CHAPTER II

AGENCIES IN THE FOREIGN POLICY MAKING IN INDIA

ROLE OF THE CABINET

In the whole administrative set-up involved in the foreign policy making, the Cabinet happens to be the most important and intricate agency. It is the chief working organisation and the mouthpiece through which the country speaks to another country. The Indian Constitution places the formal executive responsibility with the President but like the British King or Queen, the President acts on the advice of the Cabinet and the Council of Ministers. The Cabinet is composed of the senior members from the Council of Ministers appointed by the President and nominated by the Prime Minister. This miniature of the Parliament is collectively responsible to it for all its functions.

It has already been stated that when Nehru was at the helm of affairs, the foreign policy was his monopoly both in the Cabinet and the Congress party. Between 1947-50, Nehru was the duumvirate, as Patel concerned himself more with the domestic affairs and the foreign policy was left exclusively to Nehru.

1. The Indian Constitution, 1956, p. 29. Article 53(1): The executive power of the Union shall be vested in the President and shall be exercised by him either directly or through officers subordinate to him in accordance with this Constitution. Also see, p. 39, Article 74(1): "There shall be a Council of Ministers with the Prime Minister at the head to aid and advise the President in the exercise of his functions".

After Patel's death, Nehru became the undisputed leader of the Congress Party and unrivalled head of the Cabinet.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs before taking any decision generally takes counsel of his Cabinet colleagues but so far as the Indian Cabinet and the External Affairs Minister, Nehru, were concerned, his responsibility by virtue of his being the Prime Minister was so large that in this regard his normal representations to the Cabinet were explanations rather than clarifications given to the Cabinet members. Krishna Menon was remarkably influential and was the principal adviser to Nehru on foreign policy issues, while other senior members like G.B. Pant, Morarji Desai and Maulana Azad had their influence confined to domestic affairs only.

Moreover, the making of foreign policy by the Cabinet in India has been merely an aspect of general functioning of the Cabinet. In the Cabinet, decision-making was singularly dominated by Nehru's charismatic personality. Ambedkar and C.D. Deshmukh chiefly complained of Nehru's practice of taking decisions without consulting the Cabinet. There are instances when decisions with regard to Kashmir were taken by Nehru without either consulting the Deputy Prime Minister or the Cabinet. While describing the Indian Cabinet at work, Krishna Menon narrates his personal

1. Richard L. Park, Macridis, op. cit., p. 299. "A good deal of consultation takes place outside the Cabinet". Also see Brecher, op. cit., p. 239, that on foreign policy questions the manner of Nehru was, "informing rather than debating".
2. Ibid., p. 140.
experiences in the Cabinet meetings that Nehru, "was not the person who sought consultation", and before really discussing out the matter he would say, sometimes, 'here it is, let us agree on this'. The members of the Cabinet took ample interest in discussing foreign policy questions and on majority of questions, the Cabinet colleagues agreed with Nehru, who mostly informed them than debated the matters.

Though till 1950, Nehru's position in the Cabinet was peerless, the foreign policy making within the Cabinet did not have an altogether smooth sailing. There was no challenge to Nehru's position as the chief architect of India's foreign policy, he, however, took little or no notice of the Cabinet members, their agreement, disagreement or frustration. Consequently in 1950, Shyama Prasad Mukerjee and K.C. Neogi resigned from the Cabinet in protest against the Nehru-Liaquat Pact between India and Pakistan and Nehru took no notice of the event. Later, in 1957, B.R. Ambedkar also resigned whose major criticisms were against Nehru's policy of friendship with China.

In the Indian Cabinet there has been a Foreign Affairs Committee. So far as Menon knew, it was an Indian invention and the first of its kind, which consisted of the members nominated by the Prime Minister. Nehru used to be the chairman of nearly all committees in the early days. Menon, Nehru and two or three

1. Brecher, op. cit., p. 241
2. Ibid., pp. 237, 243.
others were in it. Later on both its scope and membership were enlarged owing to the feeling that foreign affairs had been treated as the private preserve of Nehru. It did not meet very often. It met, for example, to finalise the delegation to the UN, the decision was already taken and members were informed of it. There were other sub-committees and ad-hoc committees of inquiry too.

To improvise the effectiveness of the Cabinet in foreign policy matters, a standing Committee on Defence was formed, but the committee remained ineffective in "influencing the formation of foreign policy". Nehru was its chief member who dominated others like the Defence, Home and Finance Ministers. Patel was also its member but he took negligible interest in foreign affairs. Azad was in it as the Education Minister and Menon as the Minister without portfolio. In its essential nature, this Committee was not very much different from the Cabinet, still, "the policy questions were not usually brought before it by the Prime Minister". Menon further explained, "how much should be said and what should be discussed", was a matter for the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister, that is Nehru.

The position of these Committees in influencing foreign policy decisions appears ambiguous. The following dialogue

between Brecher and Menon is an evidence to it:

Brecher: "Menon, as you look back on the working of the Cabinet and these Committees, particularly in the realm of foreign affairs, would you regard them as being in any sense participants in decision-making or in shaping policy, or were they not really crucial to the decision-making process, but more organs of consultation in the very broad sense?

Menon: By and large they did not shape policy although they did at times". Menon further stated there was no example when the proposals of the above mentioned Defence Committee, "had to be postponed sine die". Some Committees took years to decide a thing.

