CONCLUSIONS
The conceptual framework for Soviet appraisal of the Indian National Congress can be traced back to the Comintern period. Under the guidance of Lenin the Comintern worked out the basic parameters of relationship between the International Communist movement and the national liberation movement of the oppressed peoples in the colonies. The First Comintern Congress held in March 1919 adopted the guidelines of the Communist International which referred to the "obligatory task" of establishing a "permanent and close bond" between the struggle of the proletariat in the imperialist countries and the national liberation movement of the oppressed peoples and supporting the struggle of the latter to facilitate the final breakdown of the imperialist world system.

At the Second Congress of the Comintern Lenin rejected the sectarian position taken by M.N. Roy who held that the Comintern and the Communist Parties should not support the "bourgeois democratic nationalist movements" which in his view were limited to small middle classes. Roy advocated that there should be exclusive concentration on the building of the Communist Parties and developing the workers' and peasants' movements. He also argued that "without breaking up of the colonial empire in the East, the overthrow of capitalism is not possible." These views were not acceptable to Lenin who
insisted that the Communists must support the bourgeois-led national liberation movement while fighting against the compromising tendencies of the national bourgeoisie and building independent class movement.

Notwithstanding Lenin's balanced theoretical formulation on relationship with the national liberation movement, the Comintern failed to forge a working relationship with the Indian nationalists during the period of non-cooperation movement launched by the Indian National Congress. As the present study has shown, the entire blame for this can not be laid upon M.N. Roy's sectarian stand alone. The manifesto of the First Congress of the Comintern in which Roy had not participated had spoken of the national liberation struggle "assuming an explicitly social character." The thesis on the World Situation and the Tasks of the Comintern adopted at the Third Congress had also stated that the "growth of indigenous proletariat paralyses the national revolutionary tendencies of the capitalist bourgeoisie". It had also referred to the vast peasant masses "finding revolutionary leaders in the person of the conscious Communist vanguard."

Of course, the Fourth Congress of the Comintern had again reconfirmed Leninist position by stating "... the Communist International supports every national revolutionary movement against imperialism ... in the Colonial East the slogan that must be emphasised at the present
time is that of the anti-imperialist united front." The Fifth Congress of the Comintern held in June-July 1924 recommended that the Comintern must expand direct contact with the national movements of the Peoples of the East. Rejecting Roy's deviation Manuilsky, Chairman of the Colonial Commission stressed the need to find a "just proportion" between the social movement and the national movement.

The ascendancy of the Leninist line at the Fourth Congress of the Comintern, however, proved to be short-lived. At a speech before students of the Communist University of the Toilers of the East on 18 May 1925 Stalin came out with a highly negative assessment of the national movement in India. All subsequent Soviet critical assessments of the Indian National Congress were coloured by Stalin's observations in his said address. Among the seven features mentioned by Stalin before the Communist University of the Toilers of the East in relation to the colonial and dependent countries of the East the third and sixth completely reversed the positive conceptual basis for Soviet appraisal of the Indian National Congress. Stalin stated that in India "Capitalism is growing at a rapid rate, giving rise to and moulding a more or less numerous class of local proletarians." And that "the question of the hegemony of the proletariat in such countries, and of freeing the masses of the people
from the influence of the compromising national bourgeoisie, is becoming more and more urgent." (J.V. Stalin, Works, Vol. 7, Moscow, 1954, p.156). Stalin concluded, "The fundamental and new feature of the conditions of life of colonies like India is not only that the national bourgeoisie has split up into a revolutionary party and a compromising party, but primarily that the compromising section of this bourgeoisie has already managed, in the main, to strike a deal with imperialism." (Ibid., p.150).

This pronouncement of Stalin deeply influenced the negative Soviet view of the Indian National Congress which continued to dominate over a long period. The Sixth Congress of the Comintern in 1928 put its seal of approval on this sectarian approach. This deviation was corrected at the Seventh Congress of the Comintern held in 1935. In his report to the Congress Dimitrov declared: "In India the Communists must support, extend and participate in all anti-imperialist mass activities, not excluding those which are under national reformist leadership. While maintaining their political and organisational independence they must carry on active work inside the organisations which take part in the Indian National Congress facilitating the process of crystallisation of a national revolutionary wing among them, for the purpose of further developing national liberation movement of the Indian people against British imperialism."
The United Front strategy endorsed by the Seventh Congress, however, could not be implemented in India on account of divergent Communist and nationalist approach to the war. The Communists were forced to leave the Indian National Congress and their relations with the latter remained estranged during the negotiations for transfer of power. This estranged relationship also influenced Soviet perceptions of the Indian National Congress.

