egypt. Indo-Soviet relations are dealt with specifically in the context of Korean and Hungarian crises. We will also refer to the Sino-Indian relations specially the border war between India and China.

Foreign policy apart from its theoretical formulations and lofty principles on which it is based is ultimately geared
to protect national interests. India's interests were supreme in Nehru's mind though he based India's foreign policy on high sounding principles and moral philosophy. He was equally aware of the fact that in the ultimate analysis foreign policy must serve country's national interests. As he pointed out:

> Whatever policy we may lay down the art of conducting the foreign affairs of a country lies in finding out what is most advantageous to the country. We may talk about international goodwill and mean what we say. We may talk about peace and freedom and earnestly mean what we say. But in the ultimate analysis a government functions for the good of the country it governs and no government dare do anything which in the short or long run is manifestly to the disadvantage of that country.¹

He considered each question first in terms of India's interests and then on its merits. He emphasised, that 'in the long run it was to the great advantage of India to try to attract the sympathy and the hope of millions of people in the world without offending others.'²

Nehru proclaimed the promotion of world peace, freedom of all nations, racial equality and ending of imperialism and colonialism as the basic principles of India's foreign policy. He did not claim a privileged position over others for India to attain a rightful place in world affairs but insisted on equal and honourable treatment, without carrying a trail of


hostility and without disadvantage to any other country. Nehru decided to develop close and direct contacts with all nations in furtherance of the basic objectives. In this regard he expressed his hope to have friendly relations particularly with England, countries of the Commonwealth, the USA and the Soviet Union and followed with interest the freedom struggle in China and Indonesia.³

He evolved the policy of non-alignment to avoid entanglement in military or similar alliances which, according to him, divided the world into rival groups and endangered peace. To him contribution to world peace was not through alignment but through independent approach to each disputed issue. He emphasised that India was aligned for peaceful purposes against imperialism. This, however, was not to mean neutrality because he realised that India may have to defend herself against aggression and neutrality was not possible when freedom was in danger. He clearly stated:

I am not thinking in term of blocs. It does not interest me very much. I am thinking in terms of what my policy is to be on a specific subject... I am on my side and on nobody else's side, I am on my country's side and nobody else's side.⁴

In his efforts to preserve peace he emphasised those conditions which were essential for peace. As he pointed out Indian foreign policy was one of keeping aloof from the rival


power blocs of nations. And being friendly to all countries he reiterated his stand against joining power blocs and rejected the idea of joining either the communist or the non-communist camps. He was keen to be friendly to all nations in such a way so as to retain India's individuality as a nation holding to its own ideals. He emphasised that India was neither communist nor anti-communist but relied on herself.

The Communist Party of India being a part of the Comintern and as the most organised section of the proletariat in India formulated its policies and programmes with regard to Indian foreign policy in conformity with the grand design of world Communism. While firmly adhering to the Marxist-Leninist principles it aimed at building up Socialism and Communism in India. The party claimed to strive for world peace against imperialism and for freedom, equality and prosperity. It contended that foreign policy in its final analysis was a projection of internal policy and reflected the interests of the classes that controlled the government and the State. It was pointed out that the capacity of a country to pursue its foreign policy in a progressive direction depended on the strength of its economy, the condition of the masses and the extent of the mass support that the government enjoyed. 

In the communist approach to international politics the

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world is divided into two rival camps, namely, the imperialist anti-democratic camp led by America, Britain and France and the anti-imperialist democratic camp composed of the Soviet Union, China, East European democracies and the fighting people all over the world struggling for their national independence. Since peace camp alone could lead towards freedom, equality and prosperity, imperialism was the most dangerous enemy of human freedom and civilization, having war-like designs to strengthen its imperialist aims for world domination. In such a formulation the Soviet Union and China were the only permanent defenders and protectors of peace and progress. In this context the liberation and emergence of China as a great power and the influence of the Soviet Union as a strong and peaceful power form the important and significant factors in the formulation of foreign policy.

With this understanding of foreign policy the communists consistently and repeatedly demanded the severance of all links with the Anglo-American bloc and advocated the establishment of close economic, political and cultural relations with the socialist camp. They believed that by friendly and co-operative relations with socialist countries and by her adherence to the policy of peace and anti-colonialism,

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6 A. Zhdanov, Secretary, CPSU speaking on the international situation at the Information Conference of the representatives of a number of communist parties held in Poland at the end of Sept. 1947, propounded the two camp theory. For the text see People's Age, Jan. 25, 1948, vol. VI (30), pp. 7-10.
India could preserve its independence.

Broadly, the attitude of the Indian Communists towards the foreign policy was determined by their ideological formulations, their adherence to Marxist-Leninist principles in the building of Socialism and Communism, their allegiance to the international communism and their characterisation of Nehru and his government. Within this framework they evolved their attitude and emphasised on the necessity to correctly assess Nehru's foreign policy in relation to Britain and the USA. Their assessment conditioned their attitude towards all specific manifestations of Nehru's policy. The communists declared that they would assess each issue on its merits and the fundamental basis of their approach was to combat imperialism. In their tactical moves they supported those specific acts of the government, which in their view, hampered the plans of the 'war mongers' and went in favour of Beijing and Moscow.

With their bitter anti-US attitude the communists mobilised mass opinion against the USA as the worst type of imperialist power. Since the USA was a challenge to their basic principles, every manifestation of Nehru's friendly approach was interpreted as an indication of his open subservience to the Anglo-American imperialists and vested interests. They looked upon his foreign policy with contempt and suspicion and criticised his

leadership as fascist, imperialist, anti-national and anti-democratic. It was contended that India's neo-colonial status was due to the link with the Anglo-American bloc and in regard to international affairs Nehru had 'yoked India to the chariot wheel of the Anglo-American imperialist machine.'

Obviously independent foreign policy or non-alignment as the basic pillar of Nehru's policy was not acceptable to the communists. They believed that one could not be a friend of both the aggressor and the aggressed. In the struggle between the forces of imperialism and forces of democracy they saw no possibility of neutrality. They argued that Nehru's policy rejected the struggle against imperialism and cooperation with democratic socialist nations. In their view independent foreign policy could be pursued only in alliance with the 'camp of peace and socialism, the freedom loving anti-imperialist countries of the world in opposition to the aggressive plans of the USA and other imperialists.' The communists strongly underlined India's strong cultural ties and friendly relations with the Soviet Union and China. They denied that they wanted India to join any bloc but intended to support every step that India would take in resisting American and British pressure and which strengthened Asia's Solidarity and India's freedom. Nehru's refusal to align with any particular bloc of nations was denounced as a mask to cover collaboration with 'Anglo-American imperialists.' They

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alleged that the government carried on a suspicious play between the two camps and flirted with the USA, facilitating the struggle of the aggressors against peace loving countries. It was their view that Nehru was playing between the peace loving countries and the war bloc.\(^9\)

In this context it is interesting to note that the Americans had similar misgivings about India's non-alignment. Kissinger saw psychological chaos behind Nehru's anti-colonialism and added, "Nehru and the non-aligned leaders were tempted to play a leading role in international affairs which was a fertile field of manipulation for ambitious men because of their intractable domestic problem."\(^{10}\) Like the Communists the Americans too felt that in the crucial struggle against the spread of communism and in defence of democracy, no truly democratic country could be non-aligned. It was an international sin. Criticising non-alignment, while Dulles called it 'immoral,' Henry Kissinger dubbed it as 'neutralism.'\(^{11}\) America thus felt that India was aligned with the Soviet Union since it was not aligned with her.

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Criticising Nehru's policy towards the Anglo-American bloc the Communists insisted that the struggle had to be carried out against America for peace and the British for freedom. They intended to convert India's neutralism into an anti-western sentiment in order to promote friendly relations between India and the communist states.

The above initial communist assessment of Nehru's foreign policy seems hasty in view of the steps taken to improve relations with the communist countries. As a matter of fact it was not Nehru but Stalin and Mao who had reservations about Nehru's attitude towards the socialist countries. After the initial coolness, however, they responded to Nehru's efforts to improve relations with the socialist countries. As a result the communists reassessed Nehru's policy. They supported his firm and forthright stand on the steps necessary to ensure world peace. These steps included the recognition of China, Indian vote against the American proposal to denounce People's Republic of China in the U.N. and Nehru's proposal for the promotion of world peace by co-operation with the Soviet Union.

The Communists declared that Nehru was not a 'lackey of imperialism,' after all, and they felt it necessary to encourage

12 The dominant group led by Dange, Ghosh and Namboodripad regarded America as the chief violator of international peace but asserted that British imperialism being the exploiter of Indian economy should be fought immediately. The other group led by Rajeshwar Rao championed the view that British imperialism was the main enemy of national progress and American imperialism of freedom and peace. See Communist Conspiracy at Madurai (Bombay: The Democratic Service, 1954), p. 12.
rather than unmask his 'neutralist' policy. Nehru's role could not for long be dismissed as playing second fiddle to imperialism and not for long could the communists give far fetched explanations for his motivations. They supported all those specific acts of the government that favoured the Soviet Union and China against the Anglo-American bloc. It was on the plea of fighting the American threat that the communists evolved the policy of lining up behind Nehru's government because they considered the United States to be the enemy of peace and freedom.

Many other steps like the diplomatic visits of the leaders of the Soviet Union and China also aroused their enthusiastic support because these strengthened India's relations with communist bloc. The Afro-Asian Bandung Conference, April 1955, and India's developing relations with Soviet Union were considered as striking developments in regard to Nehru's peace efforts and were supported without any conditions. They declared that Nehru's personal role in initiating the progressive shift in foreign policy imparted to it a pronounced democratic and anti-imperialist character, and gave Asia's unity a content.

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The change in communist attitude towards Nehru was not unanimous. There were differences within the party. While certain policies were supported without any 'ifs' and 'buts' other aspects were opposed. To P. Sundarayya, Nehru's foreign policy was still a pale reflection of Anglo-American imperialists. To others like Hiren Mukherjee India possessed a moral initiative in world affairs and Nehru exercised it with positive courage. Dange went so far as to announce conditional support to Nehru's neutrality. Ajoy Ghosh after his return from Moscow in December, 1954, outlined the strategy of supporting the peaceful aspects of Nehru's policy. He made the party position more explicit by saying that 'while the foreign policy suits the interests of the masses the internal policy does not.'

Nehru was not unmindful of the shifts in the communist attitude. Earlier they had defined India as a stooge or puppet of the British and denied for several years that India was independent. India was seen as helping America for a global war. Nehru condemned them for their extra-territorial loyalty. He was convinced that communists had begun to appreciate aspects of his foreign policy because of the Soviet influence:


The appreciation of Indian foreign policy (by the U.S.S.R.) put the communists in a dilemma because the Soviet World which they claimed to represent took a different slogan about India and her foreign policy.  

Nehru's appreciation of the Soviet Union, emphasis on the relations with China, coupled with his attack on the Indian Communists surprised them. The basic distinction between the Indian Communists and the Communists in the U.S.S.R. rejected commonman's notion of associating the CPI with the U.S.S.R. and Communism. When asked how he reconciled his policy of comforting communists abroad and fighting them at home, Nehru replied:

We try to comfort every suffering mortal . . . we do not understand this passionate crusading spirit of communism or anti-communism. We think we should deal with other countries as independent countries going their way and it is none of our business to interfere with their internal matters. If they interfere with us then naturally there is something like a conflict.

Even before independence we find Nehru looking forward to closer ties with the Soviet Union while he strongly condemned communists for their role in India during the Second World War.

The communists accepted aspects of Nehru's foreign policy which they found were oriented in a progressive direction and had led to closer ties with the Soviet Union and China, against the war designs of American imperialism in Asia. They had condemned the foreign policy earlier because of its association on the


world scene with America and Britain. They attributed the shift in their attitude to the shift in the foreign policy itself. In the communist view the growing strength of the democratic world, the weakening of the imperialist powers as revealed by the failure of American war machine in Korea and Vietnam, the advance of the national liberation movements in Asia, the growth of the anti-imperialist, anti-war and mass democratic movement of the Indian people led Nehru to change the Indian foreign policy. It was pointed out that besides increasing American pressure, the U.S. Pak aid and the formation of SEATO forced Nehru to change his foreign policy.

However, communists could not maintain a consistent attitude especially in regard to the later phase of Sino-Indian relations, as we shall see later. They were in a dilemma to adopt a consistent line because the border dispute was intimately connected with their approach towards Nehru's foreign policy. They could not reconcile themselves to Nehru's views so long they were in step with Chinese stand. Favourable attitude towards China earned them discredit, placed them out of step with the political mind of India and exposed the internal dissensions within their own ranks.

Within the broad perspectives of foreign policy framework outlined above we will examine Nehru's viewpoint and those of the Indian communists in regard to western and communist countries taking specific aspects for illustration.

We begin with Nehru's policy towards the Commonwealth
because his decision to stay in the Commonwealth was one of his earliest foreign policy decisions and created a lot of misgivings in the minds of the communists.

Nehru was the main spirit behind the idea of the Commonwealth, a free association of former British colonies. To retain an international connection especially when India was transcending from pre to a post Independence period, the membership was considered to be beneficial to India. Nehru strongly defended the association for its benefits, content and implications. 21 He felt that it would help India fight against racialism, help the colonies to achieve independence (since India had recently emerged from the shadows of colonialism) and thus promote the cause by decolonisation. Though he knew that economic problems varied from country to country according to their circumstances he believed that member countries could articulate economic reforms through this association. 22

For Nehru the association thus was not a bargain in the market place but a right step to retain the membership of a strong and influential system that did not put India to any

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21 For details of his defence of the membership, see his speech in the Constituent Assembly while moving that the decision to continue in the Commonwealth of Nations be ratified. May 16 and 17, 1949. Constituent Assembly Debates, May 16 - June 16, 1949, vol. VIII, pp. 9-10, 65-71.

22 The Commonwealth, over the years, has evolved itself into an instrument of multi-lateral economic and technical co-operation among member countries. See B. Vivekanandan, "India and the Changing Profile of the Commonwealth," Seminar on Indian Foreign Policy under Indira Gandhi, April 2-5, 1987, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, Teen Murti House, New Delhi.
subordinate role. To the contrary he felt that the membership would bring India closer to other member countries.

The Indian communists criticised the membership because it tantamounted to India being a part of the British Empire. Nehru was criticised for having bartered the little independence India possessed by the membership and made her people full fledged partners of imperialism. They regretted that India had set aside the friendship and goodwill of the Soviet Union and of new China. India was rather regarded as an ally of Anglo-Americans and a satellite of London and Washington. Their argument runs thus:

We are members of an alliance of colonialists and exploiters, the hateful company, which bled and starved our country and which now seeks to use our emaciated people for a war of aggression against the only consistent allies we have had in our many struggles against alien rule, the Soviet Union and the international Socialist movement.  

Commonwealth membership was held responsible for American imperialist penetration into the Indian economy. In the Communist view American imperialists would not have infiltrated into Asia as they were doing if Nehru had broken his ties with the Commonwealth.  

The Soviet Union too was perturbed over India's membership of the commonwealth. On the day of the decision, K. V. Novikov,  

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the Soviet Ambassador to India told K. P. S. Menon that that was a sad day for India and the world. 25 When the Constituent Assembly ratified the decision Pravda dubbed the arrangement as the creation of a new military-political basis for the British plan to keep India within the empire. It was declared that though Constitutional forms are altered, the relations between Britain and India remained unchanged except for the introduction of a new military political basis. Indian republic was being used to strike a new bargain between the British and Indian leaders involving the transformation of this 'Republic' into an 'Anglo-American lever in South East Asia.' 26 China also declared that by signing this declaration the country had joined the Anglo-American bloc. 27

In more explicit terms the communist criticism meant that India could have 'nothing in common with British imperialism and its manipulated commonwealth so long as India remained dedicated to the great causes of humanity.' 28 In their view Commonwealth link operated to the detriment of India's independence.


27 Ibid., p. 15.

her sovereign rights and security. It distorted and inhibited India's economic progress and stood in the way of building up of a self-reliant strong defence potential.

The communists believed that through the Commonwealth link India had not gained a single thing for herself or for others. On the other hand her association with the Commonwealth had provided moral prestige and alibi to British imperialism. There was another reason for communist opposition to Commonwealth membership. They were convinced that Britain joined by the United States would leave no stone unturned to prevent the growth of Indian friendship and cooperation with the Soviet Union and other Socialist countries. Their criticism against Nehru was that his government was not making any effort to form any similar association with other countries like the Soviet Union and China. 29

Communists wanted to see India break away from the Commonwealth, a 'symbol of India's slave status and continued domination.' Such a step would support the cause of freedom, peace and democracy. Nehru's arguments in support of the Commonwealth links were interpreted as an apology to British imperialists for enunciating the policy of denunciation. 30


Anglo-French invasion of Egypt in 1956 and the U.S. economic aid to India were specifically intensified the communist, propaganda against India's membership of the Commonwealth. They believed that India's Commonwealth membership had enabled Britain to deceive the world public opinion in carrying on aggression against Kenya and Egypt.³¹ British operation in Malaya and American invasion on Vietnam aided the communist efforts to intensify their struggle for a break with the Commonwealth.³²

The anti-western attitude of the communists was clearly projected during the Anglo-French invasion of Egypt in 1956. It once again brought to the forefront the question of India's relations with the Commonwealth. Nehru intended not to antagonise either of them by taking sides. He appealed for peaceful method of negotiations to solve the dispute over the Suez issue. He anticipated fierce reactions in Britain to the nationalisation of the canal and hence advised Britain not to use force against Egypt. In his approach he consistently and firmly appealed for negotiated settlement ensuring the rights not only of Egypt but of all the user countries.³³ He realised

that the proper functioning of Suez canal was of vital importance to India too.

Nehru did not remain neutral when Egypt was invaded in flagrant violation of the U.N. Charter. The action was a clear and naked aggression by two strong powers, Britain and France, against a weak country. Nehru expressed his sympathies with Nasser and condemned aerial bombing of Egyptian territory by the British and the landing of Anglo-French forces, as an act endangering freedom. The invasion represented the revival of colonialism and a violation of Panchsheel. Though Nehru admitted that British action in this regard was without a precedent, he considered it incorrect to view the whole record of Commonwealth relations from this action of Britain alone.

The communists condemned the British action in Egypt as an imperialist action aimed against the entire people of Asia and Africa, their independent policies and world peace. It was a calculated move to reverse the whole process of the emergence of Asian and African countries as independent and sovereign states. They upheld Nehru's view that it was a reversion to the old discredited colonial methods and supported his demand for restoration of Egyptian sovereignty over Egyptian soil.


35 Nehru at a meeting of Parliament's informal consultative committee on foreign affairs, New Delhi, Nov. 15, 1956, National Herald, Nov. 16, 1956, p. 1.
However, they also complained that when it came to actually halting aggression or restoring Egyptian sovereignty Nehru under rated the necessity of drastic measures and put his faith in the U.N. persuasion and the moral weight of public opinion in the world in general and in Britain in particular. They were not satisfied with Nehru's mediatory role between Britain and Egypt.

The Communists wanted India to get out of the Commonwealth on the grounds that on such a grave matter as this India which is the biggest country in the Commonwealth was not even consulted or informed of what the British were intending to do it. Nehru did not accept this position.

It is of interest to note that while the communists criticised Nehru for not taking any concrete action against Britain, the Soviet Union appreciated Nehru's peaceful approach. The Soviet Union put faith in Nehru's personal prestige to play an outstanding part in taking immediate and effective measures against the aggression. Nehru upheld the Soviet Prime Minister's warning to Britain, France and Israel against military operations in Egypt as the most decisive factor leading to the subsequent ceasefire. The communists strongly commended the Soviet warning because it demonstrated friendship for the victims of

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aggression, its steadfast role will uphold the cause of peace and national freedom. The Soviet Union was thus the ally of the Asian and African people. 38

Nehru disagreed with the communist demand to quit the Commonwealth on the Egypt issue and refused to quit the Commonwealth on the act of Britain alone. Though he strongly condemned the attack on Egypt and declared his sympathies with Egypt, he did not want Egyptian affairs to vitiate the Commonwealth links, obviously because India did not hesitate to express her anger and opinions in the strongest possible terms, subject to courtesy, on the question of military operations in Egypt. The fact that a major country of the Commonwealth was involved in attacking Egypt did not prevent India from showing her feeling and putting the weight of sympathy for Egypt. Commonwealth relations did not stand in the way of a policy that Nehru wanted to pursue for India. Instead of fanning criticism against India's Commonwealth membership, Nehru tried to minimize the protests.

Nehru strongly reacted against communist views on the Commonwealth issue and said:

Some men repeat why India is in Commonwealth. These are some set phrases, set grooves of thoughts, set ideas which are not affected by whatever happens in the world. I find it very difficult to deal with those close minds which have learnt to repeat phrases without understanding them. 39


Chances of a compromise between Nehru and the communists were remote because both were convinced of the correctness of their approach. The Communists did not favour any relations with a particular group of countries like the Commonwealth and emphasised equal relations with all. They demanded the expulsion of British officers and advisers from the Indian army and the liquidation of all vestiges of British control over Indian economy through the confiscation of British capital. It was argued that the association with the Commonwealth compelled India to seek the narrowing markets within the confines of the Commonwealth and the dollar areas and prevented her from seeking profitable trade and exchange with countries like China. They argued that Commonwealth linked India with the western bloc and promoted economic exploitation and racial discrimination.

Compatible with the communist criticism against Nehru's relations with Britain and the Commonwealth was their attitude towards the United States of America, the major partner of the Western bloc. Here we will confine ourselves to a discussion of India's acceptance of US aid. In his policy of continuing cultural, economic, and philosophical links with the west Nehru was fully conscious of the need for financial and technical assistance. He sought friendly relations with the United States and did not fail to express his gratitude

40 Hiren Mukherjee, April 8, 1953, Lok Sabha Debates, March 30 - April 21, 1953, vol. VIII (11), Col. 3929.
for the massive U.S. economic assistance.

The Communists were, on the other hand, critical of Nehru's decision to accept and welcome U.S. economic aid. They criticised India's relations with United States on the bases of their policy of opposing the western imperialist bloc. They strongly condemned the United States economic aid to India and viewed it with hostility and suspicion. It was their firm conviction that the aid would weaken their stand to foil the designs of U.S. imperialism against the Asian people. They assumed that the growing wave of revolutionary discontent was being combated by dependence on American money and loans to maintain the Indian capitalist order. In the communist opinion American assistance and allied financial measures meant the U.S. domination of political life and domestic and foreign policies. 41

The major argument against the U.S. aid to India was that it enslaved the country and meant the strangulation of the economies of the underdeveloped countries and a deeper penetration of the U.S. dollar imperialism. The aid, in their view, would lead to the economic expansion of U.S. multinational influence rather than economic development. The communists regarded the aid as inconsistent with national self respect and dangerous to national security and sovereignty.

41 CPI, Political Thesis Adopted at Second Congress, op. cit., p. 7.
Economic aid under the Indo-American technical co-operation programme along with a series of operational agreements with the U.S.A. were regarded as a charter to the U.S.A. to establish herself in India as a trading concern and India's political boss. It seemed to the communists that Government of India had placed all its administrative machinery at the disposal of the United States. The communists opposed the whole U.S. scheme of aid to Europe and Asia because it was meant to organise an anti-communist front and was a part of the U.S. anti-Soviet and anti-revolutionary policy.

The Communists emphasised that any kind of encroachment in economic policies and programmes should be resisted as an encroachment on Indian territory and political integrity. They asked Nehru to completely break away from the U.S. aid and not to accept their conditions. A firm stand on his part was demanded. They alleged that Nehru had refused to face the rude fact that so long as the Indian economy continued to be tied to and dominated by imperialist countries, to talk about setting up of key industries, industrialisation and employment of the latest techniques was futile. The communists did not want Nehru to adopt an attitude of balance between what they

42 Lok Sabha Debates, Dec. 4-20, 1952, vol. VI (11), col. 2472.
44 Hiren Mukherjee in Lok Sabha, Lok Sabha Debates, Nov. 25 to Dec. 6, 1957, vol. IX (11), col. 2628.
called the 'imperialist war mongers' on the one hand and the U.S.S.R. and China, the 'peace fighters' on the other.

It is significant to observe that though the communists opposed the U.S. economic aid they favoured aid from the socialist countries. They made it clear that they were not opposed to foreign aid as such but objected to the manner in which it was made available. Economic aid from the U.S.S.R. and other Socialist countries was advocated because they believed that these countries were genuinely interested in India's progress and were not inclined to interfere in India's internal affairs. They also expected that economic co-operation with Socialist countries would keep the United States away and would defeat Anglo-U.S. attempts to weaken and undermine the country's independence. The communist attitude thus reflects a strong dislike of aid from capitalist countries and favoured closer economic collaboration with socialist countries.

But Nehru's approach to economic aid was marked by pragmatism. He did not see it in terms of western or communist blocs. So long he was convinced that the aid could serve India's interests and was without any strings, it was welcomed irrespective of the country that rendered it. On the other hand when he found an aid programme to be against India's interest, did not hesitate to oppose it in very strong terms. The ideology of the donor

country did not affect his attitude towards economic aid if it was beneficial to the progress of India. His views were supported by Khrushchev, who during his visit to India in 1955 advised Nehru to take western economic aid but wanted him to be careful in this regard. Nehru had already shown the significance of Khrushchev's advise and warning. While he acknowledged the United States as a friendly nation and expressed his deep gratitude for economic assistance he equally, strongly criticised the U.S. military aid to Pakistan. Nehru expressed his great concern and fear that Pakistan might use this aid against India. He admitted that as independent nations the U.S.A. and Pakistan were free to decide their affairs but was concerned because such an alliance had far reaching consequences not only for the two neighbouring countries but for the whole of Southeast Asia, as an attempt to check the growth of freedom movements in Asian countries fighting against colonial domination of one kind or another. The Communists got yet another argument against India's Commonwealth membership


48 He said, "If the strength of the Pakistani army increases with U.S. aid it will have repurcussions not only in India but in the whole of South East Asia. This will disturb without fail the entire balance of power in the region." Nehru, Public Address, Calcutta, Dec. 13, 1953, Bombay Chronicle, Dec. 14, 1953, pp. 1, 5.

49 Ibid., and Eisenhower to Nehru, The Tribune, Feb. 24, 1954, p. 3.
when the U.S. military aid began to pour into Pakistan. They argued that India could not defend against one imperialist power by relying upon another imperialist power. Communists were ready to support Nehru on the question of the proposed U.S.-Pak military alliance provided he remained consistent in his present attitude and did not change it. 'We know the value of Nehru's statements. He says one thing and does another in practice.' The Communist Party made it clear that people would stand united in repelling American pressure tactics which threatened the freedom of the country. The pact was a greater threat because of the backwardness of the country and the poor state of India's industry.

The communist opposition to the U.S. aid was also guided by the consideration that the U.S.-Pakistan pact was an attempt of U.S. imperialism to endanger the security of India. India was being surrounded by war bases and being forced to join their camp unconditionally. U.S. imperialism was thus No. 1 enemy of the world. They stressed the need for the development of a


53 'We believe that Pakistan's entire future is being played ducks and drakes with by the world public enemy No. 1 which is the imperialism of the U.S.A.' Hiren Mukherjee Dec. 23, 1953, Lok Sabha Debates, Dec. 7-24, 1953, vol. X (11), coE. 2998-3002.
powerful campaign against U.S. blackmail and for Indo-Pak friendship, Asian Solidarity and world peace. The pact was a continuation of the U.S. policy of surrounding the Soviet Union and China and the People's democracies in Eastern Europe with war bases for launching the third world war.

The Communists supported Nehru's declaration against U.S. intervention and his emphasis on the need to resist the domination by any country at any time. They welcomed Nehru's rejection of Eisenhower's similar offer of military aid to India. Communist attitude clearly revealed the Soviet influence because their protests against the pact complemented each other. Soviet Government also protested against reports of the establishment of American air bases in Pakistan. Moscow also hailed Nehru's plea for the abolition of nuclear weapons. India was praised as a nation which was becoming an important factor in the strengthening of peace and security in Asia, one which would never join the Americans in the pursuance of their aggressive plans. 

The Communist attitude towards Nehru's policy towards the western countries was guided by their ideological formulation according to which the capitalist countries of the west were extending their imperialism in a different garb. While political control of the colonies was no longer possible under the changed domestic and international circumstances, the capitalist

countries, Britain, France and the U.S.A. were keen to control the economies of their colonies. Dollar or pound imperialism, as it came to be known, was deeper and harder to fight than political imperialism. This was the ideological basis of the Communist criticism of Nehru's decision to join the Commonwealth and his acceptance of the U.S. economic aid. They were convinced that India's independence had been compromised by these policies and that India had become a stooge of Anglo-American imperialism. Nehru on the other hand believed that neither the Commonwealth nor the U.S. aid compromised India's independence.

The Anglo-French invasion of Egypt and U.S. military aid to Pakistan confirmed the communist fears. Their predictions about the character and policies of the capitalist imperialist countries appeared to be true. However, these very developments also gave Nehru an opportunity to demonstrate his independence and the correctness of his stand. He criticised the British for the Suez invasion and the U.S.A. for military aid to Pakistan. Perhaps it was his stand that led the U.S.S.R. and China to review their understanding of Nehru and support him.

The Communist reappraisal of Nehru influenced as it was by Nehru's handling of the Suez crisis and U.S. Military aid to Pakistan, was perhaps influenced more, by Nehru's efforts to improve relations with the Soviet Union and establish a rapport with Mao's China. Nehru was not unmindful of the importance of friendly relations with the two principal socialist countries. He was however, handicapped by initial
hurdles. His non-alignment stood in the way of his going all the way to woo these countries. Also the preconceived negative images that Stalin and Mao had of Nehru and the Congress led them to be cool to Nehru's initial overtures. The ice was broken by Nehru's bold recognition of China in 1949. Nehru's policy towards the U.S.S.R. and China is discussed in the subsequent parts of the chapter.

II

It is imperative to refer specifically to the Indo-Soviet relations for two reasons. First, because Nehru keenly looked forward for close co-operation and friendly ties with the U.S.S.R. Second, because the attitude of the Soviet Union towards various aspects of foreign policy left an undeniable impression on the Communist assessment of Nehru's foreign policy. As a result they shared their views to such an extent and the Soviet influence appeared so evident that the commonman associated the Communist Party of India with the Soviet Union. Yet it was surprising that Nehru made a basic distinction between the Indian Communists and the Communists in the U.S.S.R. and rejected the commonman's notion of identifying them together.

We would discuss the communist attitude towards Nehru's foreign policy in the light of the Soviet assessment and try to explain their cautious appraisal of Nehru's Soviet policy
in spite of his clear intentions to have friendly relations with the U.S.S.R. This will further lead us to explain why the Indo-Soviet relations could not develop as rapidly as was desired.

During the pre-independence period Nehru had been a keen observer of the developments in the U.S.S.R. since the 1917 Revolution. Though he did not approve of everything that had happened there and rejected many of its features, he was attracted towards their achievements particularly the pace of economic progress. While he gave primacy to the objective of Indian independence he did not consider the question of Indian freedom in isolation from the larger world perspective. He expressed his sympathy with the Soviet Union and China. The Soviet Union was a powerful neighbouring country and its achievements were impressive. Obviously Nehru looked forward to friendly and cordial relations with the Soviet Union.

Explaining his policy towards the U.S.S.R. Nehru said, "For many years past we have looked with very great interest towards the Soviet Union for many reasons but more especially because of the tremendous achievements of the Soviet Union during the last quarter of a century or so." Addressing the Soviet Union in his Presidential address in the 1947 session.

55 Jawaharlal Nehru, The Discovery of India, op. cit., p. 541.
56 Ibid., pp. 421, 449, 477.
of the Indian Science Congress, he said:

You are our neighbours and as neighbours we must take interest in each other. We must know each other and develop closer contacts with each other. But apart from being neighbours you have been pioneers in many fields and you have transformed the vast tracts of country before our eyes with a speed that has astonished humanity. Inevitably when we want to produce great changes in India we want to learn from your example. We want to know what you have done and how you have done it. . . . It is our purpose also to better the lot of the millions who live in India. And we want to utilise Science to that end and we want to learn from you what you have to teach in that respect. . . .

It was the cardinal principle of Nehru's foreign policy to be friendly to all countries. While doing so he made no distinction between the Soviet Union, the U.S.A. and Great Britain because he could not afford to do so since India was on the way to plan her national life and was emerging from a period of colonial inaction. India faced gigantic task of mobilising resources to build up her national economy and had to place herself among the family of free nations in the international arena.

By emphasising on the need to establish diplomatic relations with the U.S.S.R. Nehru expressed his gesture of goodwill but was suspected to be a communist in the process. However,


58 Nehru asked V. K. Krishna Menon to contact the Soviet foreign Minister V. M. Malotov. Their Conversations turned on the establishment of diplomatic relations. But neither Menon considered it to be significant nor Pravda gave any special coverage to it. Because of Menon's background, the talks were considered a secret mission (Indian Spokesman Commented in New York Times, Sept. 26, 1946, p. 34). When Nehru was asked about it he said, 'I myself hold Communist Views on a great many matters.' The Hindu, Nov. 16, 1946, p. 4.
his efforts did not yield the results as desired.' Even though the Soviet Union reciprocated and decided to establish diplomatic relations, the relations remained cool.

At the time of Indian independence there was a distinct suspicion in the Soviet mind that Indian unity might not survive at all, because they did not consider the whole population of India a single nation. The Soviet Union condemned the Cabinet Mission Proposals because let alone independence they did not even proclaim dominion status for India. In the Soviet view the plan treated all questions except the withdrawal of British troops from India. Transfer of power was dismissed as a fraud gesture because the Soviets did not accept the British promises as true manifestation of their intentions and described their promises to withdraw from India as an illusion. The acceptance of the Mountbatten plan was a 'sell out' by the National Congress on the urging of Indian capitalists, to the imperialists. The Soviet Union condemned the Congress' decision to accept the British terms for political settlement thereby indicating that the congress leadership had gone over to the reactionary elements.

This was clearly a hostile Soviet posture shared by the Indian Communists as we have already seen. The Soviets showed no keen interest in India's independence because of their ideological pre-conception. They were not convinced of the

British intentions because their relations with Britain had considerably deteriorated. Churchill's plea for a joint Anglo-American alliance against the Soviet Union confirmed their doubts about British intentions. The anti-British bias in the Soviet attitude was thus obvious. The Soviet Union pressed the need for revolutionary struggle in the underdeveloped countries against political elements likely to succeed to power.

As a result of their ideological perception, the Soviet leadership under Stalin did not favour friendly approach towards India. As a result, he did not share Nehru's keen interest in developing such relations. He did not even receive India's first ambassador and adopted a stern attitude towards non-communist governments. The emergence of China as a powerful communist regime in Asia confirmed the Soviet optimism regarding the potentialities of communist revolutions in Asia. The Soviet perception of Indian leadership was equally negative and Nehru was castigated as a demagogue. It was said that the political regime established in India was very similar to the reactionary regime in Kuomintang China.

The Soviets were also sufficiently irritated due to India's membership of the Commonwealth as we have already seen. The charge that India was inclined towards the Anglo-American bloc was reinforced by Nehru's visit to the United States in 1949. It was reported that Nehru showed greatest readiness to make concessions to the American capitalists and to open Indian markets to them both for the sale of goods and for the
investment of capital. The Soviets also apprehended that the United States was influencing Nehru against 'liberation forces.' Nehru's stress on economic assistance and his talks with U.S. leaders were seen as an American effort to wean Nehru to American Imperialism. In a strong condemnation of Nehru a Soviet writer said, 'the vacancy left by Chiang is being offered to Nehru.'

It was natural for Nehru to be irritated by such uncharitable comments and one sided assessment of his foreign policy. Reacting to the Soviet criticism of India's membership of Commonwealth he said, 'the whole policy of Russia appears to be that no essential change has taken place in India and that we still continue to be camp followers of the British. That of course is complete non-sense and if a policy is based on non-sensical premises it is apt to go wrong.'

This biased and one-sided Soviet view of Nehru's policy towards the west could hardly last for long specially in view of the steps which Nehru took towards the Socialist countries. The Soviet union appreciated these steps reflecting India's Independence from the west. Nehru's prompt action to recognise China, his efforts to promote China's cause in the U.N. and his diplomacy during the Korean crisis revealed that India was capable of pursuing an independent course and was not a camp

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follower. Even though the Soviets did not completely agree with India's stand on Korea and their overall impression remained unchanged, they began to appreciate particular aspects of Nehru's foreign policy. In the long run these steps helped and encouraged the Soviet Union to reassess and revise her attitude towards India.

Nehru's handling of the Korean crisis proved to be a turning point in Indo-Soviet relations. The issue had far reaching implications and received supporting response from the Indian Communists. When they began to support specific aspects of Nehru's foreign policy. The Korean crisis is also important because it revealed Nehru's position in regard to the basic approach of his foreign policy. It helps us to understand under what conditions and to what extent could he remain neutral and independent in his approach. Moreover Korean crisis attracted significant attention because it reflected the world wide antagonism between the Soviet Union and the United States.  

The Soviet Union and the United States were involved in Korea in 1945 because the Korean people accepted them as forces of liberation. Korea was divided artificially at the 38th parallel into North Korea and South Korea in order to prevent the two powers from overlapping. Repeated attempts to establish a unified government in the country failed because neither side showed any  

61 Nehru pointed out, 'The two States North and South Korea were important because they were client states of very big powers in the world. So in essence any conflict between these two small States was a reflection of the larger conflict in the world ....' Parliamentary Debates, July 31 - Aug. 14, 1950, vol. v (př. 11), col. 224.
inclinations to do so. Even though the Republic of South Korea was proclaimed it did not solve the crisis because both governments claimed to represent the whole of Korea.

India was reluctant to participate in the crisis because of her desire not to interfere too much. By not recognizing either of the two governments, Nehru revealed India's ability to exercise its independent judgement. India did not confirm the U.N. General Assembly's decision to recognize South Korean Government because Nehru believed that the division between North and South could not last long since it was artificial. All was not well within Korea. There were constant attempts by both sides to get rid of the other side. The conflict intensified in 1950 when with a view to establish a unified government North Korea invaded South Korea.

Nehru declared his sympathies with the Korean people and defined the North Korea's invasion as an aggression in any sense of the term. He said, "It is perfectly clear that North Korea indulged in a full scale and well laid out invasion and this can only be described as aggression in any sense of the term. So that when this matter came up before the Security Council of the United Nations it seemed to us quite inevitable that we should describe it as aggression because it was an aggression." India supported the U.S. sponsored Security Council resolution in the

U.N. General Assembly branding North Korea aggressor. Nehru was convinced of the correctness of his stand because he felt that logically and practically there was no alternative left for India to follow. He made it clear that his primary consideration was to serve the cause of peace and the support to the resolution did not involve any change in the basic policy of non-alignment with any group of nations against another group. He concerned himself with the issue because he did not want the war to assume wider dimensions. He did not see it as an attack by a Communist power in a grand design of world conquest but saw it in its local context.

No doubt these arguments were welcomed by U.N. members but his stand was opposed by the Soviet Union and the Communists in India. Differences were obvious because the Communists viewed the problem with an entirely different contention. The Soviet Union branded the United States Government an enemy of peace and condemned the Security Council resolution because in its view it was illegal and was introduced under U.S. pressure on the members of the council. The United States was repeatedly accused for sending army and naval forces.

Following the Soviet line the Indian Communists too held the U.S. responsible for keeping Korea divided and proclaimed South Korea the aggressors. The Soviet Union and China were regarded as the only powers that stood for defence of Korean freedom.\footnote{Andrei Gromyko was the first top Soviet diplomat to comment on the Security Council Resolution June 27, 1950, \textit{National Herald}, July 5, 1950, p. 6. The text issued by Tass from Pyongyang said, \textit{ Forces of Puppet Government of Syngman Ree started an Offensive on North Region. See \textit{National Herald}; July 28, 1950, p. 1.}
"STOP THAT KOREAN AGGRESSION"  Shankar's Weekly. July 9, 1950

The Crossroads, wrote, "It started with an unprovoked attack by the U.S. puppet forces of Syngman Rhee on the Korean peoples Republic North of the 38th parallel. ... It is evident that the U.S. imperialists and their South Korean puppets are the aggressors." The Indian Communists called upon the people to unitedly condemn U.S. aggression and to support the democratic stand led by the Soviets.

The Communists compared the battle of Korea with India's struggle against the British. Nehru's role in this context was severely condemned as a ghastly betrayal of the Asian people battling for freedom, peace and democracy against the onslaughts of imperialism. The support to the Security Council resolution denied the national and progressive character of the government. Nehru had thus violated every anti-imperialist sentiment of the Indian people. Despite the proclamation of neutrality Nehru had openly aligned himself with the imperialist war bloc. Korean war reflected and unmasked Nehru's so called neutral foreign policy. They shared the Soviet view that Nehru had rather helped the enslavement of the Korean people by supporting the aggression. They in fact


66 Soviet representative Jacob Malik held the view that India's stand far from making any contribution to the cause of peace has only helped the U.S. aggressors in furthering their aims. Crossroads, Sept. 15, 1950, vol. ii (20), p. 10.
regretted their failure to utilise this as an opportunity to remind the people of the need for forging unity for peace, and to develop mass opposition to the imperialists and their 'Servitors.'

However, Nehru's initiative to achieve peaceful settlement in an unobtrusive way startled the Communists in India and abroad. Nehru realised that international situation deteriorated because the Soviet Union had withdrawn from the Security Council and other organisations and agencies of the United Nations. The Soviet Union had withdrawn ostensibly because China had not been admitted to the U.N. Since Nehru was basically inclined towards achieving the solution of the problem in a peaceful way, he sought to eliminate the root cause and assured India's efforts through diplomatic channels to secure China's admission. The Communists could no longer justify their opposition to Nehru in view of his supporting the cause of the Soviet Union and China.

No doubt India had supported the resolution to brand North Korea an aggressor but in doing so Nehru had sought to localize the conflict. He did not want to involve India as a party to the war in case it developed into a wider conflict. Nehru appealed to the U.S.S.R. and the United States for a peaceful settlement of the issue.67 His proposals to localize the conflict and bring about an eventual settlement aroused considerable interest. He sought

to resolve the impasse in the Security Council so that the U.S.S.R. could return to it. The two countries could find a basis for the cessation of the conflict with the assistance and co-operation of other peace loving States. Stalin not only welcomed Nehru's initiative to seat Communist China in the U.N. and bring back Soviet representatives to the Security Council but also supported his move to bring North Korea into the discussion. Although the Soviets were not fully satisfied with India's stand on Korea they appreciated and encouraged India's favourable attitude towards the Soviet Union and China.

The Communists underlined Stalin's comment and described Nehru's initiative as a retreat from his earlier position. In Nehru's efforts to communicate with Stalin they observed the reflection of the demand of Indians who were opposed to imperialist aggression. However, judging his initiatives on the basis of his past record they pointed out that he was not likely to firmly oppose U.S. pressure.

However, Communists were not to remain suspicious for long regarding Nehru's intentions. He soon proved India's independent stand without inclining towards the West or the Socialist camp. Nehru did not support the U.N. resolution authorising General

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McArthur to allow the U.N. forces to cross the 38th parallel into North Korea. Nehru believed that it was wrong to carry on military operations when peaceful methods could bring positive results. Hence he strongly counselled against crossing the 38th parallel, pointing out that the crossing might widen the area of conflict. He proposed peace talks with the United States. The Communists felt that on the face of it Nehru's formulation seemed satisfactory but actually it seemed to them that he was deliberately being blind to the reality of imperialist intervention. They criticised his understanding of the Korean situation especially when he suggested peace talks.71

As apprehended the crossing of 38th parallel, widened the area of conflict because China also intervened as expected, in view of the prior Chinese warning. In spite of the fact that the Chinese forces came across the Manchurian border into North Korea and threatened the U.N. troops, Nehru thought it prudent to avoid an approach that might complicate the problem. He preferred direct efforts towards a ceasefire instead of legal approach and did not support the U.N. resolution branding China an aggressor. He insisted that when attempts were being made for a negotiated settlement such a resolution would not help and would rather create a difficult situation. He said, 'The proposal could not


lead to peace; it could lead to an intensification of the conflict and might close the door to any attempt at solution by negotiations.' Nehru firmly reiterated that the whole difficulty had arisen because China was ignored.  

Nehru's intentions were now clear to the Soviet Union and the Indian Communists. Stalin realised that Nehru was capable of pursuing independent policy. Indian diplomacy during the Korean war thus played a crucial role in dispelling the impression in the Soviet Union that in spite of being independent India was still tied to the apron strings of Britain and was likely to act as its camp follower in world affairs. Indian friendship was emphasised even in the Chinese circles. The Indian communists welcomed Nehru's stand and held that mass sentiment against American imperialists had compelled him to take the bold stand. Nehru was no more a lackey of imperialism.

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72 The resolution was opposed at Lake Success on Jan. 20, 1951. Nehru justified the Indian opposition in his broadcast on the AIR, New Delhi, on Jan. 24, 1951. See National Herald, Jan. 25, 1951, p. 4.


Nehru's efforts were to convince the U.N. General Assembly that mediation was the only alternative and hence it should not be abandoned. He was also successful in conveying the impression that India was in a position to play a major part in containing peace in the world. Nehru urged for a decisive gesture to overcome the last difficulty in the way of concluding an armistice in Korea, namely the question of exchange of prisoners.

Discussion on the prisoners of war problem broke the long silence and India played an important role by presenting a formula which intended to further the cause of peace and endeavoured to suggest an honourable way out of the difficulties that came in the way of settlement. The Indian plan proposed immediate ceasefire, the reference of all disputes and issues to negotiation and settlement through a commission.

The Indian formula was acceptable to China and the Soviet Union in so far as it constituted a serious basis for discussion and suggested neutral supervision of the prisoners of war. But the absence of the Chinese and North Korean participation in the discussion on the Indian proposals irked these circles. They were also angered over the principle of nonforcible repatriation as suggested in the Indian formula and condemned the formula on that ground. They opposed the Indian proposals and maintained that the proposals did not offer any real solution. Instead of ending the Korean war the formula would perpetuate it. The Soviet Union charged that Indian Government had gone
a far to please the Anglo-American warmongers. China endorsed the Soviet stand and the Indian communists too found the plan lacking in that courage and determination to which Nehru had referred. They regretted that India did not consider the alternate plan proposed by the Soviet Union. The Indian plan appeared to favour America. They condemned that the presence of Chinese and North Korean representatives during the discussion in the U.N. was not insisted upon.78

Nehru was disappointed by the Soviet rejection of the Indian plan and said, "The Russian attack on the resolution was somewhat unkind to us." He argued that India had made an earnest attempt to try to compose things without compromising on any party's view and thus considered it unfair to be accused of partiality. Although the Indian plan was rejected, its success lay in the fact that ultimately it laid the ground for the final armistice. The long drawn out negotiations in 1953 ultimately removed the hurdles and the final agreement bore resemblance to the Indian resolution.
The signing of the Korean truce Agreement was welcomed by the Soviet Union and China. It was considered to be a victory for the forces of peace. Great importance was attached to the strengthening of peace in the East. The Indian Communists also welcomed it as a mighty victory for the heroic Korean people and their allies for the forces of world peace, a great success for the peace policy of the Soviet Union and China and a heavy blow to the 'aggressive imperialists led by America.' However, it was not until Malenkov's speech in 1953 that the Communists acclaimed India's stand and help in ending the hostilities in Korea.

Although there was no full throated acceptance of all aspects of India's foreign policy. Sufficient background for warm relations between India and the Soviet Union had been created. It was clear that because Soviet leaders began to assess India's crucial role in the establishment of the Korean ceasefire, the Soviet Union and the Indian Communists began to stress the importance of friendly relations with India.

While signs of friendly approach towards India were observable even during Stalin's time, the decisive turn came after his death in 1953. The Soviet Union moved to increase its contacts with India and used trade and extensive cultural

80 Georgil Malenkov in the Course of his address to the joint Session of the Supreme Soviet said, 'She (India) has greatly contributed to the efforts of the peace loving countries aimed at bringing about an end of the war in Korea.' Pravda, Aug. 9, 1953, p. 23 in Crossroads, Aug. 23, 1953, vol. V (17).
relations as the instruments. The Soviet Union supported India's protests against Eisenhower's commitment to supply arms to Pakistan in 1953. Both thus complemented each other. Dramatic and bold Indian approach towards China created a favourable climate of friendship and widened the scope of Indo-Soviet friendship.

As a result of a favourable Soviet opinion about Nehru's foreign policy, Nehru's personal role also began to be acclaimed. As a result of a favourable Soviet opinion about Nehru's foreign policy, Nehru's personal role also began to be acclaimed. India's role in world affairs was reassessed and Moscow proceeded to give strong support to the major efforts of Indian diplomacy. Bandung Conference in April 1955 was welcomed and Nehru was proclaimed an advocate of peace and anti-colonialism. Nehru was respected for his outstanding statesmanship and India as a peace loving state upholding its national independence. A new line on foreign policy was echoed when it was noted that India was not colonial but a republic.

The Indian Communists too shared these views and held China as the key to the resurgence of Asia and Africa. The two countries were a symbol of triumph for the people in Asia and

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81 'The first national Government of the Republic of India led by the outstanding statesman, Jawaharlal Nehru, announced that it will gradually eliminate the harsh legacy of colonialism.' Pravda, Editorial, Jan 26, 1955, The Tribune, Jan. 28, 1955, p. 4.


Africa against American designs. India was praised for its firmness in refusing to be misled by those who wanted to isolate China. Nehru's strict adherence to the principles of Asian solidarity was appreciated as a major factor that decided the fate of the Bandung Conference.\(^{84}\) No doubt the Communists supported Nehru's stand because he stood together with China but Nehru clearly stated that he was neither for the Communists nor for the anti-communists.\(^{85}\)

Gestures of friendship were further strengthened by the exchange of diplomatic visits between the two countries. During his visit to the Soviet Union 1955, Nehru was acclaimed as a lifelong enemy of imperialism and a friend of the Soviet Union. He was hailed as 'the most distinguished Statesman of our times.'\(^{86}\) The Communists by this time had declared their support to Nehru's foreign policy and greeted his visit as a welcome step. The role of Soviet Union was acclaimed as they began to see much in common between the people of the two countries in spite of different social and political systems and unlike state structures.\(^{87}\)

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\(^{87}\) "May the Friendship Between the People of the USSR and India Grow and Gain in Strength." *Pravda*, June 7, 1955 in *New Age*, June 12, 1955, vol. ii (37).
countries were 'peace loving.'

In international developments like the Anglo-French invasion of Egypt discussed earlier, Soviet leaders had expressed their confidence in Nehru's statesmanship and called for a peaceful settlement of the conflict relying on Nehru's efforts. But the events in Hungary soon put the fast moving Indo-Soviet friendship to test.

Nehru did not condemn the Soviet action in Hungary and but responded in such a way as to give the impression that he put high priority on the maintenance of good relations with the Soviet Union. He clearly stated that any kind of suppression of the freedom of people was an outrage on liberty. He was opposed to military alliances and occupation of one country by another. With these considerations he viewed the Hungarian problem as a 'national uprising.' He wanted Hungarian people to determine their future and hence demanded the withdrawal of foreign troops. Soviet intervention was condemned as a revival of colonialism and a violation of Panchsheel. He intensely disliked foreign forces functioning in this way and wanted such pressures to be removed. He rather advocated that growth of democracy should be encouraged. However, he opposed the proposal to hold elections in Hungary under the U.N. auspices because he could not subscribe to the idea of any sovereign state agreeing to hold such elections. He apprehended that it would set a 'bad precedent which might be utilised in future for intervention in other countries. 88 India also abstained from the U.N.

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88 Nehru in Lok Sabha Nov. 16, 1956, Lok Sabha Debates Nov. 14 - Dec. 4, 1956, vol. ix (pt.11), col. 266.
resolution that condemned Soviet intervention and called for immediate withdrawal of the troops.