The Standing Committee on Defence was the Cabinet itself. The decisions taken by it were tantamount to decisions taken by the Cabinet unless the Prime Minister wished otherwise. Certain questions were taken by this Committee alone. The Committee met more than any other Committees of the Cabinet. But, on the whole its deliberations, expected to influence the policy, failed in their endeavour due to Nehru's personality, his mode of thinking and deciding things. Its inability to influence foreign policy

---

2. Ibid, p. 246
was partly the result of Nehru's unchallenged leadership and the way in which he generally treated the Cabinet, and partly due to the fact that during that critical period, the Defence Minister, Krishna Menon, held identical views with the Prime Minister on Defence and foreign policies.

Very often Nehru failed to consult his Cabinet colleagues and acted either on his own discretion or on the advice of Krishna Menon. M.C. Chagla stated that Menon was responsible for the policy decisions with regard to Hungary in 1956 and the Goa action in 1961, and all that Nehru subsequently did was to defend Menon, hence Menon's role in Hungary and Goa, in decision making was much more important than that of either the Cabinet or Nehru himself.

During the last phase of his life, Nehru often failed to consult the Cabinet on important policy matters, either because he was losing his grip over things in general, or because perhaps he was too fatigued to pay serious attention to important matters. A glaring example was his statement on October 13, 1962, before the Chinese attack, through which he ordered the Indian army to drive the Chinese out of NEFA area. There is evidence to confirm that in the Cabinet meeting, it was decided that the Indian troops should observe the status quo and should not take any initiative to oust the Chinese troops. Viewed in the light of the Cabinet

decision, the declaration looks rather odd, but not when it is examined with reference to Nehru's character and status. It has been suggested that Nehru acted like this because "....... (a) he wanted to put on a bold face and thus assuage the resentful public opinion on his China policy, without actually intending to provoke a conflict; or (b) he hoped to scare away the Chinese, who were obviously preparing for an armed attack, by such bold statements; or (c) he was wrongly advised by some close associates".¹

During the recent 1971 Indo-Soviet Treaty of friendship, the members of Opposition tacitly admitted that this treaty was not referred to the Cabinet. The angry Union Health Minister, Uma Shanker Dixit, while replying to newsmen at Bhubaneshwar drew his attention to the recent observation of the former Deputy Prime Minister, Morarji Desai, that the Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi had bypassed the Cabinet before it was signed and was presented to the Cabinet only for formal approval as a fait accompli. However, getting more mild, Dixit tried to save Mrs. Indira Gandhi. He said that the treaty was, "a delicate diplomatic move", which warranted informal consultation at the outset. "This was her great contribution to Indian democracy because she even consults opposition leaders before taking the

¹ Bandyopadhyaya, op. cit., p. 144.
Thus, in the presence of a powerful External Affairs Minister and the Prime Minister, the role of Cabinet gets eclipsed. It can be even reduced to negligible minimum, if the Prime Minister is capable enough not to put the things for the Cabinet approval.

Another flagrant example in which the Cabinet was side-tracked was India's abortive participation in the Conference of Islamic-States held in Rabat, in 1969, leading to the Rabat fiasco. Parliament raised a hue and cry to defeat Indira Gandhi-regime. All uproar was due to the fact that the decision was taken without Cabinet consultation.

On the basis of available information, one can conclude that from the time of India's independence up to the present day, the Cabinet in India has not functioned as the highest and collective decision-making authority with regard to foreign policy. There has always been concentration of decision-making authority in the Prime Minister and to a small extent in the Minister for External Affairs in the post-Nehru era, which is bound to militate against rationality in the making of foreign policy. Moreover, most of the details about Cabinet process, its meetings, agenda etc., are ambiguous as they are kept confidential to the core. Menon once remarked, "I am not prepared to disclose what comes on a Cabinet Agenda".

1. The Hindustan Times (New Delhi), 27.8. 1971.
ROLE OF THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER, NEHRU

In a Parliamentary system, the Cabinet is the steering-wheel of the ship of the state and the Prime Minister is the steers-man. The Prime Minister plays a decisive role in every matter, for he is more than, "the first among the equals" or inter stellas luna minores (a moon among the lesser stars). The office is powerful enough to make him the key-stone of the Cabinet arch. The ultimate stamp over the decisions of the Cabinet is that of the Prime Minister since he is the leader of the majority Party and almost a direct choice of the people whereas most of his colleagues owe their offices and status to him. Nehru was certainly a, "giant among pigmies" rather than the first among the equals. The office itself involves power, side by side Nehru enjoyed a position of eminence because of his enigmatic personality and charismatic leadership combining in him both the offices of the External Affairs and Prime Minister. Perhaps, in no other democratic state one man dominated foreign policy as Nehru in India. Indeed, so overwhelming was his influence that India's policy came to mean in the minds of people everywhere, the personal policy of Pandit Nehru. Practically speaking, Nehru has been the philosopher, architect, engineer and the voice of his country's policy towards the outside world. He has impressed his personality and views with such overpowering effect that foreign policy may properly be termed

as his private monopoly. No one in the Congress or the Government and the Opposition ever challenged his control in this sphere.

Out of all the factors and determinants which shaped foreign policy, Nehru's ideology, educational background and thinking are paramount. In India, public opinion, political parties, emerging pressure groups, parliament and Cabinet did not play their roles effectively as is expected of them in a democracy. It made Nehru's singular position as the maker of India's foreign policy almost completely undisturbed. With an aristocratic background, western education, political backing of Motilal Nehru, Gandhi and other Congress leaders, Nehru was to play an influential role in Indian politics. Since Nehru returned to India for several times he was elected President of the Congress Party and since the Madras Session of the Congress (1927), he had become the recognised spokesman of the Congress on foreign affairs, because he was more interested in foreign affairs and better informed than others. Due to his ability, insight and interest in international relations, the later resolutions of the Congress were inspired, drafted and piloted by Nehru.