Contrary to the commonly subscribed view about negative Soviet perceptions of the Indian National Congress during the war and the period following it until the attainment of independence by India in 1947, the Soviet academic circles did not always take an unfavourable view of the role and character of the Indian National Congress. Thus we find Soviet journal World Economy and World Politics describing the Indian National Congress as the "mass anti-imperialist organisation of the Indian people" just two weeks after the outbreak of the war. Soviet scholar Melman writing towards the end of 1942 referred to the Quit India Movement with sympathy, expressing his disagreement with the British propaganda projecting it as pro-Japanese. In 1946 A.M. Dyakov characterised the Indian National Congress as "undoubtedly a progressive organisation". He called Gandhi "the most influential and popular leader" in spite of the "strong imprint of backwardness" which his philosophy bore. In another article published
in February 1946 Dyakov wrote that the Congress aimed at the complete independence of India and that its social and economic programme was, under Indian conditions, "progressive". In his New Times article of 15 May 1946 Dyakov described Nehru as a "progressive democrat" and praised him for his by and large correct appraisal of the International situation. Patel and Rajendra Prasad were described by him as narrow nationalists.

A shift took place in Soviet perceptions of Indian developments roughly between March and June 1947, in the period which saw an escalation of cold war in the wake of Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan. The cold war atmosphere contributed to unfavourable and antagonistic perceptions of the Indian reality by the Soviets. E.M. Zhukov accused Nehru of pro-British sympathies and criticised him for retaining the Commonwealth links which the Soviet scholar viewed as emanating from the necessity for maintaining military cooperation with Britain. By June 1947 when a Conference of Soviet Orientalists was held in Moscow, the Soviet approach towards the Indian National Congress had crystallised in the negative direction. There was general agreement among Soviet scholars that the Indian National Congress had betrayed the national movement by its acceptance of the Mountbattion Plan and that the Indian working class with the Communist Party of India as its vanguard must now lead the struggle. Cooperation with the Indian National Congress was ruled out by both groups of Soviet Indologists (Zhukov, Melman
supporting a four class Communist-led united front and Dyakov, Balabushevich favouring a three class united front). Zhukov called Gandhi the "apostle of backwardness", and Nehru a "rich millionaire". He also alleged that the Indian big bourgeoisie was employing Gandhism for "poisoning the masses with disbelief in their strength". Not only a hawkish Zhukov but a dovish Dyakov criticised Nehru for trying to become together with Patel the "natural leaders of Non-Communist Asia." Sharply critical of Nehru's speeches during his U.S. visit, Dyakov deplored the Indian government's policy of "converting India into an Anglo-American gendarme in the East." In his work on the nationalities question in India Dyakov argued that the Indian national movement was dominated not by the big bourgeoisie of the country as a whole, but by a few nationalities represented by big Gujarati-Marwari business group, which wanted to monopolise Indian market by gaining political power through a compromise with the British imperialists.

During the closing years of Stalin's rule the Soviet assessment of the Indian National Congress began to show some signs of change. At a conference held at the Institute of Oriental Studies in November 1951, Zhukov warned against the danger of following the Chinese model with its emphasis on peasant-based guerilla warfare as a stereotype. Other participants I.P. Nasenko and V.V. Balabushevich also argued against the applicability of the path of the
Chinese revolution to other Asian countries particularly India. Conditions were now becoming favourable for a new positive appraisal of the Indian National Congress. The need to harness the newly independent countries for a worldwide peace movement and struggle against military blocs played an important part in the re-evaluation of the old dogmatic Soviet approach. The conclusion of American military aid agreement with Pakistan in February 1954 and the fear of a strong neighbouring Communist China forced the Indian ruling classes to revise their pro-West stance.

Yet, notwithstanding the improvement taking place in the Indo-Soviet relations during 1951-54 period, many of the Soviet writings continued to be critical of the policies of the Indian National Congress and its leadership. An article by Soviet economist I. Leinin in the Soviet academic journal *Voprosy Ekonomiki* in early 1952 stated that the Congress leadership expressed the interests of the monopolist bourgeoisie, of the landlords, moneylenders and speculators. The crisis in the Indian National Congress in the wake of Tandon's election as the Party President was commented upon by Soviet weekly *New Times*, which also mentioned reports in the Indian press about Tandon's dealings with American Ambassador. The Soviet weekly wrote that the crisis was precipitated by the policy of the Indian National Congress, which Tandon was the symbol. In its view, the curbs on freedom of speech and press, ban on strikes and the Preventive Detention Law
only testified to the continuation of the crisis. The Congress Party's victory in the 1952 elections was attributed by the Soviet press to its "many privileges and advantages" and "extensive political experience, notably in conduct of election campaigns which the other parties lacked." The Indian National Congress was also charged with the abuse of the government machine by ordering wholesale arrests of candidates and militant workers of Communist and other democratic parties. The Congress reverses in the 1952 elections were attributed to failure of the party to carry out radical land reforms and liberate the country's economy from domination by the imperialist powers.

