CHAPTER VI

INDIA, THE UNITED ARAB REPUBLIC AND THE HUNGARIAN REVOLUTION

The Revolution

The Hungarian Revolution broke out on October 24, 1956. Its genesis may very briefly be described as follows. Ever since Khrushchev inaugurated de-Stalinisation at the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union on February 14, 1956, there were demands for freedom from Soviet control in Eastern European states, notably in Poland and Hungary. In Hungary, as already indicated, Imre Nagy was rehabilitated into the communist party on October 13, 1956. Six days later, the Hungarian Government agreed to several measures asked for by students including the abandonment of compulsory Russian Language Courses. On October 22, a number of meetings were held in Budapest, the capital of Hungary. The largest meeting was held at the Building Industry Technological University and ended after formulating a programme of national policy demanding, interalia, withdrawal of Soviet troops from Hungary, and the reconstitution of the Government under Imre Nagy.

2. For details, see Survey, 1956-58, pp. 72-79.
4. Supra, n. 1, p. 429.
A student demonstration in sympathy with the Poznan trials in Poland was first banned and was allowed on October 23.

Erno Gero, the then First Secretary of the Communist Party of Hungary, who had just returned to Hungary after talks with Tito in Yugoslavia, condemned the demonstration, which resulted in a violent reaction from the mobs. On October 24, Imre Nagy was made Prime Minister and at the same time the Soviet forces stationed in Hungary under the Warsaw Pact intervened in the revolt of the people, on the invitation of the Government of Hungary. This marked the beginning of the Hungarian Revolution.

In his famous speech at Pula on November 11, 1956, Tito said that this intervention was 'not necessary' and was 'absolutely wrong coming at Gero's invitation'. On October 25, Gero was replaced by James Kadar. In the week that followed, there were several developments in Hungary. On the one hand, Imre Nagy, the Prime Minister,

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6. Supra, n.4.
7. Supra, n.3, pp.402-407;
8. For the Hungarian Government's appeal for Soviet intervention see. Id.,p.527.
9. Id.,p.527
10. See Kadar's broadcast of October 25,1956 - Supra n.1, pp.452-453.
was forced to accept the demands of the revolutionists\textsuperscript{11}, such as the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Hungary, Hungary's withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact and the revival of democratic institutions and free elections etc. The Soviet Union also appeared willing to withdraw its troops from Hungary as it announced on October 30, and had begun talks with the Hungarian authorities\textsuperscript{12}. On the other hand, there were Soviet troop movements on a large scale into Hungary across the border\textsuperscript{13}. And, finally, at dawn on November 4, 1956, the Soviet troops which had encircled Budapest, suddenly struck and began to suppress the revolution in a ruthless manner.

The U.N. