CONCLUSION

India has followed the Westminster parliamentary model, the essence of which is the supremacy of Parliament. In the field of foreign policy-making and implementation, the supremacy of Parliament is maintained to a considerable extent. The role that the Parliament is destined to play is conditioned by certain limitations and inhibiting factors. This mammoth forum of discussion is preoccupied with matters concerning domestic affairs. The role of Parliament is largely shaped by the party in Power. Foreign policy-making is constitutionally an executive concern and it is too much to expect from the Government to place all details concerning foreign policy issues before an assembly consisting of numerous persons. Disclosure of information may open Pandora's box and place the state in doldrums. Untimely leakage of information can never be in the broad national interest that a government is supposed to serve. Secrecy is the hallmark of diplomacy. Members of Parliament are repeatedly found clamouring for more and more information but they are deliberately kept in the dark on the usual plea of not being in the public interest. In our country, if the Parliament and its Committees want to participate fully in international matters, affecting our position and using their influence and constitutional power continuously, they should insist on altering the Rules of Procedure.
in such a way and to such an extent that no policy is considered worthy of implementation if it does not register the general approval of Parliament. Our political system cannot claim to be Parliamentary, if the Parliament does not assert itself on important domestic and crucial international issues. The oft-repeated plea of 'national interest' as a ground for secrecy is hackneyed and it should not be made an excuse for withholding necessary information from the Parliament.

For the successful working of the Parliamentary system, the existence of stable Opposition is a necessary ingredient. The representatives of the majority and the minority parties together constitute the Parliament. The Government and the Opposition function as the contending blocs with a tacit agreement that the majority is to govern and the minority is to serve as a watch-dog to check the high-handedness of the ruling party. Absence of unified Opposition in India has made the confusion worse confounded.

The word Opposition is used here to indicate those Members of smaller parties who do not belong to the party in power. During the period under study, the role of the Opposition was quite negligible owing to factions and cliques within themselves which paved the way for the Congress to enjoy un-interrupted political hegemony for two decades. Nehru's dynamism and charismatic leadership mainly contributed to the cohesiveness and popularity of the Congress. During the first decade of his rule,
there was hardly any Opposition to his policies. Despite the resentment in the Opposition about Nehru's domination over foreign policy matters, no one tried to make him realise the supremacy of Parliament. Nehru was not in the habit of consulting either the Opposition or the leaders of his own party which caused irritation among both the quarters. The inability on the part of the Opposition to provide alternate programme, absence of electoral alliances at the national level and mounting differences within themselves including clash of personalities, further added to the confusion. In 1958, the Opposition alleged that the Government, on more than one occasion treated it shabbily, particularly on questions dealing with foreign policy.

Limitations apart, the members in Opposition had reflected their genius and calibre through their speeches, relating to foreign policy and border issue, that helped to keep the Government on its toes. The contribution of veterans like H. N. Mukherjee, M. R. Nasani, Nath Pai, J. B. Kriplani, H. N. Kunzru and others, cannot be easily underestimated. Undoubtedly many a time there were noisy and uproarious scenes in the House but there were calm and calculated scenes also. An objective study of the Parliamentary debates confirms that our Parliamentarians were blessed with the gift of the gab. There were many people in Opposition, who wasted the precious time of the House for the sake of Opposition. They gave unnecessary details while describing the international scenes, leg-pulling of other speakers, more often beating about the
bush or playing to the gallery. Besides, there was also a category of those who happened to be 'publicity-hunting-politicians,' evoking popular sentiment to remain in the limelight.