Such an attitude gave the impression that Nehru was adopting double standards. It was charged that initially he was inclined towards a favourable attitude towards the Soviet Union but later on he strongly condemned the Soviet action. Nehru admitted the ambiguity that essentially stemmed from events and pointed out that in Hungary 'the broad facts were not clear to us.' 89 Till the Soviet troops re-entered Hungary after initial withdrawal, Nehru's primary concern was to keep the conflict localized and was interested in relieving the Hungarian people of their suffering. Hence he called for the withdrawal of the Soviet troops.

His approach was clear so far it concerned general principles in regard to conditions obtained in Hungary. But he was cautious in regard to facts. He regretted that small countries were becoming victims of rivalry of great powers. To Nehru Hungarian case illustrated the evil of ideological domination and its likely repurcussions. He described the failure of the Communist government in Hungary to Convert its people in ten years to its theory a much greater failure than the failure of the military coup. He believed that Soviet action had uprooted the faith of many Communists and was a set back to its prestige. 90

89 Nehru in Lok Sabha, Nov. 19, 1956. Ibid., col. 373.
90 Ibid., cols. 385, 387-88.
events were a reflection of the fact that the desire for national freedom was much stronger and was not essentially a conflict between communism and anti-communism.

In line with the Soviet view Communists followed an attitude, distinct from Nehru’s. They saw the events in Hungary as a great warning of the dangers to which the socialist systems had been exposed by their policies that violated the principles of such a system. For them Hungarian uprising began as a popular movement for democratic reforms, but was distorted by reactionaries and imperialists who rose against the socialist system. A real genuine, popular movement was cruelly distorted according to one of the Communists.91 They justified the Soviet stand in Hungary because the USSR had been called to control the situation where democratic forces had failed. They felt that otherwise counter-revolutionaries by their infiltration would have robbed Hungary of the fruits of socialism. The intervention was defended in the name of socialism that had ‘crushed the attempts to restore landlordism and capitalism directly aided by imperialists to convert Hungary into a war base against socialist world.’92

Such views tend to confirm Nehru’s contention that Communist Party of India was partly dependent on outside inspiration. Their thinking got ‘rusty’ because they relied on thinking being done by others. He pointed out that they would not consider a new


situation from their own stand and tended to be out of date. He said, 'Communists get very annoyed when I call them reactionaries. I use that language in a technical specific way and I think it is a perfectly clear way.' Developments in Hungary had demonstrated to Nehru that revolution could not be exported and even when held down by a heavy hand nationalist feeling was bound to raise its head sooner or later.

Differences in attitude in regard to Hungary were further intensified by Nehru's open views on Communism in his article 'The Basic Approach.' Moscow expressed its annoyance as is confirmed by P. Yudin's article, "Can We Accept Pandit Nehru's Approach?" On Nehru's contention that he sought to blend the best of all economic systems including socialism. Yudin argued that Nehru's concept of socialism had very little likeness to real socialism. What irritated Indian Communists most was Nehru's view that Communism has been ruined by its association with violence. They also did not like Nehru discussing Hungary as an example and an evidence that nationalism was stronger than international communism.

The Soviet Union now again began to see in Nehru's approach the dominating influence of western propaganda about Socialism. This impression was strengthened by the expanding western role


in India's industry and the rapidly growing aid programme of the
United States. The Soviets were displeased with India's relations
with the west and described Eisenhower's visit in December 1959
as a singular attempt through confidential negotiations on the
highest level to influence the course of Indian foreign policy
to induce her to turn to the U.S.A. for military aid.

Developments within India too disturbed Indo-Soviet relations.
The attitude they adopted and the reactions reflected in the
context of Sino-Indian relations gives us an understanding of
their relationship to which we shall refer in the following
section.

III

India's relations with China go back to the ancient period
when Buddhist monks converted China to Buddhism and Chinese
travellers like Hieuen Tsang visited India in 642 A. D. This
Buddhist connection would have been a source of strength to
Sino-Indian relations but for the ascendancy of Mao and the
introduction of Marxist-Leninist culture in China in the 1940s.
The British used India as a base for penetrating into China and
the Opium War was a visible manifestation of British imperialism
in China in which colonial India played its role. The colonial
shadow still looms large over Sino-Indian relation. The
emergence of nationalism in China in the 1920s and the rise of
Sun-Yat Sen was widely welcomed by Indian nationalists. The
Indian National Congress sent fraternal greetings to the
Kuomintang and a medical delegation to help the wounded in China in 1927.

Despite his personal association and sympathies with the Kuomintang, Nehru was quick to grasp the significance of the fast moving events in China culminating in Mao's victory. The emergence of China as a strong and unified nation was of immense significance to India. As Nehru pointed out, "very great revolutionary changes have taken place in that country... It is not a question of approving or disapproving, it is a question of recognising a major event in history, and of appreciating it and dealing with it..." In a major policy decision India recognised Communist China and was the first non-communist country to do so. Not only that, India was the major non-communist advocate for the admission of China to the U.N. Nehru vigorously championed her case for admission and expressed sympathies with China in the Korean war opposing the U.N. motion to brand China as an aggressor. His pro-China policy, while it earned him brickbats from the Western countries, also helped the Chinese communists to overcome their initial hostility towards Nehru and the Congress to establish cordial relations with India.

The Communists welcomed the positive steps towards strengthening diplomatic relations with China more specially because they saw in the events in China, a struggle for colonial

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liberation that would change the entire shape of Asia and the world and ensure the doom of the colonial and capitalist order. Liberation of a great part of China was seen as a blow to the capitalist order. Victory of the Chinese revolution was hailed as a great landmark in the history of socialism. The Communists believed that the victory against the combined forces of American imperialism and Kuomintang reactionaries had strengthened the people's forces against the imperialists and created a favourable situation for revolutionary forces in India.

Indian Communists welcomed Nehru's efforts to co-operate with the People's Republic of China. They were impressed by his early recognition of the Chinese victory. It was believed that India had been compelled by the might of the liberated China and the overwhelming support for China in India to recognise it. They welcomed Nehru's emphasis on the need for Sino-Indian unity, his conviction that the Chinese people did not want war, his emphasis that the friendship between the two powers would bring peace and freedom, and his tributes to the Chinese leaders for the way they were trying to bring about transformation of their country. They supported Nehru in his demand for China's seat in the U.N. his move to stop the war in


Korea and above all his refusal to brand China an aggressor.  

It is pertinent to point out here that the Communists offered cooperation and support so long as Nehru's approach met their requirements to maintain the policy of friendship towards communist China. Hence their support in this context was conditional and fluctuated with events. The early phase of cooperation received its damper in China's invasion and occupation of Tibet in October, 1950. Since India had clearly admitted Chinese suzerainty over Tibet and disclaimed any political or territorial claim, the invasion was an irritant. Nehru was unhappy that China should disturb the special status of Tibet. He was obviously disturbed over these developments and China's regret over India's protests against the invasion. China accused India of having been affected by foreign influences hostile to China.

Nehru repudiated the charge and pointed out that India had protested against China's invasion because it affected India and the peace in the region. Though suzerainty of China over Tibet was not denied he emphasised on the need to maintain Tibet's autonomy. He was keen to preserve trade and cultural relations with Tibet as they came in nobody's way and denied territorial or political ambitions in regard to Tibet. He emphasised on the

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99 Government of India delivered three notes to the Chinese Government on October 21, 28 and November 1, 1950. The text of the notes was consistent with India's policy of peace, pointing out in substance that the liberation of Tibet should have been peaceful and the clash of arms on the roof of the world might raise unwanted chaos. Chinese suzerainty over Tibet was accepted
need for a peaceful solution.\textsuperscript{100}

The Indian communists did not accept Nehru's reference to Tibet as an autonomous state since it amounted to a reassertion of traditional imperialist policy and interference in the internal affairs of China. It was argued that Anglo-American imperialists had intrigued against the Soviet Union and China to strengthen themselves in Asia. Anglo-Americans were blamed for sabotaging the peaceful rapproachment between Tibet and China. Communists alleged that Nehru's stand was inconsistent with his recognition of the Chinese People's Government and of its suzerainty over Tibet. In fact his stand facilitated the game of the Anglo-American imperialists to extend their aggression in Asia.

Failure of peaceful settlement was attributed to the imperialists and reactionaries. It was alleged that arms had reached Tibetan rebels via India. Since they believed that Anglo-American imperialists had built bases to attack China, hence, China's action to secure its borders was justified.

Communists considered Nehru's 'interference' in China's affairs unjustified though they did not offer justifications in support of China against India. Was it an internal matter of China for them too? Nehru's Tibet policy according to them tantamounted to supporting imperialist aggression against the struggle of Asian people for freedom. Hence they wanted him

to reverse his stand.101

The communists supported China's stand that Indian Government was influenced by foreign powers hostile to China and Tibet. They also endorsed China's argument that India was under the yoke of imperialists and their collaborators. The communist stand was a prototype of the view expressed in Soviet Union welcoming China's stand in Tibet and complaining that India in collaboration with Anglo-American imperialists was nursing some designs on Tibet.102

Nehru objected to the communist stand and confessed that 'Communist tactics' were closely allied to expansionism. His personal reaction was that the Communist Party was completely unscrupulous.103 When some members of Parliament pressed him for a revision of policy in regard to 'China's menace' to India he retorted, 'I am not prepared to surrender my judgement or my country's judgement or my country's position to any single country or group of countries.'104

The communist condemnation or criticism of Nehru, however, could not explain Nehru's vigorous efforts to check the drift


towards war, unrest and disturbances as a result of the Chinese military action. India's proposed peaceful solution to the problem, cordial relations and negotiations in Beijing during December 31, 1953 to April 29, 1954 resulted in an agreement that implied full recognition by India of China's sovereignty over Tibet and a pledge to follow the Five Principles in their mutual relations. ¹⁰⁵

By this voluntarily denial of political and territorial rights in Tibet, Nehru hoped for peaceful and friendly relations with China. Chances of friendship were enhanced by the exchange of visits by the Prime Ministers of the two countries in 1954. The joint Communique reaffirmed the Five Principles of Panchsheel enunciated by them in their Joint Statement in New Delhi in June 1954. ¹⁰⁶ Nehru felt that this gave Asia a place of her own in world affairs. ¹⁰⁷ In return India was pledged support in its foreign policy to develop the area of peace in Asia and elsewhere. Zhou Enlai urged strong Sino-India relations and pledged to work together with Nehru to overcome difficulties. ¹⁰⁸ In spite of the differences in the political and economic structures and their


¹⁰⁷ AICC, Letters to PCC Presidents, July 4, 1954, p. 10.

problems and methods, Nehru emphasised on the need to cooperate for peace. He was convinced of the tolerance and friendly feelings but was not sure about the future.

The communists described the signing of the Sino-Indian Treaty on Tibet as much more than a mere trade agreement. The enunciation of Five Principles was a significant landmark, and the pledge of friendship between the two countries was considered important not only for Asian countries but also for the cause of peace and freedom. Above all it was considered a blow to the imperialist system. In the communists' view American imperialists were frantically attempting to 'cook up their Southeast Asian NATO and to inveigle the countries of Asia including India into their diabolical plans of war against China.'

People were called upon to organise meetings to welcome Zhou's visit in India thereby to demonstrate their support for peace efforts in Asia to futile 'the war designs of America.' China was hailed as the spearhead of the awakened Asia. The Communique of June 28, 1954 was similarly viewed as a sequel

113 For the text of the communique see Foreign Policy of India: Text of Documents, 1947-64, op. cit., p. 294-96.
to strengthening Sino-Indian friendship against the threats pursued by the Americans.\textsuperscript{114} Nehru's views on Panchsheel were welcomed as a true picture of world happenings and in tune with people's desire for peace.

As a result of these considerations the Communists enthusiastically supported Nehru's foreign policy because in their view it promoted peace efforts against the imperialists. India's role in the preservation of peace in the world was considered to be significant. Acknowledging the sincere efforts of Nehru the Communists stated that, "in initiating the Progressive Shift in the Government's foreign Policy, in imparting to it a pronouncedly democratic anti-imperialist and Asia unity content, the personal role of Nehru has been an important factor."\textsuperscript{115}

However, the Communists could not maintain for long the spell of positive relationship and support offered during the signing of Sino-Indian treaty and diplomatic visits. Developments in Tibet in 1959 again proved to be an irritant and offered sufficient ground for them to differ and drift away from Nehru.

In the wake of the uprising in Tibet in 1959, the Chinese alleged that Tibetan reactionaries were carrying on their


activities against China from Kalimpong. Indian Government was requested to repress these activities. China asserted that Tibet was an internal affair of the country and resented any discussion on the issue by other countries. The Communists did not accept Nehru's view. Rather they supported China's charge about Kalimpong and suggested that India should not allow her territory to be used for action against China.

The Indian Government did not involve itself in the early phase of the uprising. An adjournment motion in Lok Sabha on Tibet was rejected. But the Chinese warning that the interference in Tibet, even a discussion on the issue in Parliament would be considered impolite and improper, and the charge that Kalimpong was a command centre of the rebels, irritated Parliament. Nehru resented their warning and reiterated that India was not interested in interfering in their affairs. He repudiated the Chinese claim that Kalimpong was centre of Tibetan rebel activities. However, he considered Tibet's claim for autonomy justified and felt that China had broken its pledge on Tibetan autonomy. Preservation of the security and integrity of India, maintenance of friendly relations with China, and deep sympathies with the people of Tibet, governed Nehru's policy towards Tibet. He described the Tibetan uprising as

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as a 'national revolt' and indirectly supported the charge that China was oppressing the Tibetan nation. China rejected these views as a distortion of facts. Nehru was accused of interference, preventing China from exercising full sovereignty over Tibet. The Communists agreed with China's stand. They took utmost care to prove that Tibet had always been Chinese territory and that reactionaries among Tibetans were responsible for the denunciation of Sino-Tibetan Agreement of 1951 and that only a fragment of the population supported Tibetan rebellion.

The Communists emphasised that Sino-Indian friendship would be imperilled if Tibetan nationalism was supported. Speaking in Rajya Sabha Bhupesh Gupta said:

Since this (Tibet uprising) has been described as a national uprising . . . I have to submit that what has happened in Tibet is an armed rebellion by some vested interests, reactionaries who want to prevent the march of history, social reform and progress. . . I feel upset when Nehru characterises such a thing in this manner . . . am I to understand that this is a national uprising just because some people have taken to arms and gone against their state. 118

The Communists supported China for meeting the difficult situation with utmost regard for human considerations of Tibetan autonomy and the unity of the Chinese nation.

Following the Chinese view the Communists described the Tibetan uprising as a subversive and disruptive activity against China's Tibetan region carried out by the U.S. and the

Chiang Kai-Shek clique in collusion with fugitive reactionaries from Tibet and local special agents using India's Kalimpong as a base. They did not accept Nehru's view on Kalimpong and insisted that India should now allow her territory to be used against China.

Credit was given to Chinese Government for following a correct policy in Tibet and the Communist Party sent its greetings. Supporting the Chinese action it was argued that it was not China which set the ball rolling but rapid attacks on China by some members of Indian Parliament. The Communists considered the Chinese counter charge against India of helping Tibetan rebels justified.

The communists also criticised Nehru for granting political asylum to Dalai Lama. Indian government justified its stand as an exercise of sovereignty and in accordance with well known international usage. This infuriated the Chinese Government which protested against the asylum offered to Dalai Lama by the Indian Government. The Indian Communists felt that Dalai Lama

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120 Note given by the Chinese foreign office to the Councillor of India, July 10, 1958, White Paper I, op. cit., p. 60.


did not deserve hospitality or political asylum as he was 'an offender.' Also they did not want the asylum to be a cause of friction between India and China.123 It was insisted that the first breach in India-China friendship was created by the attitude and acts of the Indian government towards the revolt and the aid given to Dalai Lama and the rebels to carry on anti-China campaign in India.124

Nehru condemned the communist assessment of the Tibetan situation and remarked "CPI suffers from certain lack of balance in mind and total absence of feeling of decency and national sentiment . . . what they are I do not know. They cease to be Indians if they talk in this way."125 His attention was drawn to a statement of the CPI which supported Chinese views on the Kalimpong controversy. He considered the CPI's policy subversive.126 Nehru charged them for having no roots in India and no kinship with Indian nationalism. They represented an entirely different approach not in conformity with Indian national sentiment.

123 Bhupesh Gupta, Rajya Sabha, May 4, 1959; Rajya Sabha Debates, April 30 - May 8, 1959, Cols. 1659-61 and 1666, op. cit.


Charges against the communists compelled Dange to explain his party's position. He emphasised that though his party supported Indian foreign policy in general it differed with Nehru on Tibet. He rejected the Chinese allegation that Nehru was an expansionist but wanted him to pay due consideration for the feelings and sentiments of the Chinese people.127 Dange considered the attack on the CPI improper, unbalanced and based on half quotations, newspapers summarisation and allegations which had no basis in fact.128 Nehru's description of the Tibetan revolt as a nationalist uprising upset the communists because they understood it to be an armed rebellion which had nothing to do with the interests of the Tibetan people. They found Nehru's statements biased in favour of Tibetan reactionaries.129

The communists expressed great concern over the deterioration in Sino-Indian relations and denounced the opposition parties which did not support the CPI on China policy as reactionary forces. These were held responsible for aggravating the anti-China feeling in India and for undermining the Panchsheel and Indian foreign policy. The Communists warned the country against the


insidious manoeuvres of elements whose pretended sympathies for Tibet could never conceal their ulterior designs and pointed out that taking advantage of deterioration in Sino-Indian relations reactionaries took advantage and launched a campaign of hatred.\textsuperscript{130}

To sum up the communist position in Tibet in 1959 we may point out that the communists supported the Peking line and welcomed Chinese Conquest of Tibet as liberation. Tibetan uprising was denounced as a self defeating attempt at backwardness made by the medieval reactionaries. They condemned pro-US elements in India for their campaign against the cause of Sino-Indian friendship and the Indian and Chinese Communists. In this regard the communists were in step with China but out of step with the political mind of India.

However, communists could not afford to reject completely Nehru's views on Tibet. They supported those aspects of Nehru's foreign policy that were in favour of China and Tibet. They supported him in not allowing Dalai Lama to make India the headquarters for anti-China campaign.\textsuperscript{131} The communists also supported Nehru's efforts at a peaceful solution of the problem and his rejection of cold war technique. Nehru saw no use in debating the Tibetan issue in the U.N. as he believed


\textsuperscript{131} \textit{Lok Sabha Debates}, May 5-9, 1959, op. cit.
it would yield no result except an angry debate. This also
drew communist support. He argued that an expression of
strong opinion by some other countries would produce reaction
from the Chinese Government that was likely to be more adverse
to Tibet. 132

The Communists acknowledged that Nehru played a significant
and an outstanding role in shaping and guiding India's foreign
policy but regretted that on several occasions he permitted
himself to take positions and make utterances which could not
be reconciled with his own foreign policy and its guiding
principle—Panchsheel—on which alone India's relations with
China could be carried forward. Imperialists were blamed for
working for further deterioration of Sino-Indian relations.

In defence of their policy the communists tried to make
China appear less offensive to India and emphasised their
concern for Tibetan autonomy. This view of the communists was
different from the general opinion in India. They created a
position for their party in which their role seemed anti-national
unpatriotic. They could be easily placed as out of tune with
the Indian sentiments. Their efforts to make it appear that
that their differences with Nehru on Tibet were insignificant
could not meet with any success. In the eyes of the general

132 Nehru, Lok Sabha, Sept. 4, 1959, Lok Sabha Debates,
vol. 35 (2nd Series), Aug. 31 - Sept. 12, 1959, col. 6552.
public they appeared to be more loyal to their ideology than India.

In the context of Tibetan issue, Nehru's attempts to promote cordial relations between India and China disclosed his anxiety to seek Chinese friendship. Otherwise too, as we have seen he had defied the whole western world to champion Chinese cause and thus prepared the ground for a qualitative improvement in Sino-Indian relations. Although Nehru understandably had reservations about certain issues in regard to China, he refrained from making any adverse public criticism of the country.

However, the respective points of views submitted in the context of the border issue revealed their disagreements which could not be resolved and ended in the outbreak of a border war in 1962. The deterioration appeared to be the cumulative effect of India's protests against the cartographic claims of Beijing to large sections of Indian territory, their differences on McMahon line, extensive penetration and occupation of India's territory by Chinese armed forces and above all the failure of the attempts at negotiations to convince each other of the correctness of their stand.

As early as 1950 Nehru referred to the misrepresentation in maps drawn by China and relied on Beijing's assurance that the maps were old and the government had had no time to make necessary changes. Nehru repeatedly drew the attention of Zhou Enlai to what he deemed objectionable in the maps and declared the boundary to be firm. He was unwilling to argue on the question that remained vague until the official Chinese magazine China
Pictorial published maps in July 1958 which included within Chinese territory four of the five divisions of NEFA, some areas in North U.P. and large areas in Eastern Ladakh. Zhou reiterated the Chinese stand that maps were reproduction of pre-liberation maps that had unrevised due to lack of time. It was stated that new principles of drawing Chinese boundary would be determined after survey and consultations with neighbouring countries. Pending such survey and consultations China decided not 'to make changes in the boundary on its own.133

Respective viewpoints submitted by them revealed the differences in their understanding. The Chinese government regarded boundary issue as an 'open issue subject to discussions. But Nehru was of the opinion that it was undisputable because large parts of Indian territory in the Chinese maps was undoubtedly Indian. He asserted that Chinese maps published even after 1949 did not adhere to any definite fronteir as different maps showed different alignments in the same sector.134

Differences also existed on the McMahon line drawn after the boundary agreement between Britain and Tibet on Indo-Tibet frontier in March 1914. While India had taken the McMahon line drawn by the British as the border, China maintained that it had


never recognised the McMahon line. The issue was not mentioned by either side when Zhou visited India in 1954. However, as early as 1950 Nehru had stated, 'Our maps show that the McMahon line is our boundary and that is our boundary, map or no map.' While hailing the Sino-Indian agreement Nehru reiterated his stand that the border was firm and not open to discussion with anybody. McMahon line thus was considered to be an important basis of the Sino-Indian boundary. Zhou also referred to the issue in 1956. He considered this line to be unfair but accepted it in view of the friendly relations between the two and proposed to consult the Tibetan authorities in regard to it. Zhou did not consider the McMahon line to be legal as it had not been recognised by the Chinese government. He considered it necessary to take a realistic attitude in view of the complex factors. Zhou's proposal was a resort to negotiations on the entire border and a possible compromise to the disputed areas. This basic approach remained in essence unchanged until 1962.

Collaboration between the two countries was further disrupted by border incidents. Both sides alleged the violation of their frontiers, lodged protests and demanded the withdrawal of troops from each other's territory. There was a further deterioration

138 Letter from Zhou to Nehru, Jan. 23, 1959, Ibid., pp. 52-54.
139 Ibid., pp. 24-27.
in relations due to incursions by the Chinese troops in many places especially in the NEFA and Ladakh area. Armed clashes on August 25 and 26, 1959 at Longju outposts were described in India as a clear instance of Chinese aggression. Nehru emphasised that a broken treaty or an aggressive attitude was more serious than a mile or two in the high mountain that made not much difference physically to either of them.

The Chinese action in overpowering the Indian outpost in Longju on the Indian side of the McMahon line was greatly resented by the Soviet Union also. Immediately after the incident Soviet Government called on the two governments to settle the dispute through peaceful negotiations. The Tass statement of September 9, 1959 said, "The Chinese and Soviet peoples are linked by the unbreakable bond of fraternal friendship. . . . Friendly co-operation between the USSR and India is successfully developing in keeping with the idea of peaceful coexistence. . . ." Some weeks after the Tass statement Khrushchev reiterated the desire for peaceful settlement of the India-China border dispute. He expressed the hope that no further incidents on the border would take place. Nehru reacting to the meaning of Tass statement said, "considering

142 Ibid.
everything, the statement was a fair one and an unusual one for the Soviet Government to sponsor." The General Secretary of the CCP, Teng Hsiao Ping in his speech in the 1960 World Communist Conference said that Khrushchev's views and other measures undertaken by the Soviet Comrades indicated that they sided with 'Nehru, a bourgeois statesman, that they are opposing China, a fraternal Socialist country ...'

The Indian communists reacted to the Chinese incursions in the context of the undemarcated nature of the northern border and the absence of any formal border agreement between India and China. Citing the Panchsheel agreement they emphasised the obligation to respect each other's territorial integrity. Immediate steps were urged in view of the border problem. They laid stress on the importance of the Sino-Indian friendship to strengthen the independence of the Asian nations. They blamed the reactionary forces in the country for launching a campaign of hatred against China. The anti-Chinese view was considered inimical to the Sino-Indian friendship.

Disputing Nehru's version of the border dispute the communists categorically stated that there was no question of aggression involved in the dispute. Events on border were 'border incidents' and not 'acts of aggression.' They minimized


144 Link, Aug. 15, 1962, vol. V (I), pp. 73-76.
the gravity of these incidents and saw no fear of aggression, because they felt India secure in Panchsheel and posed China as a friend of India. The communists tried to stop the rising tide of anti-China sentiments in India. They ruled out possibility of Chinese attack on the ground that India and China believed in Socialism and were fighting together for Asian Solidarity on the principles of Panchsheel.145

Communists called for immediate steps to settle the border problem by mutual negotiations. They had full faith in peaceful negotiations with China and wanted the Indian government to sustain it. They agreed with Nehru's proposal to settle the disputes of NEFA and Ladakh by arbitration. But the firm belief of the communists in the good intentions of China was shattered by the failure of the two leaders to agree on the terms of arbitration.146 Nehru affirmed India's clear intention to stand firm by the line and the status quo for discussion.147 They disagreed on the McMahon line as the Sino-Indian border. They asserted that the McMahon line provided a broad basis for agreement to start negotiations and suggested peaceful


146 Nehru in Lok Sabha, Sept. 4, 1959, Lok Sabha Debates, Aug. 31 - Sept. 12, 1959, vol. 34 (2nd series), Col. 6551.

negotiations to settle the issue. In regard to Indian claim on the McMahon line the Communists asserted that India had not quoted any document to show the Chinese acceptance of the line.

Despite the repeated proclamations of the Communists that they broadly agreed with Nehru's approach to the border problem the differences were obvious. Nehru considered McMahon line non-negotiable, a firm frontier by treaty, usage, history and geography. He considered China to be an aggressor after the occupation whereas Dange advocated China's firm commitment to Panchsheel and asserted that communist China had not committed any aggression against India. The intrusion was described a bogey raised by the press, the western imperialists and the vested interests.

Nehru was rather blamed for worsening the Sino-Indian relations. P. C. Joshi stated:

It is only when the Prime Minister exaggerated a few border incidents into the threat of aggression against our country and also made some angry, unrealistic and unwise statements against the aims, policy and activities of the Chinese Government that all the pro-imperialist reactionary elements came out in the open and ran wild without the bit in their mouths, spreading anti-Chinese


151 A. K. Gopalan pointed out, "The much published intrusion on India's border by China is nothing but a bogey raised by newspapers and a deep rooted conspiracy by the western imperialists and vested interests for whom India China friendship is an eye sore," Amrita Bazar Patrika, Sept. 2, 1959, p. 3.
slanders, and stocking-up war hysteria.\footnote{New Age, Sept. 20, 1959, vol. VII (38), pp. 8-9.}

In the process of underlining the border problem the Communists intended to defend their party against the charges of disloyalty to the country. They considered the anti-Chinese feeling and the fear of the Chinese invasion in the minds of the people, as the work of the reactionaries to injure Indo-China friendship and to bring down the prestige of the Communists.\footnote{P. Ramamurti, Sept. 1, 1959, The Hindu, Sept. 3, 1959, p. 3.} They apprehended that the deterioration in Sino-Indian relations would serve the interest of the imperialists and damage the interests of Afro-Asian countries.

The party, however, declared its support with the people to safeguard the territorial integrity of India but refrained from condemning Chinese action. Because they viewed Sino-Indian friendship as a corner stone of Afro-Asian solidarity and freedom, its weakening they thought, would serve a blow to the forces of world peace. In fact the CPI strategy was to retain China's friendship and remain an important link in Indian politics. For the former it emphasised on the importance of Sino-Indian relations and advocated China's stand favourably. It was argued that China was not capable of aggression. The latter part of the strategy was difficult to maintain. Mohit Sen for example tried to justify the strategy by arguing that real
Patriotism required the defence of Sino-Indian friendship.

Nehru's efforts to seek the withdrawal of Chinese troops and evacuation of the posts occupied by them on the Indian side of the traditional frontier and to cease further threats so as to make the discussions useful, were contrary to the Communists' views. They expressed the opinion that differences between India and China on the demarcation of the border should be resolved through friendly discussions and negotiations without either of them making the acceptance of its own stand by the other as a condition precedent for the starting of negotiations. They did not want India to insist on the McMahon line, nor China on its maps.  

The communist viewpoint was full of ambiguities. It could be seen as a prototype of the Tass Statement in as much as it deplored the incident and wanted it to be settled through peaceful negotiations. On the other hand it viewed the problem from China's stand point and insisted as the Chinese did that the border had not been demarcated.

Nehru was well acquainted with the communist arguments. He noted the Communist stand on Zhou's refusal to recognise McMahon line. Zhou's statement that warned Nehru and aroused indignation in India was described a friendly approach by the

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Communists. For Nehru, Zhou had gone back on his assurance while the Communists expressed their confidence in China's adherence to Panchsheel. Nehru strongly resented the attitude of the Indian Communists towards the border problem and remarked that it was an extraordinary resolution for any organisation, even the communist Party, to keep itself aloof from the sentiments of all like-minded Indians. He considered this as completely wrong attitude.

The Communists were justified in their own way in proclaiming confidence in the good intentions of the Chinese government. Ajoy Ghosh's visit to China to participate in the anniversary of the Revolution strengthened their belief. He gathered the impression that the Chinese and Soviet leaders were keen to have an early settlement of the dispute through negotiations. He denied that the Chinese had committed any aggression on the McMahon line and saw no desire for aggression on the part of the Chinese Government. He asserted that he had found no manifestation of anti-Indian feelings nor the atmosphere of hysteria and excitement against India.


However, this strong belief of the communists could not sustain for long. Immediately after Ghosh's assurances about China's peaceful intentions, the news came of the border clash in Eastern Ladakh in October, 1959. India lodged a strong protest and reiterated its firm policy to continue to resolve amicably and peacefully all the border disputes, to resist aggression by all means available to it. Nehru declared Chinese armed attacks as a challenge to India and resolved to meet the situation with firmness, determination and strength. Nehru was determined not to take any action in anger of passion.

Keeping in view the urgency of settling the issue through peaceful negotiations, attempts were made to eliminate risks of border clashes. Zhou suggested early talks with Nehru. The latter however, declined to accept Zhou's claims and offer. He outlined the deep differences between the viewpoints of the two countries and described the Chinese proposals as impracticable.

Communist reaction on the news of the border clash in Eastern Ladakh revealed the differences within their own ranks which they had tried to conceal in their earlier resolution after the Longju incident. Conflicting assessment of the situation by the Communists disclosed that while the left group led by B. T. Ranadive, Hiren Mukherjee and Bhupesh Gupta opposed India's position on the

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McMahon line and insisted upon full support to China's point of view, the right group led by Dange, Adhikari and Joshi wanted to support the Indian position on the McMahon line and proposed negotiations for minor adjustments.

The decisions of the party reflect a compromise between the different groups. It is evident that they deplored the incident in Ladakh and described it as a tragic event even after the exchange of friendly greetings between the Prime Ministers of the two countries. The Chinese action was considered unjustified in view of the fact that it was a disputed territory. Gopalan described the incident as regrettable and shocking and warned the Chinese that these incidents would lose the friendship of India. Reiterating these views Dange declared wholehearted support to Nehru in his steps to avert such incidents any further and supported his policy of negotiations. China's recent policy was denounced as wrong and it was hoped that McMahon line would form the basis for negotiations to settle the dispute peacefully.  

161 He declared, "If the socialist movement of the country represented by the Communist Party has to progress it must be integrated with nationalism. I do not see eye to eye with my party, but I am sure it is capable of admitting its mistakes and revising its line I knew that China is creating this trouble because she is annoyed with India's policy on Tibet."  

162 Dange supported in general the foreign policy of

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Nehru, his peace policy and accepted the McMahon line. He strongly favoured the acceptance of the McMahon line. The Dange group asked the Communists to disapprove Chinese policies in relation to India as it had led to the growth of rightist forces to combat Indian Government in its defence efforts. The group demanded a firm and categorical declaration of the party in support of the Government stand on Sino-Indian relations. It also commended Nehru's role to fight the reactionary pressures single handed and called for unqualified support to back Nehru in Ladakh and asked China to vacate aggression.

Between the rightists and the leftists there was a centrist group led by Ajoy Ghosh who had only a partial faith in Nehru and shared most of the beliefs and conclusions of the leftists and contended that he had only feebly resisted the rightist pressure. Reactionaries were blamed for creating problem in India-China relations as they took advantage of deterioration in Sino-Indian relations and launched a campaign of hatred. The resolution prepared by Ghosh reflected a position similar

163 Link, Nov. 8, 1959, p. 9.


166 The National Council of the CPI, Meerut, Nov. 10 - 14, 1959, Ibid., p. 70.
to Nehru's stand as it disapproved the Chinese action on borders, demanded the restoration of the status quo existing in 1954 and supported the Indian stand on disputed areas. 167

The left Communists disagreed with the opinion of their right colleagues. Ranadive resisted all attempts in the party to conform its policies to Indian nationalist. He did not accept McMahon line and held, contrary to Nehru's stand that this line was not valid as it had no support of history, treaty and tradition. 168 In his view Nehru Government had surrendered to rightist pressures and had exhausted whatever potentialities it had. The leftists insisted on negotiations even at the expense of the McMahon line and held that Chinese had neither violated McMahon line nor committed aggression.

It was in the background of these inner party differences that the CPI met and expressed its opinion on the Sino-Indian border conflict in Meerut on November, 1959. The party resolution supported India's stand that traditional border in Ladakh should be accepted by China. It pointed out that the exact frontier on the western side was vague and unclear. The party supported its argument in the context of Nehru's view that the question of western sector was a complicated matter. It urged that no preconditions be set by either of the parties for starting negotiations to settle the issue.

167 Ibid.

168 Link, Nov. 22, 1959, p. 12.
The party appreciated Zhou Enlai's proposal for early talks with Nehru for its constructive approach. The proposal was seen as a desire of the Chinese government to settle the issue. At Ajoy Ghosh's suggestion an appeal to the Indian government was incorporated to accept Zhou's offer of direct negotiations but made no specific reference to the suggestion for a demilitarized zone. In his view the proposals demonstrated Zhou's readiness to ensure the tranquillity of the border pending final settlement. The party organized demonstrations and public meetings to exert pressure on the Indian Government to start negotiations with China and to create mass sentiment favourable to Sino-Indian friendship.

Communists group led by Dange and Ghosh argued that Nehru’s approach of peaceful negotiations was consistent with a strong defence of national interests. Dange approved Nehru’s view that the meeting of the two premiers should be preceded by preliminary work. He hoped that so long as Nehru was the guide of India’s foreign policy the two could never go to war with each other. He asserted that there was no failure on Nehru’s part to protect the integrity of the country. Dange declared his position to be consistent with the basic approach and policies in matter of foreign policy pursued by Nehru and his government. Defending his position, he pointed out, "Perhaps on details we may differ but details do not make a policy. A detail does not make a fundamental disagreement."  

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The Communist Party declared its support to Nehru's foreign policy and appreciated his devotion to peace. Defence of the territorial integrity of the country, peaceful negotiations and non-alignment were explained by the Communist leaders as the three pillars of national policy on border problem and reiterated their deep seated conviction that there was no question of war. Acceptance of McMahon line as the boundary between India and China reflected a change in the attitude of the Communists. Government's stand on Ladakh was endorsed. However, despite its support to Nehru in Parliament the differences in CPI's stand with Nehru's policy can be seen. The CPI's emphasis to hold negotiations without any preconditions had remained unchanged. They party also refrained from making any charge of aggression against China.

Nehru on the other hand condemned China. He called the Chinese behaviour on border a 'definite breach of faith.' Nehru did not fail to take note of the differences among the Communist leaders and recognised that some of the members were affected by nationalist sentiment. He wanted them to understand that it was utterly wrong to keep their mind and roots outside India. In the context of dissensions among the groups he pointed out that the Communist Party was in a turmoil. He suspected them for their extra-territorial loyalty and stated:


I do not like that such a party should have a big role in Indian affairs. We give opportunity to all parties to exist and function here and do not obstruct any one of them. But you have to consider carefully whether such a party which has its roots outside India should be allowed to interfere in Indian affairs. This is so because at any time this party might push India in a wrong direction.172

Relations between the two countries continued to deteriorate. Nehru had no misgivings about the differences between the two countries on the border issue and had doubts about the results and success of the possible meeting with Zhou. Despite his reservations about the utility of talks he could not rule out a meeting with Zhou. Nehru's offer to Zhou for talks on Feb. 5, 1960 resulted in their meeting at Delhi from April 20 to 25. His invitation to Zhou was an attempt to explore avenues which might lead to a peaceful settlement.

The communists supported and welcomed his attempt because they had all along emphasised the need for negotiations and the meeting of the two Prime Ministers.173 Earlier also they had pledged to work seriously for a meeting between the two Prime Ministers. The news was hailed as the most heartening news of the year.174 Party sources were optimistic about the forthcoming meeting between Nehru and Zhou.


Despite optimism the meeting yielded no results. No appreciable progress was made. The basic disagreement about historical and actual facts came up repeatedly. Discussion came up against entirely different sets of data and with this the arguments and inferences too differed.\textsuperscript{175} The joint communique regretted that their efforts could find no solution. The two sides agreed on a joint team of officials to examine and check the historical and factual material to report to the two governments to help further consideration of each question.

The communists welcomed the joint communique on the ground that it proposed to avoid further clashes on the border. Failure to reach an agreement was regretted\textsuperscript{176} but the meeting in itself was considered an achievement. They welcomed the decision to continue discussions at the official level as happy and rewarding development.\textsuperscript{177} They argued that differences arose due to the reliance of the two governments on entirely different sets of facts. Peaceful approach and friendly negotiations were

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{175} Zhou maintained that the entire boundary had never been delimited, Chinese note to Indian Government. April 3, 1960, \textit{White Paper}, vol. IV, p. 15. Nehru on the other hand contended that India's boundary had been determined and was firm on the basis of history, treaties and geography and was not open to negotiations, Nehru, \textit{Lok Sabha}, April 26, 1960. \textit{Lok Sabha Debate}, vol. 43 (second series), pp. 13, 791-804.

\item \textsuperscript{176} P. C. Joshi defended Peking against the charge that it was opposed to peaceful co-existence, \textit{New Age}, Oct. 2, 1960, vol. VII (40), pp. 2-3.

\item \textsuperscript{177} CPI, \textit{Statement of Central Secretariat}, April 27, 1960, \textit{New Age}, vol. VIII (18), May 1, 1960.
\end{itemize}
suggested as the only way out. They urged the continuation of negotiations despite all difficulties with a view to preserve Afro-Asian solidarity, the maintenance of world peace, the struggle against colonialism, the internal progress of the two countries and the principles of Panchsheel.

