Chapter VI

CONCLUSION
A study of the Soviet Union's policies and attitudes towards India in the decade and a half following the Second World War is a fruitful study of Soviet foreign policy during which period the Soviet rulers faced the problems of cold war and of establishing relations with the newly freed Afro-Asian countries. That Stalin and Khrushchev evolved different policies towards a neutral power like India was due as much to their assessment of the importance attached to their ties with India as to the fact that there was, especially in Khrushchev's days, a noticeable increase in India's influence in the United Nations and other councils of the world. India emerged as a neutral power capable of influencing events arising from cold war politics during the period of the Korean war. This India's new helpful posture was visible to Stalin; but his last a year or two was too short a period to change outlook and policies of the Communist dictator who had ruled with certain fixed ideas and policies for three long decades. Moreover, India's image as a neutral power was still faint during Stalin's time. When Khrushchev came to power, not only were Soviet policy-makers in a position to make a fresh assessment of India and increasing usefulness of the Afro-Asian world in their game against the West, but India had begun to attract the attention of the major world powers on her own merits too. The difference in the Soviet rulers' approach to India during this period was, thus, due to their varying approach to the non-aligned world and to circumstances that brought importance to the non-aligned countries like India in the course of time.

In assessing the Soviet Union's posture towards India during this period a word must be said about the brilliant work done in Moscow.
by India's capable Ambassadors, K.P.S. Menon and his successor T.N. Kaul. Menon came during the closing days of Stalin in 1952 and left Moscow in June 1961, and thus had the unique opportunity of seeing Stalin's days and of projecting India's image when Khrushchev was at the helm of affairs. He was the last foreign diplomat to interview Stalin a few days before his death and was, apparently, one among the very few, if not the first one in the post-war period, to be honoured by Soviet rulers with a much publicized farewell party when he left Soviet Russia for good. When Kaul left at a later date Khrushchev had gone and Brezhnev with his not-so-warm policies had come - and a similar farewell function was organized in his honour too. Along with the Egyptian Ambassador, Menon maintained a living image of Bandung powers in Moscow. During this period formal receptions were given on behalf of the Bandung powers to Heads of State of Burma, Afghanistan, Nepal, Egypt, and India when they visited Moscow, and these receptions were attended, among others, by the Head of the Soviet Government too. At these receptions the Ambassadors of India and Egypt used to speak on behalf of the Bandung powers. The absence of such an activity in other capitals, such as Delhi, Cairo, and Belgrade is indicative of the efforts put in it in Moscow.

Soviet policies towards India during this period followed not a straight course and, therefore, any uniform explanation of Soviet Russia's posture towards other countries (including India) suffers from limitations. It is asserted by some Western analysts that the only preoccupation of Soviet rulers is to spread communism abroad; on the other hand, it is asserted by the rulers in the Kremlin that
their economic policies towards newly freed countries carry no strings and that their policies do not aim at spreading communism or Russian power abroad, but at strengthening the economic and political independence of the newly freed Afro-Asian countries. The present study provides no facts to completely vindicate either the assertions of such Kremlinologists in the Western capitals or those of the rulers in the Kremlin. Khrushchev's helpful policies for industrializing India, his offer of economic aid with nominal interest and on easy repayment terms to non-communist Nehru, his policy of encouraging Indian imports into Russia, his willingness to recognize the reality of the neutral world - all this baffles on all-covering explanation of seeing only the ghost of communism in all that the rulers in the Kremlin do. The contrary assertion by the communists, on the other hand, that the regime in the Kremlin exists only to help the economic development and political independence of the Afro-Asian world conveniently skips over Stalin's days when the Kremlin saw no such developing world around Russia. The truth is that international politics, like any other branch of social science, is not deductive logic. The task of the analyst is not to draw inferences from universal truths but to observe facts and provide judgements based on them. To the extent to which judgements go astray of facts, they are unsound; to the extent to which facts are collected to support a priori assumptions, the approach is unsound. May be some Kremlinologists suffer from the former and the Kremlin from the latter.