In 1942, Gandhi openly declared Nehru as his successor. The "uncrowned King of the Indian Republic", Nehru enjoyed supremacy in every field, and virtually exercised unchallenged and monopolistic jurisdiction over foreign affairs.

In the Interim Government and later as well, Nehru was incharge of External Affairs of India. The foreign policy statements which Nehru made as the Prime Minister of the Interim Government especially on September 7, 1946, laid down the cardinal features of India's foreign policy.

When in 1951, Patel died and Purshottam Das Tondon weakened in health, Nehru's stature embejed with regard to domestic and external affairs.¹ Virtually, Nehru appeared to be indispensable for the Congress, the Cabinet, the Parliament and the country. Till his death in 1964, his leadership retained a quality of something approximating charisma. He retained the, "sole repository of final decisions, master in his own household", and enjoyed, "extraordinary status within the Congress".²

Nehru combined in him, "a queer mixture of the East and the West, out of place everywhere, at home nowhere",³ but left a "trail of glory and a legend behind him", "like some triumphant Caesar".⁴ Though Nehru had much of his Western education, nevertheless, he was impressed by the Gandhian doctrine of non-violence, Ashokan and Buddhist doctrine of peace, Socialism

---

1. Ibid., p. 229.
of the East and was deeply influenced by modern European humanist-philosophy. Thus he often visualised 'One World' as a deeply committed internationalist. There were the various cross-currents in his intellectual make up. It is often suggested that Nehru sometimes failed to synthesise them into a coherent intellectual pattern. Nehru used to keep himself busy in parliamentary business and processes. In a parliamentary session, during question-hour, Nehru used to stay on until its conclusion. This showed his interest in foreign policy matters. He spoke for hours and hours together when the motions regarding the international situation and the policy of the Government of India thereof, were debated.

The year 1956 marked a "turning point" in Nehru's Foreign Ministership. It was because of the Hungarian episode and Anglo-French-Israeli aggression against Egypt coupled with the events of 1959, notably the Tibetan revolt, China's border incursions and Eisenhower's visit to India. Thus, the crises of 1956-57 produced a round of the edges and ironically, a greater sense of inner calm in the face of external turmoil. After 'the year of crisis', began the disenchantment of Nehru's political leadership. His open criticism started at boiling point in and outside Parliament. Since then Nehru was deprived of universal adulation. The intelligentsia started levelling staunch criticism against his stand on China. The Members of Parliament raised an uproar against Nehru's calculated and deliberate attempt to hide relevant information from Parliament.
This criticism gained momentum in the wake of the border crisis with China in 1959.

Nehru was an idealistic-realist. At times he soared in his higher and higher sitting/ivory tower and at other moment, he appeared as a down to earth realist. In his attempt to present a synthesis of idealism and realism, Nehru said, "we propose to look after India's interest in the context of world cooperation and world peace, in so far as the world peace can be preserved."  

In his approach to the Kashmir issue, Nehru showed the synthesis of two approaches when he said, "we have indeed been over-scrupulous in this matter" and that "we went out of our way to make a unilateral declaration that we would abide by the will of the people of Kashmir as declared in a plebiscite or referendum". The idealistic approach of Nehru is evident from the reference of the issue to the UN, in the light of infant UN being made a plaything of the then bipolar world. In March 1948, Nehru openly confessed in a speech in the Constituent Assembly, "our making a reference on this issue to the Security Council of the United Nations was an act of faith, because we believe in the progressive realization of a world order and a world government". If Kashmir was an integral part of India and a domestic issue, it should not have

1. For details see, Nehru, *India's Foreign Policy*, op. cit., pp. 34, 51, 73.
2. Ibid., p. 28
been taken to the UN by India and if it was an international issue, Pakistan's subsequent claims to it would be justified.
The Kashmir question, the bone of contention between India and Pakistan, was solely dealt with by Nehru in the international arena. His realistic sense made him realise that the pledge of plebiscite was out of the way and impracticable yet, it is believed, he acted as a prudent statesman.

Nehru was the Congress Party's acknowledged spokesman on foreign affairs. In fact he was, "the soul of the Party". ¹ Nehru's insistence on India's membership in the Commonwealth as an independent Republic was an illuminating example of his dominant role in the shaping of India's foreign policy. Nehru was inevitably influenced by a host of factors in this decision. The most remarkable and significant was his realization that India could not remain isolated in the world of tension and that the Commonwealth link was the most advantageous of all links. Mostly Indian trade was carried on with the Commonwealth countries; its foreign exchange reserves were tied up in the Sterling-Area, its military power then depended on the weapons made in great Britain. This has also enabled India to assist the Indians settling abroad.

Nehru enjoyed an indomitable stance within his Cabinet. ² From 1947 to 1958, there had been four Congress

¹ Brecher, op. cit., p. 162. "Viewed in the perspective of the duumvirate, it was an act of high statesmanship, for it was the first real stabilizing act in India's relations with outside world".