The year 1955 which represents a high watermark in the development of Indo-Soviet relations saw the Soviet Party Daily Pravda devoting an editorial to India's Republic Day anniversary. The unique feature of the Pravda write-up was the praise it lavished not only on the peaceful foreign policy of the Congress government but also on its domestic achievements. It referred to Jawaharlal Nehru as an "outstanding statesman". Yet, the Soviet Daily's appreciation of Nehru government's domestic achievements was still on a low key in comparison with its fulsome praise for its foreign policy. Significantly the Pravda remained silent about adoption by the Indian National Congress of socialistic pattern of society as its goal at its Avadi session in early January. The Pravda
editorial of 7 June 1955 on the arrival of Nehru in Moscow on a state visit like the earlier editorial on the Republic Day anniversary laid stress on the Soviet and Indian peoples' common desire for peace. The only reference to the domestic policy confined itself to the observation that "the Soviet people sympathise with the Indian government's efforts to industrialise the country, for they know from experience the importance of industrialisation for independent existence." Again there was no mention of the Avadi session of the Indian National Congress on socialistic pattern of society or to any of its radical economic programmes. It was only 15 years later that Soviet scholar T.F. Deviatkina in her work published from Moscow in 1970 (the first monograph by a Soviet scholar on the Indian National Congress) made an observation on the importance of the socialist pattern resolution adopted at the Avadi session of the Congress. Deviatkina stated that "it evoked great enthusiasm in the country and strengthened the position of the Congress." The Soviet scholar also noted the changes brought about in the pattern of voting by social groups in the elections as a result of the adoption of the socialist slogans by the Indian National Congress. The reactionary feudal circles got scared of the Congress and began to found their own political parties. She referred to the Gantantra Parishad in Orissa agreeing to share power with the Indian National Congress in the face of Communist success in Kerala in the 1957 elections.
The new Soviet policy adopted under Khrushchev to strengthen a worldwide front of forces against imperialism had an objective basis in the existence of deep contradictions between the big bourgeoisie constituting part of the national bourgeoisie and the imperialist bourgeoisie. Cooperation between the newly independent countries and the Soviet Union in the anti-imperialist struggle for peace was not without gains for the forces of social revolution in these countries. Their fight for national independence was inseparable from the fight for peace. The extent to which the newly independent countries were able to break away from the stranglehold of imperialism, determined the pace of their advance towards socialism. But the new Soviet approach had its shortcomings too as it raised unrealistic expectations about possibility of transition to socialism under the leadership of national bourgeoisie.

A.M. Dyakov's article published in the first issue of the new journal of the Institute of Oriental Studies was the first indication of a positive assessment of the Nehru government at the scholarly level. Dyakov's article projected India as an example of a sovereign country striving to attain economic independence. It was in marked contrast with the dominant Soviet appraisal during the Stalin period which denounced Indian independence as a sham and viewed India as a semi-colony. Since Dyakov confined himself to Nehru's foreign policy, his article fell short of an attempt to substantiate the new Soviet appraisal on the basis of shift in relations between Indian bourgeoisie and
foreign capital. An uphill task faced Soviet scholars in bringing out the theoretical basis of the progressive character of Nehru's foreign policy, its linkage with the path of independent sovereign development on the basis of a concrete analysis of his domestic economic policy and the character of Indian economy. Soviet scholar V.A. Maslennikov reiterated that the bourgeoisie displayed contradictory tendencies and concluded that Indian bourgeoisie could not be depended upon as a consistent fighter against imperialism and feudalism.

Divergent opinions were expressed by Soviet scholars. Iu. N. Rosaliev stressed the incompatibility of the native and foreign monopolies. An editorial of the Soviet journal Sovietskoe Vostokovedenie which carried discussion on Maslennikov's views, authoritatively stated that foreign capital no longer exercised "uncontrollable rule" in countries following the path of independent development. This, however, did not prevent the continuation of a critical Soviet approach to the domestic policies of the Indian National Congress. Soviet economist I. Lemin asserted that as yet no social transformation had taken place in countries believed to be pursuing the path of independent development and that they remain within the world capitalist economy, Lemin took a guarded view of Indian economic planning. Similarly another Soviet economist M. Rubinshtein in his article published at the end of 1955 referred to the half-hearted character of agrarian reforms in India and also highlighted the exploitative character of Indian capitalism.
The continuation of a critical approach to Indian developments must have caused some anxiety to the Party leadership which was trying to cultivate the Congress regime in India led by Nehru in the interest of strengthening the struggle for peace. The result was the famous Sovetskoe Vostokovedenie editorial in the first issue of 1956 which reminded the Soviet Orientalists that the Leninist formulation about the general tendency towards decay of capitalism in the era of imperialism did not rule out the possibility of growth of capitalism in individual countries. It also pointed out that the dominant economic position of foreign capital in the newly independent countries did not imply domination of their political life by imperialism and that political independence was vital for economic independence.