The Sino-India Border Dispute was the first important matter considered in the history of India's Parliament. The Parliament could not play a very effective role in this regard. It has been inhibited by certain factors which relegated it to a less important position over the Dispute. Most relevant being the oft-repeated fact that the foreign policy is an executive concern. All major or minor decisions are taken by the Government. This is a constitutional limitation upon the Parliament and its role. The details of the dispute were kept as secret as the activities of the CBI. The decisions were taken, neither through public debates nor through open discussions in the House, but en camera through a complicated net-work of administrative set-up involving the cabinet, Prime Minister, Minister of External Affairs, Secretariat staff and Consultative Committee. The Cabinet was fully under Nehru's control, who had the decisive voice. Its members were often critical of lack of consultation with them. Participation of the Cabinet in the process of consultation would have created a new precedent. He was personally disposed to negotiate on the Boarder dispute. He believed that the Opposition to the fundamentals of state policy amounted to opposition to India's independent status. So far as the question of involvement of the Ministry of External Affairs as a whole was concerned, Nehru's custom was to
inform them rather than consult them. The sub-Committee on Foreign Affairs seldom met. It often acted as a rubber-stamp which was generally informed than consulted. Regarding the Sino-India Dispute, Nehru firmly believed in not opening his mind too wide.

The Sino-India border dispute was an acid test on which the Members of Parliament showed sharp reactions and raised harsh criticism, taking the Government to task. It settled into establishing the precedent of receiving timely information on all developments. During emergency, the power of Parliament declined. The Rules of Procedure are such that they impose a limit on the scope of parliamentary indulgence. Discussing the border dispute, the Parliament came across many such critical moments. The speaker, Sardar Hukum Singh had to check the members repeatedly.

The Dispute was tackled more through the exchange of letters, Protest Notes and Memoranda in the form of White Papers, negotiations and diplomacy for which a debating society like Parliament is not suitable. Such an open public forum as the Parliament, it is most pertinent to legislate on issues which have hardly got anything to do with a matter of such significance as the border dispute or other intricate issues of foreign policy.

The entire Sino-India border dispute was considered in the Parliament under Nehru's protective umbrella. Till 1959, Nehru was less particular in disclosing things to Parliament and seeking the seal of its approval. In 1959, the Parliament for the first time resented the lack of
information about the minor incursions across the border, secrecy regarding the construction of the Aksai-Chin road and the illegal occupation of Indian territory in NEFA, Longju and Ladakh. In almost all the debates that followed, Nehru grew more particular about the formality of informing the Parliament well in time. The occasional uproar in the House over this concealment was sufficient to change the regular practice. Nehru’s unquestioned sway over Parliament was not challenged so far, leaving aside the eclipsed position that followed the Chinese invasion, he had his gala time in the Parliament. The grandeur of the Parliament and the other Parliamentaries was enhanced by his presence. His speeches, after 1959 and more particularly after the invasion, bore a clear-cut reference to his intention of securing the approval of the Parliament. He sang devotional enlogies in praise of Parliament and the validity of its ultimate approval. His speeches also bore an impression that for the Government, it is not desirable and practicable to come and seek the vote of approval on all the details of the dispute. He believed and impressed upon the Parliament that the Government can take further decisions in accordance with the generally accepted policy as generals do in the battle-fields when they move without consulting the Government. The influence of Parliament gets paralysed during crises and emergency. This Dispute invited a mass of critical remarks over India’s cardinal policy of non-alignment. Nehru accepted on the floor of Parliament that we were living in a world of idealism and
that the Chinese aggression has awakened us to reality. Ashoka Mehta had once remarked that he was not against the policy of non-alignment as such, but was unhappy over the conduct of Government's policy in the most vital part of our foreign relations namely the Sino-India border dispute of 1962. After the 1962 debacle, in the agonising reappraisal both of foreign and domestic policies, there was a general disposition to seek a scape-goat for the apparent failure of the policy of non-alignment in promoting national security.

None of the Presidential Addresses provided a direct discussion of our policy with regard to China. From 1952 to 1956, this reference, if at all there was, was scant and negligible. Since 1956 when the Government started getting information of minor incidents across the borders, the Addresses included a slight reference to the nature of relations. During 1957-63, the Addresses abounded in such references, when the trend of relations deteriorated and ultimately resulted in the massive invasion of 1962. From 1963 to 1967, India and China were positively and openly hostile to each other and both indulged vociferously in hostile propaganda against each other. In 1968, India's attitude turned towards detente. The recent phase of relations is moving towards cordiality and our policy-makers are hoping against hope that our relations will improve in the near future. Barring a few examples when the dispute was considered in separate Motions, it figured in the general foreign policy Resolutions and Motions. In general foreign policy Motions, the
international situation was assessed and the foreign policy was mentioned only by courtesy. The irony of all these Motions was that they all ended in the approval of the foreign policy. However vociferous the criticism of the Opposition had been against the Government's policy, these motions could never be negatived. It also created an impression that the Motions were debated to approve of the policy and not to disapprove it. It is desirable to make the vague foreign policy resolution more concrete and definite. Parliamentary control over the executive must be more effective. There have been no specific resolutions indicating our relationship with other nations. Parliament has not exactly and precisely defined as to what our foreign policy was or ought to be in the light of past experience. The trends of policy had to be gathered from the diversified speeches of various Ministers made here and there without sufficient preparation. These speeches were not to the point and precise but emanated from them as vague arguments, personal opinions, unclear intentions and justifications. At the conclusion of a foreign policy debate, the Parliament passed omnibus motions that the international situation is taken into consideration and the policy of Government of India in that regard is approved. It is also due to imprecise and ambiguous wording of the Government Resolutions that the Parliament had been less effective in enforcing what it wanted to enforce. The Substitute Amendment Motions spell out the intention of the Member of Parliament quite clearly but due to the thumping majority of the Congress, they always got negatived. After heated debates and prolonged discussions in the House,
the policies of the Government have always been approved.

Question-House facilitated the receipt of abundant information of the up-to-date developments of the border situation. However, the total number of questions raised in connection with the dispute was not alarming. Sometimes there were unnecessary repetition of questions seeking information already supplied through Debates, Adjournment and Calling-Attention Motions and Ministerial Statements. The reason for this lack of information may conveniently be that either the particular Member was absent or absent-minded and slept over the matter. During the debate on the Proclamation of Emergency in 1963, the speaker drew attention to this error.

A cursory glance at 1957-59 debates mirrored the inherent resentment of the Members of Parliament regarding a number of crucial decisions having been taken by the Government, without referring the matter to the Parliament. The glaring example was the Panchsheel Agreement of 1954, which was signed before the Indo-Tibetan Treaty could be ratified by the Parliament. Another instance being Nehru's approval to accept the Colombo Proposals of 1962 in toto without any reference to Parliament. The discussion to consider the proposals followed the same month over the fact that was already decided. It is difficult to say as to what difference had it made if the Parliament had got a chance to discuss the Colombo Proposals after the Government had already discussed it? Some of the Members of Parliament made further suggestions but of no avail.
Nehru, however kept on assuring the House that the Government would do whatever the Parliament had decided. He did not put any such Motion that the Proposals of the Colombo Conference be passed nor he placed any circumstances leading to it before the House. It approved of the Government's decisions ultimately due to the majority that the Congress enjoyed. The opposition viewed it to be the very antithesis of democracy and travesty of parliamentary responsibility. During its crucial debate, Nehru declared that he did not want to create a precedent that every matter be voted upon by Parliament. Broad orientation and acceptance of policy by Parliament should suffice. He further made it clear to the House that the matter of accepting them in total was justified in the light of delay from the Chinese side. In fact, during emergencies it is inevitable for the Government to take decisions and conduct secret discussions without any prior reference to Parliament. The reasons of urgency, complication, continuity of work and secrecy demand it. But during normalcy, the role of Parliament should not be glossed over and the practice should develop to establish a proper liaison between the Parliament and Government over such important matters.

The dispute was discussed in the Parliament as a formality. During the elongated debates over it, the Members resented the concealment policy. In 1964, P.K. Deo observed that it was a tribute to Indian democracy that the Parliament was referred to at every critical juncture relating to the dispute. These deliberations should create guidelines for the Government. But, the Government asked them to put
their seal of approval on *fait accompli*. The Parliament was simply asked to endorse that policy as was acceptable to the Government.

On the whole, the role of Parliament *vis-a-vis* the Border Dispute was not decisive. Nevertheless it has made the Parliament more vigilant in matters of foreign policy decisions. Undoubtedly through the various criticisms levelled against the Government on the border issue, the Parliament has quite successfully drawn the attention of the Government to many relevant problems and highlighted them. Nobody expected the Parliament to dictate foreign policy. The Parliament existed only to hold the Government accountable to it. The task of the Government was to defend it in the House. The Parliament proved to be the best forum reflecting public opinion which happened to be the life-blood of our democratic and parliamentary set up. The public opinion was largely shaped and modelled in the light of the tone of criticism in the House. The national public opinion has asserted itself quite unambiguously over the Government's stand, but it has little effect on the moves adopted by the Government. Despite all the hue and cry of the public and the Opposition, the proposed meeting of Nehru and Chou in April 1960 could not be prevented.

At the same time the supremacy of Parliament cannot be ignored. The genius of the Government lies in striking out a just balance between the supremacy of Parliament and safeguarding national interest. The Indian Parliament could play a less significant part because of the overwork with which it was burdened. It allowed itself lesser time and opportunity
to indulge in foreign affairs. Despite the fact that the Parliament tried sometimes to intervene in foreign policy matters, the centre of its attention was confined to legislation and supervision of the enormous net-work of administrative matters. It has become customary to conceal the gravity of case while reporting it to the Parliament for the fear of public morale going down. Parliament is a public forum and to give point-blank information about aggressions and wars would adversely affect the public mind. Nehru, for example, while replying to a question in August 1962 about the possibility of any Chinese invasion clearly said that such an invasion was not imminent merely to boost up public morale. But in the hearts of his heart he thought quite differently. In his private interview with Taya Zinkin, as early as in 1954, Nehru prophetically observed, 'you must remember that they have a lot of work to do in China proper. But in say twenty years time, when they are strong and modern, then the picture would be quite different and they will probably be a menace'.

It is also noteworthy that the Members of Parliament took less pronounced interest in foreign affairs. They were more actively involved in domestic issues. What interested them most were the problems of their own constituencies, the solution of which would help them in the next elections. This trend might have been either due to their ignorance of foreign policy matters or lack of interest in it. Another reason was that they usually gave preference to associate themselves more with the domestic affairs to improve the prospects of leadership in their respective constituencies.
Foreign affairs were considered by most of them as the preserve of the Prime Minister or the Government to be dealt with skillfully by experts under the overall guidance of Nehru.

There are examples when deliberate and concrete efforts were made in our parliamentary system to strengthen its hands in controlling the purse and the influence of our Parliament over administration, but negligible efforts were made to improve its position regarding foreign policy. It is essential in this regard that Parliament's ceremonial sessions be reduced to the minimum and the work of various Committees be speeded up and galvanised, encouraging different sections of Parliament to express their views and take active part, instead of leaving every thing to the Government. A code of conduct should be prescribed vigorously for the parliamentarians to avert cynical misbehaviour in House, which had increased manifold since the death of Nehru. Some of the Opposition Members like Hiren Mukerjee had also lamented over this pitiable state of degeneration. On the other hand, Opposition for the sake of Opposition should be discouraged. Foreign Affairs planning Committee had already been formed which takes into account all aspect of the policy, before finally approving it. A team of specialists should be set up to study and evaluate our China policy and to overcome the appalling lack of information to the House. The Members of Parliament, who debate on foreign policy matters should be trained men who know their job and do not waste the precious time of the House in longwinded purposeless speeches. The intricacies of the foreign policy are the most
sensitive area of Government and should be tackled by the 'expertise' and not the 'generalist', both in the Government and the Parliament. A sound foreign policy requires the continous appraisal of the world around us, concentrated homework and a mastery over the art of diplomacy. Consequently, the Parliament will have to depend on the guide lines offered by the Cabinet and the lead given by the foreign Minister, under the over all direction and supervision of the Prime Minister. The foreign policy of a country can, in the ultimate analysis, be sound and purposeful only if there is a mastery over foreign affairs and a proper appraisal of foreign relations. The Members of parliament, in general, do not possess this essential prerequisite and therefore have to remain docile and cooperative. The initiative and final decision has to remain in the hands of policy-makers.

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