The survey also makes an interesting reading of the Soviet rulers' expressed policies and attitudes towards Indian communists.
When India was under British rule and the Communist International was functioning, Soviet Russia's policies towards such colonial countries was openly to help the organization of communist movement in India. Policies towards non-communist organizations like the Indian National Congress changed according to circumstances to suit the interests of the communist movement in India or at times those of the Soviet State. But the policies were directed more with a view to helping the establishment of communism in India rather than helping her to win her freedom becomes clear from the fact that, except during the days preceding the Nazi attack on Russia when the Indian communists were rounded up and put into gaols, the policy generally advocated by the Communist International was one of opposing the Indian National Congress and its leaders like Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru and of directing the Indian communists to organize a movement of their own and oppose the Congress. When Britain left and Nehru with his Congress Party started ruling over India, Stalin was alive. To him India under the rule of the bourgeoisie was as good as India under British rule. On the whole he was indifferent, and official Soviet policy statements hardly took any note of India. The overall attitude of the regime, as was expressed through the press, was indeed one of hostility. When the official posture of the Soviet rulers towards India was thus either indifferent or hostile, Soviet rulers did show some interest in organizing communist movement in India. There is now fairly reliable evidence to believe that the Indian Communist Party's policy line, adopted at its Second Congress in 1948, to overthrow the Congress government by violent means, was supplied from outside and that Russia had a hand in it.
This interference in India's internal affairs in general and in the organization of Communist movement in particular was avoided by the Soviet rulers when their India policy changed under Khrushchev and became friendly. The Soviet press now carried less news about Indian communist. Such a change in approach becomes clearer by the Indian election news covered by the Soviet press under Stalin and Khrushchev. During the first general election in 1951-52, when the Communists suffered a big defeat, the Soviet press accused the Congress of following corrupt practices and maintained that the common people in India supported the Communists and opposed the reactionary Congress candidates. A few years later the Indian Communists won power in Kerala; but Pravda did no more than give some facts and figures of the elections. And when they were soon dismissed, it did not even publish an article on it.

Non-alignment or the "Third World" was another major concern of the Soviet rulers in the Kremlin. For Stalin, who saw only two camps, "a Socialist camp and a Capitalist camp", non-alignment virtually did not exist. It existed in a big way for Khrushchev. Apart from the difference in personal assessment, difference in circumstances too caused different Soviet postures towards the non-aligned world in general and India in particular. In spite of Andrei Zdanov's thesis that the world lay divided into two camps, the socialist and the capitalist, the non-aligned world provided a new dimension to Khrushchev's policies. At a time when the "capitalist" world was organizing a world-wide military alliance against Soviet Russia and dragging newly freed Afro-Asian countries in it, non-alignment of the "Third World" had begun to serve the
Purpose of defence of Soviet Russia as, in the absence of such an alternative, most of these countries would have joined the Western military alliances. That the non-aligned countries pursued common policies on such issues as colonialism, military blocs, economic slavery, racial discrimination, etc. and worked in an effective, organized way on all these issues in the United Nations ensured Khrushchev's active support to their role. Whether or not the same policy towards the non-aligned world would continue depends as much upon the capacity of the non-aligned world to maintain its economic and political independence from the Soviet Union's opponents and its effectiveness in world affairs as upon the Kremlin's own preferences for the cause of allies or of communism to support of the "Third World". That a Stalin preceded Khrushchev is a pointer to changing Soviet postures.

The readiness of the Soviet leaders to recognize the reality of the neutral world at a time when the Western leaders showed no such enthusiasm for it helped leading neutral countries like India to play a significant role in world affairs. In any full account of India's role in world affairs during this period the helpful, responsive policies of the Soviet leaders must find a place. Unlike some in the West, the Soviet people by and large do not regard India as only an illiterate, poor, ex-colonial country. The author saw great respect for India's ancient history, her culture and her people and sympathy for her colonial past in many sections of Russian population. An average Russian's attitude to Western colonialism is analogous to the Westerners' attitude towards their own freedom. That they hate Western colonialism can be easily
observed. Any account of the Soviet leaders' behaviour towards newly-freed people, therefore, will be incomplete if it presents them only as those who are trying to turn others against the West and thus safeguarding their own narrow national interests. Such view of political behaviour of both Super-powers in the post-war period does not fully account for the ideological considerations that go into their economic and foreign policy moves.