² For details see Supra on the Role of Cabinet where the role of Prime Minister Nehru is also discussed at length.
Cabinets, all headed by Nehru. At no time the government faced a vote of no-confidence for the Congress had an over-whelming majority in the Parliament. The main cause of the stability of Cabinet system in India had been Nehru's pre-eminence. In foreign affairs, Nehru relied on Menon largely. In cabinet meetings, it was said, "the Prime Minister has great skill in winning his colleagues to his view point by persuasion".¹

So far as the Sino-India border dispute is concerned, Nehru was central to all its decisions, discussions and negotiations. His policy towards the people's Republic of China was somewhat steeped in idealistic moorings. He made an ideal assessment of the Chinese intentions and took their gestures of friendliness and cooperation at their face value, of which more later. Similarly, in regard to the Goan question, Nehru was all in all in its decisions. In his Goa policy (as in his Kashmir policy) Nehru made a firm commitment to certain high principles at the outset, which was indicative of his political idealism, but eventually retreated from his position mainly owing to the persistent failure of the idealist approach against the then inflexible Portuguese Government.

Nehru's monopoly in foreign affairs was willingly accepted by his colleagues and even acclaimed by members of Parliament. L.M. Singhvi, a member of the Lok Sabha, went to the extent of saying that it was fortunate to have a man of distinction

---

and eminence like Nehru to preside over the formulation of our foreign policy.¹

Nehru's greatest contribution to India and international world had been his persistent cry for non-alignment, the cardinal feature of India's foreign policy. The other leaders of this camp were Tito and Nasser. The policy was in favour of national interest to Nehru's mind, though after the Chinese aggression and India-Pakistan tussle, demands to quit non-alignment were raised, but Nehru stuck to it. Nehru was so much convinced of its being in the national interest that he said, "it is completely incorrect to call our policy Nehru policy. It is incorrect because all that I have done is to give voice to that policy. I have not originated it. It is a policy inherent in the circumstances of India, inherent in the past thinking of India, inherent in the whole mental outlook of India, inherent in the conditioning of the Indian mind...... inherent in the circumstances of the world today...... I am quite convinced that whoever might have been incharge of the foreign affairs of India and whatever party might have been in power in India, they could not have deviated very much from this policy".² Even his successors, Shastri and Mrs. Indira Gandhi, followed his suit and expressed their desire to move on the pre-determined line. It is in this context that India's active

² Nehru, op. cit., p. 80.
participation in the non-aligned Summit Conference (Sept. 1973) at Algiers is to be seen. And today, the main tenets of the policy as engineered by Nehru are the same.

The Prime Minister himself was the External Affairs Minister, he devoted considerable time to supervise and control the foreign policy. Yet, vast nothing-ness existed between Nehru and the bureaucracy. The bulk of Civil Servants, princely members and the upper echelons of the army personnel were in favour of a pro-Western policy. It was Nehru, his personal experience, socialistic outlook and belonging to a poor nation like India, which saved the Western-orientation of our foreign policy. It goes to the credit of Nehru and his towering leadership that he was able to keep the bureaucracy almost completely out of basic policy decisions, and compelled it to submit itself to the political guidelines laid down by him with regard to foreign, defence, domestic and economic policy.

In the post-Nehru era, the role of the External Affairs Minister has deteriorated, because after Nehru, the External Affairs Minister has not been the Prime Minister. Firstly, the calibre of the succeeding leaders and members was decisively lower and secondly, they were less popular and have to act under the control or the shadow of the Prime Minister. In the highly fluid conditions of modern India, it is difficult to ascertain the extent to which Foreign Ministers have been able to exercise their own judgment in decision-making. Now, there have been as
many as five Foreign Ministers from 1964-70 and within such a short period, no Foreign Minister can be expected to exercise formidable influence or take firm policy decisions.

Nehru, like the Cabinet, dominated the proceedings in Parliament also. His pre-eminence can only be compared with that of Churchill at Westminster during the Second World War. It is suggested that sometimes, while in Parliament, Nehru sat hunched over with a pensive expression on his face. At other times he would crease his brows as he listened to a sharp attack from the Opposition. Frequently he would ruffle one of his colleagues into silence or leap up to rescue a Minister, who feebly answered the questions. Often he rose in anger when he felt that an insult has been hurled at the Government. Still at other times he would make moving and solemn speeches. On the whole, Nehru was extraordinarily active during debates. He used to make himself present in all sessions. He was tolerant to the Opposition. Due to his learning and interest, he was consulted by the Minister for Parliamentary Affairs before the business of the day was decided.¹

To conclude, the most articulate expression of Indian foreign policy is to be found in the speeches of Nehru. In Parliament and party caucus, within India and abroad, he hammered on these themes with remarkable consistency. The emphasis may

have shifted but never the main principles of the policy. The role that Foreign Affairs Minister plays varies from country to country, but nowhere one man dominated foreign policy as Nehru did in India. Indeed, Nehru was the philosopher, architect, engineer and the chief spokesman of India's policy towards the outside world.

**ROLE OF THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: ORGANISATION AND FUNCTIONS**

**INTRODUCTION:** In a parliamentary democracy, domestic and foreign policy is the prerogative of the Executive. The Foreign Office carries on the directives of the Executive. On account of the far-flung and highly complex nature of the foreign policy, the Foreign Office performs the significant function of feeding it with 'Information' and 'Advice'. The elite at the apex of decision-making consists of the Foreign Minister, Prime Minister and the Cabinet, the Foreign Office is sur-charged with the work of analysing and evaluating the available data and recommending concrete measures. Its role is vital and detailed in foreign policy making without, however, bearing the odium of responsibility. The Ministry is solely responsible for the conduct of India's relations with the other countries. It also deals with country's representation at the UN and advises the Ministries as far as their relations with foreign Governments and institutions are concerned.