The official guideline laid down in the Sovetskoe Vostokovedenie editorial of 1956 was, however, not acceptable to all Soviet academics engaged in research on India. Their divergences came out at the Conference held at the end of 1956 at the Institute of Oriental Studies to discuss the economic and political position of the national bourgeoisie in the countries of the East. Not many Soviet scholars agreed with A.I. Levkovsky's view which described the national bourgeoisie in India as consisting of three groups, the big, middle and petty bourgeoisie (the Indian monopolists treated as a sub group of big bourgeoisie). Levkovsky asserted that despite the close ties of the
national bourgeoisie with both foreign capital and native landlords serious contradictions emerged between it and the foreign capital and native feudalism as local capital developed. Only a small group of compradore bourgeoisie stood in contrast with the national bourgeoisie and played a role subservient to the foreign capital. Soviet scholars L. Gordon, G.G. Kotovsky, E. Komarov, Schmidt and Shastitko took an independent line of their own. Schmidt and Shastitko went to the extent of stating that power in India was still in the hands of monopolies and landlords and that the Indian National Congress was a party of monopolies and landlords. Kotovsky noted that the big bourgeoisie was tied more to moneylending capital than to landlord elements. He also held that the petty bourgeoisie was at times less radical than the big bourgeoisie on questions relating to abolition of landlordism. Komarov was critical of Levkovsky for not giving enough attention to the ties that linked Indian monopolies with imperialism.

Summing up the results of the discussions Balabushevic observed that the consensus of opinion at the conference was that the national bourgeoisie was a progressive force and that the monopoly layer was a part of it. He also affirmed the progressive character of the Indian National Congress as it represented the national bourgeoisie and the section of the landlords interested in capitalist development. Thus the above position though representing a total rejection of the earlier dogmatic stand under Stalin which assessed the Indian situation as revolutionary and
ripe for the hegemony of the proletariat in the national liberation struggle against capitulationist bourgeoisie, did not imply a euphoric approach of admiration for socialistic slogans raised by the Indian National Congress in 1955. Notwithstanding a positive assessment of the Congress regime in the period following the 20th Party Congress serious reservations about the progressiveness of the national bourgeoisie in India and its political organisation the Indian National Congress continued in Soviet academic circles.

The critical approach to the Indian National Congress continued all through the Khrushchev period until 1964 even though high compliments were paid to Nehru's peace loving policy. An attempt made by leading Soviet Indologist R.A. Ulyanovsky to provide an economic basis in the sphere of domestic policy to the progressive Nehruvian line in foreign policy through his positive assessment of the nature of state capitalism in India met with opposition at the hands of several noted Soviet Indologists. Ulyanovsky's views met with sharp criticism by scholars of the Institute of World Economy and International Relations. A.A. Poliak and M.A. Maksimov found fault with Ulyanovsky for not recognising that state capitalism was above all an economic and not a political category whose development depended not so much on foreign political conditions as on domestic class struggle.
During 1960-61 the statement adopted by the Moscow Conference of Communist and Workers Parties (1960) and the programme of the party adopted at the XXII Congress of the C.P.S.U. (1961) advanced the concepts of national democratic states and the non-capitalist path of development. The evolution of these concepts raised some problems for Soviet scholars in their evaluation of the Indian developments. Barring a few stray examples of projection of India as either following the non-capitalist path or poised at its threshold, Soviet scholars were by and large objective in their analysis of the developments in India. They steered clear of an euphoric approach projecting the Indian development model as pursuit of "political and economic independence" and not that of non-capitalist path. The period was remarkable in another respect. The Soviet media and academic circles were not reluctant to voice their criticism of the domestic and foreign policies of the Indian National Congress. Nehru's critique of Soviet society and Communism in general for its adherence to violence and suppression of individual freedom was strongly rebutted by Academician Yudin in his rejoinder published in the December 1958 issue of the World Marxist Review.

Both the Soviet media and the academic circles took due notice of the rising threat of domination of the Indian National Congress by the monopolists and the landlords beginning with the late 50s. The growing struggle inside the ruling party came in for repeated comments by
Soviet journalists and academics. Thus P.V. Kutsobin in his small monography *Sovremennaye Indiya* published from Moscow in 1963 noted that the representatives of the monopoly circles and their supporters in the ruling party and the government succeeded in getting the draft of the second five year plan re-examined and altered in the interest of the private sector. According to Kutsobin allocations for development of industries in the state sector were reduced by 2.5 billion rupees even though the total plan outlay was increased by 5 billion rupees. He also referred to many loopholes left in the 1956 Industrial Policy Resolution which replaced the earlier one from 1948. The Soviet scholar also noted the half-hearted character of the agrarian policy of the Indian National Congress under the leadership of Nehru in the post-1956 period. Referring to the sharp struggle at the Indian National Congress session in Nagpur in January 1959 where Nehru moved a resolution on further regulation of agrarian relations and cooperativisation of the Indian village, Kutsobin noted that it was only through a majority vote that the resolution could be adopted. He also made a critical reference to fixation of ceilings on land in the estates at 100, 200 and even 300 acres.

The critical tone of the Soviet media persisted during the 1959-62 period and grew even sharper in the wake of developments following the border conflict with China down to the death of Nehru in 1964. The Soviet press paid
particular attention to the inner-party developments between the period November 1963 to January 1964 i.e. from the Jaipur session of the All India Congress Committee to the Bhubaneswar annual session. The *New Times* article by Kotovsky, Pavlov and Redko ascribed the differences within the party to its heterogeneous class composition. They noted a number of negative features of Indian developments and regretted that many leading personalities of the Indian National Congress got involved in the campaign for the dismissal of the Communist Ministry in Kerala, "failing to see the danger emanating from the extreme right." The Soviet scholars expressed concern over the Indian National Congress losing a substantial number of seats to the Swatantra and other Rightist parties in the 1962 general elections. They also criticised the government for arresting trade union and Communist leaders following the border conflict with China. The Kamaraj Plan was hailed by them and they expressed the hope that the removal of Morarji Desai and S.K. Patil from the Cabinet would make possible a "revitalisation of non-alignment". The discussion of the Jaipur draft resolution by the Congress organisations in the states was taken as an indication of grave differences between the progressive forces and the Congress Right which spoke for the big business and landowners. The Soviet Commentators found the resolution on democracy and socialism adopted at Bhubaneswar inadequate and hazy though "to some extent expressive of peoples aspirations." The
failure of the resolution to even mention nationalisation was taken by the Soviet scholars as an evidence of the advocates for a capitalist path for India gaining the upper hand in Congress policy-making circles.

It is interesting to note the divergent Soviet interpretation of the developments in the Indian National Congress particularly in the period extending from the Jaipur AICC session to the Bhubaneswar annual session. Differences can also be noticed in their analysis and appraisal of the period following the adoption of the Avadi resolution as also in their assessment of Nehru's concept of socialism.

The two important monographs on the Indian National Congress by Soviet scholars T.F. Deviatkina and A.I. Reginin published respectively in 1970 and 1978 widely differ in their appraisal of developments in the Indian National Congress and Nehru's concept of socialism. Deviatkina highlights the change which occurred in Nehru's ideas of socialism in the post-independence period. The subsequent work by Reginin does not dwell upon this change. The former work attributes this change to the conflict which arose after the independence between the desire of the young bourgeoisie which wanted to make the maximum use of new possibilities opened up by the country's independence and the efforts of the ruling party in pursuit of its ideals to somewhat curb the spontaneity of private enterprise in the interest of independent development. These efforts, however, did not in the opinion of Deviatkina,
lead to establishment of a society radically different from the existing capitalist society. Deviatkina con-
trasted Nehru's views on socialism as laid down in his 1930 speech at the Lucknow session of the Congress when he stated that socialism signifies liquidation of private property and the position he took in 1956 at the National Council on Development where he said that he did not see the need for squandering national resources to pay compensation for nationalisation. According to Deviat-
kina Nehru's earlier approach of opposing capitalism with socialism gradually softened in the post-independence period with his discovery of a third path of development. In her opinion, Nehru favoured the middle path avoiding both the extremes represented by the U.S. and the Soviet Union in the name of specific character of India. The so-called mixed economy formed the basis of this path. Deviatkina projected the formulation of the concept of socialism by the Congress leadership between 1962 and 1964 as an attempt to highlight the difference between Indian socialism and the socialism practised in socialist coun-
tries in the wake of emergence of strong reactionary forces following the border conflict with China. The Bhubaneswar resolution laying equal stress on both democracy and socialism was viewed by Deviatkina as the cul-
mination point in the development of the concept of a special form of Indian socialism. The Bhubaneswar session was compared by her to a peculiar kind of movement of legs
while standing at the same place (тотаниве на месте) after which an open retreat from the earlier positions became visible.

The later work of A.I. Chicherov under the pseudonym of A.I. Reginin offers an altogether different appraisal of Nehru's concept of socialism. Chicherev does not distinguish between pre- and post-independence ideas of Nehru on socialism. Nor does he look upon the Bhubaneswar session as the beginning of retreat from socialism. In fact he treats the Congress resolutions of Avadi, Nagpur and Bhubaneswar as reflecting the basic stand of Nehru though he feels that the Prime Minister's position was not adequately expressed in the face of opposition by Rightist forces. Chicherev's work draws heavily on the ideas of B.N. Komarov whose evaluation of Nehru's socialism is highly positive. Chicherev concludes by quoting from Komarov who goes even beyond Lenin's characterisation of Sun-Yat Sen as "subjectively socialist" in evaluating Nehru's programme which in Komarov's view included a substantial element of a realistic approach based on recognition of law governed historical character of socialist transformation of society and creation of direct material pre-requisites for it.

Soviet worries about the post-Nehru alignment of forces within the Congress and outside it did not decrease even after the installation of Mrs. Gandhi as Prime Minister after the death of Lal Bahadur Shastri. The composition of the new Cabinet formed by Mrs. Gandhi in which
Morarji Desai occupied the post of Deputy Prime Minister and continued to cause anxiety to Moscow. Mr. Morarji Desai was considered by the Soviets as a representative of the big business. The Soviet press made critical references to the opening up of industries marked for public sector to foreign capital as also the devaluation of Rupee in 1966 under pressure of the World Bank. During the 1966-68 period Soviet press carried a number of articles by Ulyanovsky, Gotbøber and Shtykanov and Savelyev highlighting the increased political activity of the Indian monopoly bourgeoisie. It also alleged that the big capitalist got their candidates included in the Congress list by threatening to stop financial assistance to the party. Soviet perceptions of the Congress regime headed by Mrs. Gandhi remained negative both before and after the 1967 general elections. Only between 1969 and 1971 it became highly positive following the 1969 Congress split.

The Congress reverses in the 1967 elections were not seen by knowledgeable Soviet political commentators on Indian Affairs as "anti-Congressism pure and simple." Thus Lev Stepanov in one of his articles in the New Times (No. 43, 1968) attached importance to the fact that in some states Left opposition parties came to power, in others Right, in still others motley coalitions. He did not attribute it to haphazard electoral behaviour and observed that it was a reflection of differing socio-economic conditions. The debacle of Congress in the 1967 general
elections and mid-term elections in several states in February 1969 received great attention by the Soviet media and academic circles. The formation of independent state parties namely Vishal Haryana Party, Jan Congress in Orissa, Kerala Congress, Bangla Congress and the Bharatiya Kranti Dal was attributed to internal contradictions within the Congress and the growing discontent on account of the failure of the April 1969 Faridabad session of the Congress to arrive at any decision on a number of key problems facing the country.

Soviet Commentators did not endorse the Western view that sharp differences in the Congress party leading to its split represented a contest for power and influence in the party between Indira Gandhi and the Old Congress leaders. They projected it as a clash of views on economic and social policies. According to Kutsobin the syndicate leaders who had close links with big business challenged the programme of progressive socio-economic measures proposed by the Centre-Left forces in the Congress headed by Mrs. Gandhi at the Bangalore meeting of the AICC (*New Times*, No.47, 1969). This, in the opinion of Kutsobin, left Mrs. Gandhi and her supporters with no alternative but to take resolute action to foil the plans of the Right.

The rival Congress sessions held at Bombay and Ahmedabad in December 1969 by the two groups were commented upon by A. Iverov in a *New Times* article. About the followers of Mrs. Gandhi who attended the Bombay session the
Soviet Commentator wrote that most of them stood for progressive socio-economic reforms. The endorsement of nationalisation of banks by the Syndicate-led Congress at its Ahmedabad session was described as camouflage. The Soviet press did not call the split in the Congress a split between the pro-monopoly and anti-monopoly groups. It simply stated that while there was a very large group among Mrs. Gandhi's followers, there were none among the followers of the Syndicate. Serious Soviet writings displayed considerable caution and characterised the new Congress leadership under Mrs. Gandhi as a Centre-Left coalition. In early 1971 Kutsobin in one of his articles referred to many reactionary elements within Mrs. Gandhi's Congress who did everything in their power to freeze the further radicalisation of the government policy and oppose joining hands with the Communists and other Leftist forces. In Ulyanovsky's view it was not the promotion of leftist measures like nationalisation of banks that led to the Congress split. According to him it was caused by an offensive launched by the Right-wing forces in the Congress in collaboration with the Rightist parties (Pravda, 4 September, 1970). The Soviet ideologue emphasised the need for forging a united front of all left-wing democratic forces against the threat from the Right. Thus one could notice the difference between Kutsobin's and Ulyanovsky's views. The latter did not mention the reactionary elements within the new Congress and sought to create the impression
as if the Congress split represented a division between the monopolist and non-monopolist sections of the national bourgeoisie with Mrs. Gandhi's Congress voicing the interests of the non-monopoly sections.

Some other scholars like V. Maevsky and V. Kudriavtsev in their articles published respectively in Pravda and Izvestia of 14 and 15 November 1969 interpreted the victory of Mrs. Gandhi's candidate in the Presidential election and the nationalisation of banks and other measures of reform adopted by Mrs. Gandhi as an indication that India was seeking a way out of the impasse of the capitalist path of development. To be fair Soviet commentators also warned that the Right had suffered only a temporary defeat and predicted new political battles in the near future. In spite of guarded optimism about developments leading to the Congress split expressed in a section of Soviet academic circles and press, the event was generally viewed as a decisive shift in Indian politics in a desirable direction.

Soviet prestige grew up tremendously in India in the wake of 1971 Indo-Pak conflict. Soviet gains, however, were shortlived. Already in February 1972 Mrs. Gandhi told American journalist C.L. Sulzberger that India was unable to display gratitude in any tangible sense. Mrs. Gandhi's massive majority in the Parliament freed her from dependence on Communist support for survival in power between 1969 and 1971. The pro-monopoly bias of the ruling
party was to surface again causing acute embarrassment to the Soviets.

Mrs. Gandhi's massive successes in the 1971 Parliamentary elections as also her impressive victory in March 1972 Assembly elections in the states did not lead to the expected political stability in the country. As a result of slowed down economic growth public discontent started surfacing in various parts of the country. The Congress Party's return to power in U.P. Assembly elections in February 1974 in spite of growing popular unrest over food shortages and rising prices resulted in the opposition resorting to the direct methods of agitation to remove the Congress from power. After the collapse of the students' spontaneous movement in Gujarat which led to the dissolution of the State Assembly, Jayaprakash Narayan launched a Gujarat type stir in Bihar on the issues of corruption and authoritarianism, demanding the dissolution of Bihar Assembly.

The Soviet media decried the agitation in Bihar, calling it as an attempt to destroy the "present Parliamentary democratic structure." The J.P. movement was portrayed as having the backing of the "religious and chauvinistic Jan Sangh, the semi-Fascist R.S.S. and other Right-wing reactionary parties and organisations." It also noted that the Indian Maoist were taking part in the J.P. Movement and that it was likewise supported by the socialist leaders
and the leaders of the parallel Communist Party (C.P.M) who considered the Indian National Congress and Mrs. Gandhi's government and not the Right wing reactionary forces as enemy No.1. The agreement on the joint action by the Indian National Congress and the Communist Party of India in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh to launch a counter offensive was given prominence in the write-ups in Soviet press.

The Soviet writings blamed the big business for its non-cooperation with the government by reducing investments in industrial development and pressurising the government to lift control over purchase of grain and its sale at fair prices which made it possible for the reactionaries to exploit popular discontent. The growing hesitancy and inconsistency displayed by the Indian National Congress in implementing its own programme and its readiness to make concession to big business, landowners, rich farmers, wholesalers and foreign capital was also blamed for creating conditions for the success of the Rightist agitation.

When Mrs. Gandhi proclaimed a state of internal emergency in June 1975, Moscow gave unequivocal support to the measures taken by Mrs. Gandhi against the Right-wing opposition which was represented as trying to create "an atmosphere of chaos, anarchy and lawlessness in the country". The steps taken by the government were described as "timely and necessary". The 20 point programme announced by Mrs. Gandhi came in for praise by the Soviet media which reported
universal reduction in food prices, punitive action against blackmarketeers, tax evaders and hoarders and active anti-feudal measures. The 75th session of the Indian National Congress was praised for its reaffirmation that the commanding heights of the economy must continue to rest with the public sector. Soviet political commentators lavished praise at the reforms in industrial management and agrarian relations following declaration of emergency. The Soviet press, however, also focussed on the "disquiet" caused among the "democratic public" by influential quarters coming in support of the holding of a Constituent Assembly and expressed satisfaction over rejection of the move. The constitutional amendment declaring India a "democratic, secular, socialist republic" was also approvingly mentioned in the Soviet press as an indication that socialism has become a national objective. Brezhnev stated in Moscow during Mrs. Gandhi's June 1976 visit that her government's actions against external and internal reaction "met with full understanding in the USSR."

Communist-baiting by Mrs. Gandhi's all powerful younger son Sanjay Gandhi in the last days of emergency must have caused concern to the Soviets even if they could not openly express it. Prompted by her desire to legitimise her power and prove her credentials as a democrat in order to remove the obstacles in the path of forging closer ties with the West Mrs. Gandhi announced her decision to go to the polls in January 1977. The Soviet press and
Radio openly backed Mrs. Gandhi and conducted hostile propaganda against the Janata Party. Even the government daily Izvestia wrote that the leadership of the alliance lacked a positive programme and commented that the leaders of the Janata Party were driven together only by their desire to remove Indira Gandhi's government from power at any cost. Only after the announcement of the election results references to mistakes and excesses during the emergency period began to appear in the Soviet press. The failure of the Congress Party to implement agrarian reforms, alienation of the working class by wage reduction and the refusal of the leaders of the ruling party to cooperate with the C.P.I. in the majority of the states were described by Izvestia (22 March 1977) as factors responsible for the electoral reverses of the Congress Party besides emergency excesses and mistakes.

In conformity with its well established policy of maintaining cordial ties with the Party in power and the C.P.I., and ignoring the non-Communist opposition parties, the Soviets started distancing themselves from the Indian National Congress which performed the role of the main opposition party. Of course, news about the split in the Party in January 1978 did appear in a small column of the New Times under the rubrics scanning the news. The other two occasions when the Soviet weekly made a brief mention about Mrs. Gandhi and her Congress Party were the Congress victory in Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh elections for state Assemblies in February 1978 and Mrs. Gandhi's success in
the by-election to the Lok Sabha seat from Chikmagalur constituency in November 1978.

During the 1980 elections the Soviets did not publicly compromise themselves by showing their preference for the ruling coalition of parties. Welcoming the new balance of forces in the Indian Parliament and throughout the country, the Pravda (15 January 1980) observed that it would as a whole "create favourable conditions for restoration of political stability." Since her return to power in 1980 Mrs. Gandhi showed a distinct disinclination to pursue her old pre-1977 radical left-of-the centre policies. The Soviet move in Afghanistan was sought to be exploited by Mrs. Gandhi to widen the country's diplomatic options. Mrs. Gandhi showed her interest in a more balanced relationship with the U.S. and was keen to continue the process of reconciliation with China. Brezhnev's Indian visit in December 1980 was not returned by Mrs. Gandhi until September 1982. Mrs. Gandhi was also reported to be not happy at the hostile stance taken by the C.P.I. towards her government in the post-1980 period and she wanted the Soviets to pressurise the C.P.I. She had hinted this at a civic reception in Brezhnev's honour in Delhi during his December 1980 visit. Mrs. Gandhi launched an offensive against the ruling Communist coalitions in West Bengal and Kerala in early 1981 and split the Indo-Soviet Cultural Society the same year. Significantly at the 26th Congress of the C.P.S.U.
in 1981 Brezhnev made no laudatory reference to Mrs. Gandhi's domestic policies. Confining himself to foreign policy, he said, "joint action with peaceful and independent India will continue to be one of the important areas of Soviet foreign relations." Mrs. Gandhi was reported to have raised the question of left parties opposition to her government during her Soviet visit in September 1982.