The efforts of the officials too failed to resolve the problem because each side approached the dispute on the basis of its own set of facts. 178

Nehru adhered to the policy of firmness and friendliness to settle the border issue through negotiations because he did not want to weaken the non-aligned movement in the world context. Even if the relations between the two countries did not improve, the resort to meetings of the officials had avoided direct confrontation between them. The two sides continued to reiterate their stand. Nehru emphasised that the border question would be resolved when the Chinese vacated Indian occupied territory and acknowledged the Indian position on the frontier. 179 Failure of the talks to lead to any amicable settlement resulted in reiteration of their stand and of pursuing diplomatic and peaceful means to settle the border issue.

178 With the final meeting from Nov. 7 to Dec. 12, 1960 came the two incompatible reports of the official teams appointed as a result of Zhou - Nehru negotiations in April, 1960.

Nehru was critical of the communist propaganda in the Northern border areas. He alleged that Chinese stand against India in regard to border issue was supported by the Communists by describing the Chinese army across the border as a liberation army and carried on propaganda against India. The communists denied the charge of anti-India propaganda and called it an inaccurate mendacious and deliberate attack against them.

Direct confrontation in view of deteriorating border situation seemed inevitable in 1961. Nehru reported a series of Chinese provocations and violations. The communists like Ajoy Ghosh expressed surprise and regret at the official disclosures and urged China to stop such incursions as these would heighten tension and embitter the relations between the two countries. He declared his party's support to all government measures to repel the Chinese if they crossed the McMahon line and justified government's stand in such an eventuality. He declared, 'the CPI stands for the territorial integrity of India. In its opinion the frontier of India in the Eastern sector lay along McMahon line, that in the western sector the traditional frontier between the two countries should be recognised. The CPI had always urged that the dispute between India and China should be settled through peaceful


181 Hiren Mukherjee, The Tribune, Nov. 23, 1960, p. 10, Nehru's allegations against Kamleshwar Pandit, S. N. Majumdar, and Krishan Bhatt were denied.
negotiations.\textsuperscript{182}

The Chinese denounced Nehru's anti-China campaign and attacked Ghosh for having trailed behind Nehru and issued statements in condemnation of China without bothering to find out the truth of look into the rights and wrongs of the case.\textsuperscript{183}

Ghosh was ready to accept responsibility for his statements against China. Difference in the communist's views on Nehru and Indian government were quite wide. Nehru believed that the communists were better judges of Indian position than any other Communist Party in the world.\textsuperscript{184} However, the communists were reluctant to be drawn into a discussion whether the Chinese act constituted aggression. In view of the counter charges of attack traded by both governments, Nehru proposed negotiations to solve the problem. He offered steps to remove the tensions and create the proper atmosphere for discussions on the boundary. He called upon the Government of China to respect the boundaries between the two countries. Withdrawal of troops and removal of tensions was considered vital for talks. He vigorously reaffirmed his government's previous statement that talks could not be resumed until the causes of tension were dispelled and status quo was restored.


Situation in Ladakh was tense and Nehru reported Chinese forces to be illegally in control of approximately 10,000 to 12,000 sq. miles of Indian territory in Ladakh and disclosed the steps taken to strengthen the defences of the country but was still ready for talks which might lead to a settlement.\(^{185}\)

However, offers of negotiations and all such efforts were ineffective and there were reports of repeated armed disturbances. Indian government launched strong protests against Chinese intrusion in the NEFA and charged that the Chinese had provocatively crossed the McMahon line and wantonly attacked Indian troops inflicting casualties. While these protest notes were being exchanged large scale offensives at several points along the Sino-Indian border and attack on Indian positions in both Eastern and Western sectors were reported in successive waves. These offensives culminated in a full scale invasion by the Chinese.

The communists condemned these intrusions into Indian territory and extended their support to the counter measures taken by the government.\(^{186}\) The dual policy of strengthening defences and at the same time attempting a peaceful settlement of the question was supported by Hiren Mukherjee. He pointed out, 'Emphasis has to be on negotiations through settlement . . . while we maintain the security and integrity of our country. . . . Let discussions take place because discussions have to take


The communists condemned the Chinese government for violating the Sino-Indian agreement of 1959 to maintain the status quo. It was held that mere protestations from the Chinese side of their desire to settle the border would not solve the problem. They called upon the Chinese government not to deteriorate the situation further, and to accept Nehru's offer of withdrawing troops from the disputed areas in Ladakh as the first step towards easing the tension and for a negotiated settlement of the border. Sardesai vehemently criticised the Chinese policy to raid India. He asserted Ghosh's earlier advocated view that the Communist Party of India alone had the right to judge and evaluate the Indian situation and that other communist parties must accept the Indian party's assessment.

Series of developments had forced the Indian communists to restate their position. It was emphasised that the CPI considered the McMahon line as the border, a virtually demarcated line and justified all necessary steps to defend it. Dange denied the charge that Nehru's foreign policy was made by dollar or rouble aid.

The massive invasion by China on October 20, 1962 was a turning point in the Sino-Indian relations for which both sides blamed each other.

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other. Zhou offered proposals to seek a way to stop the border clashes, to reopen negotiations and to settle Sino-Indian border question. He regretted that efforts for peaceful negotiations did not evoke Indian response. The Chinese claimed that the proposals were in line with their consistent stand for a peaceful settlement of the boundary. In Zhou's view the Indian side did not appreciate the proposals and Nehru insisted on reverting to the status quo along the entire boundary as it prevailed before September 8, 1962. The Communists condemned the Chinese action and branded them aggressors. They supported Nehru's terms for negotiations and repudiated the charges and provocative statements of the Chinese Government in press and radio programmes, especially their reference to Nehru as an agent of the U.S. imperialists and their tool to secure more aid, a leader of reactionaries and imperialists. That China would seek to settle the dispute with India by force of arms was beyond the communist expectations from a socialist country. They defended India as a country of peace camp engaged in peaceful consolidation of its independence. They charged that China had fallen victim to narrow nationalistic considerations at the cost of the interests of world peace and anti-imperialism in its attitude towards India. Chinese aggressive policy was attributed to the resistance of the Communist Party of China to accept principles.

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of international communist movement on the questions of war and peace and peaceful co-existence. The communists publicly condemned the aggression and defined it as most naked unkind, treacherous and criminal aggression against India and declared unreserved support to Nehru and the position of the Indian government on the border question.\(^1\)

Communist reaction reflected differences too. The group led by Dange laid stress on the defence and held that mere protestations against China and emphasis on negotiations were of no value. Nehru's offer to the Chinese government to restore their position was seen as a reasonable and constructive approach. It was believed that communist support to Nehru would serve the larger interests of world communist movement and would prevent all out western support for India. They regretted that Chinese press and the media carried on vicious and slanderous campaign against Nehru and the Indian Government in complete disregard of all facts and of the common understanding of the international communist movement.\(^2\)


P. Ramamurti stressed on the need for negotiations against defence and did not name China an aggressor because it had not accepted McMahon line. Ranadive too held this opinion and defended China in view of his belief that socialist China could not commit aggression. Marxist theory consistently expounded that no socialist country could commit aggression. Ranadive continued to oppose the overall party line of supporting the Nehru Government on its own stand on border problem.

Some of the radicals like C. Rajeswara Rao supported Dange group and they became dominant because unceasing Chinese activities on the borders could not be denied. Facts became too obvious and evidence was too massive.

On November 20, 1962 a month after their offensive 'the Chinese suddenly announced that they would unilaterally initiate a cease fire and would begin withdrawing their troops. The communists lent support to Nehru's views on unilateral cease fire along the entire Sino-Indian border. Nehru had described Chinese proposals, the ceasefire statement and the withdrawal of forces as the violation of principles and a

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195 CPI, Secretariat of the National Council, Letter to Fraternal Parties, Sd, S. A. Dange, E. M. S. Namboodripad, Bhupesh Gupta, Z. A. Ahmad and M. N. Govindan Nair, Yogindra Sharma, in The India China Border Dispute and the CPI, op. cit., p. 82.

definite attempt to prejudice India's position in maintaining its stand on the boundary issue. He asserted that the Chinese aimed at retaining physical control of areas which were never under their administrative control either on November 7, 1959 or at any time prior to September 8, 1962. He proposed the status quo prior to September 8, for their acceptance, and reaffirmed the determination not to compromise on Chinese terms. No meeting ground with the Chinese was possible unless they returned to pre September 8, positions.

The communists emphasised that no terms unacceptable to Nehru could be accepted and asked China to meet his points. They clearly stated that the acceptance of Chinese proposals for a cease fire was a capitulation to their aggression. They viewed Sino-Indian relations in the context of world peace and anti-colonialism, national independence, democracy and socialism. To them these effected the cause of the world communist movement as a whole. It was alleged that just as the Chinese Government, "imposed fighting" upon India, similarly it wanted to impose its own settlement. Chinese government was thus, denounced for an unabated expansionism. Chinese statements suggested the bellicosity of the spirit and demonstrated that


China counted on its physical strength. While extending its full support to the position taken by Nehru in regard to China, the Communist Party welcomed Government's move to send missions to non-aligned countries of Asia and Africa to seek support against the Chinese aggression and to explain India's position in regard to the conditions which could create the basis for negotiation with China. The party criticised the forces working for a change by removing Nehru government. The party more forcibly than ever before appealed for national unity in support of the basic policies pursued by Nehru. This included the policies of all out national defence against Chinese aggression, preservation of non-alignment and of steadfastly seeking an honourable settlement on the basis of the vacation of the present Chinese aggression.

The left group within the CPI however had reservations about the party stand. It favoured a political settlement with China and wanted to avoid the spread of anti-China feelings in India. It characterised the national party council as thoroughly anti-China because it took no initiative to oppose the government's stand. The group felt that with the worsening Sino-India crisis the western powers would dominate the economic and military affairs of India and would prevent Nehru from pursuing his policy of non-alignment and democracy.


Nehru took note of the division in Communist ranks and interpreted their reactions accordingly. He asserted that the CPI talked with two voices in supporting China. While one group supported them the other maintained that both India and China had made mistakes. He declined his support to the communist party as it looked for guidance from others, but welcomed their support against Chinese Government. He stated:

The (CPI) resolution (of Nov. 1, 1962 in support of his policy) showed that the party stood out and stood up four square against this attack as any hundred per cent nationalist would do, that is a good thing. Why should we not take full advantage of it. Instead of deriding it and seeking causes why they did it? The country should take full advantage of it in forging the unity against aggression that we have in fact forged.

In supporting Nehru's position at the Colombo Conference of six Afro-Asian non-aligned countries to find means by which India and China could be brought together to consolidate the cease fire and to negotiate a settlement of their border dispute, the communists too expressed their deep yearning for the peaceful settlement of the issue. The conference was described as a favourable turn to create favourable prospects for a peaceful settlement through negotiations. They appreciated the six nations for their great initiative and efforts to end the tragic conflict between India and China. The CPI extended its full

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202 CPI, CEC, Resolution, New Delhi, Jan. 15-17, 1963, India China Border Dispute and the CPI op. cit., p. 96.
support to the Colombo proposals and welcomed their acceptance in toto by the Nehru government. His government's stand in this respect was considered constructive consistent with the dignity of the nation and fundamental interests. His approach was defined as constructive.

The Communists stand was in no way different from Nehru's in regard to the Colombo proposals. They shared his belief and faith in the sincerity and impartiality of the Colombo proposals. They urged the Chinese government to reciprocate India's acceptance of the proposals by a similar act on its part without any delay. 203 The Chinese opposition to the Colombo proposals was condemned and the Chinese government was held responsible for the undesirable situation and for the failure to start negotiations. Deadlock in the relations between the two countries could not be resolved because India and China failed to make adjustments and approached the dispute on the basis of their own set of facts.

The Sino-Indian developments not only affected Nehru's relations with the communists but also affected Nehru's view of communism and the growth of the Communist Party in India. China obviously was the most tormenting issue for him in the 1960s. It was a great blow for Nehru to find that imperialism which was the voice of white capitalism could be found in full force in Communist China. Aggression against Tibet was followed by an armed attack against India and Nehru himself had to resort to armed

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force to repel it. He did not shirk the issue to resort to war and took a realistic view because he was faced with the fact of aggression. One of his great disappointment was his experience that the Chinese Communist leaders had betrayed him. Although he had no illusions about the dangers of communism to democracy in India and he fought successfully to minimize communist influence at home, he could not believe that the Chinese communists would openly attack India to gain their ends.

The border issue widened the dissensions among the Communists themselves. The unity and strength of the party was damaged because different Communists groups publicly made statements revealing the differences in their approach. In spite of the repeated proclamations that they would unite with the rest of the people in case of aggression, the differences erupted on defining aggression. As a result they could not decide whether the aggression had taken place or not. The leftists in their ranks refused to accept Chinese action as aggression in defiance of international law, supported China tactilly and sometimes publicly. But the unprovoked, unwarranted Chinese aggression exposed the intentions of Chinese Communism; its expansionist designs could not explain the Communist view that no Socialist country could ever commit aggression. In their enthusiasm to support the communist proposition that a communist country could not commit aggression, they tried to minimize the Chinese provocative acts. Such statements on the part of the Communists undermined their position and led Nehru to specifically charge them for their anti-national activity on the border.