The Ministry of External Affairs bears the real brunt of
foreign policy planning. When Nehru was at the helm of Affairs, the Ministry as an agency was less assertive and subservient to a single man. After his death, its position subsequently improved.

HISTORICAL RETROSPECT:

The history of the Ministry of External Affairs goes back to 1784, when for the first time a Department to deal with foreign affairs was created in the Government of India, by the then Governor General, Warren Hastings. This Department was known as the Secret and political Department with three branches—Secret, Political and Foreign. The Secret branch dealt with all Government transactions concerned with wars, negotiations and diplomatic missions abroad. The Political branch dealt with the correspondence with the Residents and Agents in the Indian States. All matters relating to transactions between the Government of India and the Foreign European Powers were looked after by the Foreign Branch.

In 1842, the nomenclature of the Department changed to Foreign Department and was organised in three branches, Foreign, Political and Domestic, under the direct control of the Governor General. Owing to the increased work of the Department, a second post of Secretary was created in 1914. This change in the organisation of the Department and the addition of one more Secretary also carried with it the change of the name of the Department. The two Secretaries were designated as the 'Foreign' and 'Political' Secretaries. The 'Foreign' wing dealt with all
the matters pertaining to the frontiers of India and the 'Political' wing dealt with all other matters emanating from the Indian States and areas administered by this Department.

In view of the constitutional changes, brought about by the Government of India Act 1935, a vast increase in the volume of work in the two Departments occurred and the Department was bifurcated into External Affairs Department and the Political Department.

The work connected with the Indians Overseas was originally dealt with in a section of the Department of Education, Health and Lands. Since 1941, that section was made a separate Department. In 1945, the Indian overseas Department was entrusted with the work connected with Burma and the Commonwealth countries, including the work relating to the rights of Indians in the countries.

Jawaharlal Nehru took charge of the Department of External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations in 1946, when the Interim National Government was formed. In 1947, the Department of Commonwealth Relations was amalgamated with the External Affairs Department leading to the constitution of the 'Commonwealth Relations Wing' of the Department, which was renamed firstly itself as the Department of External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations and later as the Ministry of External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations. In March 1949, the amalgamation of both

the wings of the ministry was completed and it was finally redesignated as the Ministry of External Affairs. The Deputy Minister deals with all the other Divisions except China, Pakistan, the United Nations and Conference Divisions, which are dealt with directly by the Minister of External Affairs.

The Secretary General is the administrative head of the Ministry and official adviser to the Minister on matters relating to foreign policy and is responsible for the supervision and coordination of the work of the Ministry. The Foreign Secretary is incharge of the Eastern, the Western, the China, the United Nations and Conference Divisions. Important administrative matters are dealt with by the Special Secretary in collaboration with the Foreign Secretary and the Commonwealth Secretary. The Ministry maintains its own Secretariat. ¹

For administrative convenience, the Ministry is divided into sixteen Divisions. Each one of them deals with a number of countries, grouped on geographical or territorial basis. The Economic and coordination Division is responsible for coordination of political and economic policies affecting India's international relations.

1. In the Secretariat there is a variety of Secretaries ranging from Secretary General to Foreign Secretary, Secretaries External Affairs and a number of Additional Secretaries. For details see- Organisational set-up and Function of the Ministries/Departments of the Govt. of India, Secretariat Training School (Ministry of Home Affairs) Government of India, IV ed., New Delhi, 1969, pp. 53-54.
During 1963-64, due to increase in the work relating to China, the China Sub-Division in the Eastern-Division was constituted separately. Besides, the present External Publicity Division and Economic and Coordination Division have been reconstituted into two new Divisions namely, the Economic Affairs and the Information and Coordination Division. The Ministry has got its own Foreign Services, the appointments to which are made on the basis of competition.

In accordance with the recommendations of the Estimates Committee of Parliament, it has been decided to revive the Foreign Service Inspectorate. Necessary preliminaries connected with its formation have been completed. When the Sino-India border dispute erupted into a full-fledged war in 1962, the North East Frontier Agency of the Ministry started and speeded both the rehabilitating programme and planned development. This Agency received a number of visitors from amongst the members of Parliament, political delegates and social workers.

FUNCTIONS AND ORGANISATION: The Ministry is responsible for the work connected with foreign affairs, consular representations, Indian Foreign Service, treaties, emigration, passports and Visas, NEFA, NAGA Hills etc. It also administers such laws as Indian Emigration Act, 1972, the Reciprocity Act 1943, the Post-Haj Committee Act 1932 etc. 1

---

Affairs has got its own Secretariat and a number of subordinate offices. There is no attached office functioning under this Ministry. There are a number of Diplomatic and Consular Offices situated practically all over the world. By virtue of their peculiar and unique position they are not considered as subordinate offices. The Foreign Minister is the political head of the Ministry who is assisted by the Deputy and State Ministers and two parliamentary Secretaries. The Secretary General is the administrative head of the Ministry assisted by a number of subordinate staff.

At the moment, the Ministry has 85 Sections of which 38 are Administrative and 47 are Territorial and Technical Divisions. These sections are grouped into eleven Divisions.

1. Ibid., p. 40, These Divisions include:

1. American Division: South and North America
2. Western Division: UNO, UK and Europe
3. Eastern Division: China, Japan, Korea, Nepal, Mongolia, Sikkim, Bhutan and NEFA
4. Southern Division: West Asia, South-East Asia, North Africa, Sudan, Ceylon, Iran, Burma, Afghanistan and Colombo Pov;ers
5. African Division: Africa, and other colonies
6. Pakistan Division:
7. Protocol Division: Emigration, Protocol etc.
8. Administrative Division: Accounts and Budgets, General Administration, Establishment work.
9. External Publicity Division:
10. Foreign Service Inspectorate.
11. Historical Division.
The enormous net-work of administration is carried on success­fully through them. Six Divisions are created so as to cover relations with nearly all nations ranging from America to Pakistan and China etc. The Protocol-Division is responsible for all ceremonial matters such as receptions, preparation of credentials and formal arrangements with regard to treaties and other agreements. The External-Publicity-Division is significant in the sense that it carries on propaganda of policy and relations abroad. In the columns of the Parliamentary Debates, it is the most criticised and applauded Division. It also renders valuable assistance in organising the exchange of good-will missions and cultural delegations. The Foreign-Service-Inspectorate makes investigations in respect of allowances and general administrative matters and recommends measures to the Government of India so as to achieve greater efficiency and economy in the operation of missions abroad. The Historical-Division is responsible for the preparation and maintenance of research papers and records for consultation by the Ministry.

The vast network of the missions and posts maintained abroad by the Ministry, is the main source of information to it. They prepare the code and directory of world events and developments. These missions are ultimately responsible for the effective implementation of foreign policy.¹

¹. At present (1970) there are 168 Missions and Posts abroad. For more details see, Report 1969-70, Govt. of India, Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, 1970, Appendix VIII.
There are different modes through which the Ministry plays its role—political, economic, military and cultural diplomacy, propaganda and external-publicity machinery, intelligence and policy planning, personnel-planning and coordination.¹

**POLITICAL DIPLOMACY:** A rational foreign policy is based on the availability of detailed and accurate information regarding general international situation and political developments. An effective evaluation of information constitutes the basic task of the Ministry. The first ingredient in policy formation is, the processing of the available information, leading to an analysis of proposed alternatives in consonance with the circumstances. Commenting on this 'Reporting' the Pillai Committee on the Foreign Services, has observed that only on the basis of accurate information, a policy can be formulated and it is the primary duty of the Foreign Service to maintain a continuous supply of information to the Ministry of External Affairs, by means of accurate and perceptive reports on current events. Information is not sufficient by itself, and needs to be supplemented by interpretative analysis and by advice as to change or modification of policy.²

The Missions are the ears and eyes of the Government and the subsequent policy is followed by their reporting, sent

---


to India in the form of monthly reports, prepared by the Secretaries. An equally potent source is the special reports sent by the heads of the Missions to Foreign Office. During emergencies, wireless communications are frequently resorted to. Our U.N. representatives also send regular reports on the international situation. It facilitates the reassessment of the material obtained from a country.

A great deal of diplomatic activity takes place through the foreign Missions located in New Delhi through the Foreign Minister and his counterparts, which include personal discussions, exchange of views, delivery of important letters, submitting notes of protest, Notes Verbal and Aides memoires like the White Papers. Another significant source of information is the news flashed by the international press, radio and television. A lot of information in India is procured by the covert network of intelligence system which provides the Government an insight into political crises in a foreign state and also secret knowledge of the relations of the state with the other states.

The Ministry analyses all the empirical data and assessment received from the various sources. It processes it into concise documents on each international problem in relation to India's foreign policy. To quote the Pillai Committee Report, ".... the strands of foreign policy are manifold and are factioned by many hands, but it is for the Foreign Office to weave them into a coherent whole". Measures are taken to improve the efficiency

---

1. Ibid., p. 20.
of the Foreign-Service to meet the present and future needs of foreign-policy-planning.¹

The advise and suggestions of the heads of Foreign-Office also assist the Foreign Minister in arriving at rational decisions. However, the advisory role of the Ministry was overshadowed by certain factors. Firstly, the matchless status of Nehru, his personality and accepted authority on history and international relations. The bureaucracy remained subdued due to his towering leadership. Secondly, the senior positions in Foreign-Office were manned by people of Nehru's influence, who lacked the nerve to object Nehru on foreign policy problems. Thirdly, the foreign policy during this period was more concerned with generalities. However, Nehru consulted some of his close associates like, N.R. Pillai and G.S. Bajpayee. He paid considerable attention to the reports of K.M. Pannikar from China and Krishna Menon from London and the U.N.O., which in fact, only buttressed Nehru's preconceived notions on foreign affairs. Unlike Nehru, M.C. Chagla relied largely on the advice of his Secretaries. During the gap of one and half years, between Chagla's resignation and the appointment of Dinesh Singh as the Minister of External Affairs, when Mrs. Indira Gandhi was both the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister, the influence of the Foreign-Office as well as the Foreign Secretary in the making of foreign policy, considerably increased.

¹ Ibid., p. V.
ECONOMIC DIPLOMACY:

It is equally potential an element in contemporary international relations. Like Britain, there has been a lot of pondering over economic diplomacy in India too, hence a powerful organisation of the Ministry to deal with this vital aspect of foreign policy. Diplomacy and national interest are closely linked with economic development. The Pillai Committee Report sheds ample light on its working. Foreign and defence policies are also interwoven as diplomacy has military connotations. With the result, foreign policy becomes an amalgam of economic and military policies. With regard to economic diplomacy, the Ministry performs strategic, operational and observational functions.