It is difficult to ascertain if there was any connection between Mrs. Gandhi's request to the Soviets to restrain the C.P.I. and the publication of an article by R. Ulyanovskiy in the Soviet magazine Asia and Africa Today. Ulyanovskiy's article on the Indian National Congress contained highly laudatory references to Mrs. Gandhi's leadership. The Soviet ideologue appealed for the liquidation of disunity between the democratic movement and the forces of social progress." Describing the Right-wing reactionary forces as a "dangerous alternative to Indian National Congress power at the national level", Ulyanovskiy wrote, "this is the chief menace and it is looming ever larger on the political horizon." Ulyanovskiy's article represented a serious Soviet assessment of the Indian political situation. Despite some disillusionment over the pragmatic course followed by Mrs. Gandhi since her return to power in 1980, Moscow still realised that the forces represented by Mrs. Gandhi's Congress were its safest bet in India in the given circumstances. Mrs. Gandhi's Indian National Congress in the 80s though not
the same as the organisation working under her leadership in the 70s, was still preferable to a more reactionary alternative. Thus Ulyanovsky characterized the Indian National Congress as the "forces of social progress deserving support by the democratic movement in the face of Right-wing threat."

This Soviet appraisal of the Indian National Congress representing the "forces of social progress" has continued after the departure of Mrs. Gandhi from the political scene and the take over of the Congress leadership by her son Rajiv Gandhi. The record Congress victory in the 1984 elections was attributed by the Soviet press to popular desire for strengthening the national unity threatened by separatist forces backed by imperialist circles. An under-current of anxiety can be noticed at times. Thus some nervousness about a possible tilt towards America could be noticed in the *International Affairs* article by Georgiev (No. 4, 1985).

The programme of the Indian National Congress under the leadership of Rajiv Gandhi continues to draw appreciation from influential Party intellectuals in the USSR like P.V. Kutsobin and V. Afanasyev. Writing in the 1985-86 Soviet Year Book on India published from Moscow in 1987 Kutsobin observed that at the present time the Indian National Congress saw its main tasks in the preservation of unity and territorial integrity of the country,
in implementation of technical modernisation of economy and emphasised the necessity for struggle against poverty. He expressed satisfaction that at the May 1985 meeting of the AICC faith in socialism and principles of planned development was again declared and the state sector was viewed as the basic instrument for raising the level of industrialisation. But Kutsobin also struck a note of anxiety by adding, "at the same time these practical steps of the government, the new budget which made important concessions to big business in the form of liberalised imports, expansion of economic and trade relations with the West and the transnational corporations could lead to considerable negative changes in the economic policy of the ruling party." He also observed that in the Indian National Congress (I) leadership "the efforts of leaders favouring closeness of India with the U.S.A. and other western powers have of late become more active." The Pravda editor Afanasyev in his series of three articles written on his return from India after participating in the centenary celebrations of the Indian National Congress held in Bombay in December 1985 also referred to his discussions with top-ranking Indian officials and Ministers who explained to him that economic "liberalisation" did not threaten India's independence and that India would never allow itself into the debt squeeze that plagued many Asian, African and Latin American nations.
To conclude, the recent Soviet appraisal of the Indian National Congress has on the whole remained positive notwithstanding the tilt to the West in the name of economic liberalisation, pragmatism and modernisation of economy. This need not be viewed as unprincipled opportunism or sheer hypocrisy on the part of the Soviets. In fact it is an integral part of a new Soviet approach to the national liberation movement and non-Communist regimes in the Third World countries. This approach was spelled out by the 27th Congress of the C.P.S.U. held in 1986. The political report presented by the General-Secretary Gorbachev noted the importance of building Soviet International policy in accordance with the realities of the present-day world and "in keeping with the specific features of the present phase of International development." "Now, as never before", said Gorbachev, "it is important to find ways for closer and more productive cooperation with governments, Parties and mass organisations and movements that are genuinely concerned about destinies of peace on earth, with all peoples in order to build an all-embracing system of International security." Similarly, the new edition of the Party Programme adopted at the 27th Party Congress also states that "the C.P.S.U. stands for the development of contacts with all national progressive parties holding anti-imperialist and patriotic positions." Without mincing words it declared that "there also exists a realistic basis for
cooperation with those young states that are following the road of capitalist development." The overriding concern for peace in the face of a threat of nuclear war and the growing realisation of difficulties that the process of socio-economic transformation presently encountered in the developing countries has deeply influenced the Soviet approach to non-Communist parties in the third world including the Indian National Congress and India.