CULTURAL DIPLOMACY:

Our cultural tradition, economic underdevelopment and military backwardness make cultural diplomacy one of the most important elements of India's foreign policy. Cultural diplomacy involves the projection of India's cultural image abroad through its representatives and exchange of cultural delegations. Diplomacy in modern world is carried through propaganda and external publicity. Nations invest enormous funds on propaganda measures. Effective propaganda warrants that global and regional interests should be collateral with general foreign policy goals. For effective propaganda, targets should be carefully evolved and devised in the light of

1. Ibid., pp. 170-71
national interest. There should be frequent evaluation of the overall contribution of propaganda machinery, which requires proper coordination and planning. The Pillai Committee provides innumerable suggestions to improvise the working of the External-Publicity-Division.

The information gathered through overt or covert sources, relating to political, military, economic and social developments in various states and international relations, constitute another function of the Ministry. This information is processed and evaluated from a vantage point of national interest. This business, which is held confidentially, is known as intelligence. In 1967, a separate unit called the External Intelligence Organisation was formed under the Cabinet. The mess of reports-political and otherwise, prepared by the Missions stationed abroad, constitute raw-material for the intelligence. However, in India, the working of intelligence organisations is marked by inefficiency, ineffectiveness and delays.

The activities of the Ministry of External Affairs should be coordinated in order to facilitate foreign policy-planning, which is the backbone of diplomacy. The chief task

1. "Intelligence is both a science and an art, - a science because investigation and analysis is as painstaking as research in chemistry or physics; an art because intelligence analysts and estimators need intuition and vision to interpret and forecast events". Kurt, The Making of Foreign Policy- East and West, Philadelphia 1965., p. 117.
of the external publicity is to secure coordination. The work of external publicity, which was originally managed through the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, has fallen upon the Ministry of External Affairs. Now the Division is actively engaged in collecting, briefing and dissemination of publicity material.

Foreign policy-planning and implementation largely depends on the Ministry, which treats of the crux of current problems and policy research. The Policy-Planning and Review-Division is controlled by the Joint Secretary who provides the rationale of improvement and trends in international politics. The Indian Foreign Services are organised as specialised services for the whole range of India's foreign relations—political, consular, diplomatic and military. The Foreign Office renders significant services in the conduct of external relations. If it is organised in a better manner, its specialised expertise and effectiveness can facilitate the negotiations amidst designates who set up the guidelines of relations. The determination of international links, is the chief concern of the Foreign Office, which works under the umbrella of the Ministry of External Affairs.¹

The role of the Ministry assumes great dimensions in the sense that continued guidance from the Ministry is not

merely ornamental. A foreign policy, however, well-defined, demands for its implementation, expertise and experience. The role of Ministry is of constructive import and cannot be labelled superfluous. Expediency demands that the Foreign Office must develop sufficient competence to deal successfully with the basic needs of foreign policy, in this changed pattern of international relations. The Ministry should set up a well-knit organisation and mechanism for adequate consultation and coordination with such Ministries as Defence, Information and Broadcasting and Civil-Aviation. In order to compartmentalise foreign relations and policy, an integrated system should develop so as to help the Executive in planning and implementing it. Foreign Policy-planning, as a systematised exercise of forethought, is an expedient innovation over the past system, with the result the Foreign Office should employ better techniques in this regard. Purposive planning based on full understanding of current events and future trends, designed to secure the national interest, is an indispensable factor in the conduct of foreign policy today.

Foreign policy-planning is related to the framework of basic policy, established by the highest constitutional authority. In India it means, the Government of the day and Parliament through which the government derives its power. Planning is concerned with policy problems, present or anticipated that arise in the course of handling foreign relations.
The direction and planning is obligatory on the Secretary-General. The recently constituted Foreign policy and Review-Committee should be accorded permanent footing under the chairmanship of Secretary-General. The Committee examines the problems of long-term planning to achieve foreign policy objectives. It also analyses the important aspects of foreign policy, in the light of fast changing international situations. The work relating to Parliament at official level also needs effective coordination, in order to accelerate the pace of policy-planning programme.¹ The Ministry ought to supply to the government the necessary guidelines and situation reports, which can be of immense help to the latter. The Legal and Treaties Division of the Ministry tenders juridico-political advice to the Ministry which helps drafting of treaties and negotiations.

PARLIAMENT AND ITS COMMITTEES:

The role of the Legislature depends largely on the form of government a state has got. In a Presidential system if the principle of separation of powers is in operation, a clear line, with regard to administration and making of foreign policy, is drawn. In a Parliamentary system where the ultimate responsibility is vested in a Parliament, it gets ample opportunity to scrutinise, discuss and approve the policy.

¹. Ibid., p. 31.
The position of Parliament, branded as the 'talking shop', in influencing foreign policy varies from country to country. Its role, "is determined by an interplay of fairly stable constitutional elements and of more ephemeral elements, such as the political climate, the strength of the parties, and the character of the leading personalities involved". All the systems fall, "within a spectrum the one end of which lies in the Soviet Union", where the Supreme Soviet, their Parliament, is denied effective power, and on the other hand is the United States, "where the principle of checks and balances assures the legislature a coordinate role with the executive". 1 India occupies an intermediate position where the Parliament and its control is made effective by the adoption of Westminster model.

The policy-making belongs to the Executive branch of government. The Parliament confirms rather than initiates policy. Theoretically, Parliament is expected to influence

1. Joseph Frankel, The Making of Foreign Policy, London, Oxford University Press, 1963, p. 25. Also see, K.C. Wheare, Legislatures, compares the British and the American systems at large. In the UK"... the whole process of negotiation, signature and ratification lies within the legal powers of the Executive; participation by the legislature is not required". Indian position is more or less similar to the British position.
and control foreign policy in a variety of ways. Parliament's resolutions, which support or oppose the policy suggested by the government, forcing the government to adopt new policies or reorientate the old ones, vitally affect the broad network of the policy. The constituents of parliamentary influence include, control over the purse, power, to sanction appropriations, reducing or increasing the budget and the demands for grants and authority to set up ad hoc or expert Committees, to affect the formulation and implementation of foreign policy. The Members of Parliament, who are experts in foreign affairs, can also exert their influence in this regard by levelling valid criticism and suggesting remedies. The role of Parliament is not fixed as the polestar. With a strong Opposition within the Parliament, its role can be enhanced. The role of Parliament in foreign policy is that of scrutiny. It can conduct enquiries if it is not furnished with relevant information. The duty of the Executive is to develop means to keep the Parliament well-informed. The timely information fed to Parliament, would enable it to influence the decisions and to

---


2. Paul Martin, "The Role of the Canadian Parliament in the Formulation of Foreign Policy", Parliamentarian (London), Vol. I, October 1969, p. 26. Also see p. 265 where the lines occur, "... Parliament is concerned with the realities of the day and its Members therefore need special opportunities and facilities".
fulfil its function of keeping people in touch with the public affairs. Another factor which determines the influence of Parliament is the nature of the party system. In a single-party system, fundamental difference is not visible between the Government and the Legislature and the Government dominates. In the American two-party system "fluid majorities give the legislature great importance". In the British two-party system where the party discipline is rigid, a majority Government, commanding a reasonable majority in the House of Commons is fairly secure from interference. A stable multi-party system can paralyse the Government as for example, in the Fourth Republic and to some extent in the German constitution.¹ The Indian position is unique and appreciably different, despite the multi-party system, the Congress has been in power at the centre with overwhelming majority. During the first and the second Parliaments, there was stream-rolling majority of the Congress Party. Consequently, parliamentary approval of the policy was a formality.

The Rules of Procedure in the Indian Parliament, theoretically provide provisions for a well-planned control over policy discussions. The Parliament can withhold assent

¹ Frankel, op. cit., p.25
on any policy motion and resolution. Whether the policy is approved or not, detailed discussion and debate occurs on it. The Members also put forth many pieces of advice, which may affect the future course of policy decisions. The other instruments of parliamentary control, discussed later at large, are the Adjournment Motions, No-Confidence Motions, Short-Notice Questions, Half-an-hour discussions and Question-Hour.¹ These modes of accountability, in a parliamentary system enable the Parliament to throw a piercing search-light in every nook and corner of policy decisions and actions. Nothing falls short of the perview of Parliamentary scrutiny. The opinion of the members of Parliament, as expressed during debates, help to identify the controversial issues with the public-opinion, which acts as a restrain on the party-decision-making in the House.

The Parliament can also influence the formulation of the foreign policy through its Consultative role. The practice, however, varies from state to state. In the United States of America, the convention of consulting the Secretaries of State, President and individual Congressmen has grown. The House Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Senate Committee on Foreign

Relations perform not only an important consultative function but also keep a constant check on foreign policy, through their inquiries, hearings and cross-examinations of members of the Executive. In the United Kingdom, such a formal committee of Parliament is lacking, though there is the convention of consultation between the Members of government and important Members of Parliament. However, in India such a Consultative Committee of Parliament is in existence. The details with regard to the working and functioning of this Committee have been given in the Chapter on the Role of Parliament.

**PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES:**

The Committees of the Parliament are one of the effective ways of legislative control over the foreign policy. Their nature and size varies from state to state. They are found in the legislatures of the European countries and the United States of America, but in most of the Commonwealth Parliaments, such Committees are missing. In Great Britain, the setting up of such Committees has been advocated but the Opposition parties are reluctant to join a committee which would remain committed to the policy, advocated and pursued by the government. Where there is a good deal of agreement between the government and the Opposition about foreign policy in the Commonwealth countries, the Opposition parties prefer to avoid cooperation through the Parliamentary-Committees.1

1. Wheare, *op. cit.*, pp. 185-89
Foreign Affairs Committees of the Parliament are not legislatures themselves. The Minister of Foreign Affairs would frankly express his ideas in the Committee, if he is assured that what he says will not be divulged to the legislature as a whole. Members of this Committee are bound to maintain secrecy. It is pointed out, with regard to the working of the Foreign Affairs Committee that it keeps the Legislature in the dark about the discussion, that occurs on its forum. The democratic control of foreign policy is not achieved through such Committees. Their utility is mitigated, though their work is highly evaluated.

The extent to which the Parliaments and the Foreign Affairs Committees can be kept informed, depends on the nature of that country's foreign policy. Where the country pursues a policy of neutralism or non-alignment, the Parliament and its Committees would remain quite informed. Whatever be the extent of information to the Parliament and its Committees, the importance of its impact remains intact. In foreign policy matters the Committees and the Parliament play a second fiddle to the Executive branch of the government. In a parliamentary system, like ours, the Parliament seldom provides prior consultations. Whatever it avails, is the opportunity to approve *fait accomplis*. The Parliament exists to approve the broad outlines of the foreign policy, which provides confidence to the Executive, that it enjoys parliamentary approval. The need is to improvise and galvanize the working of its Committees and increase parliamentary accountability.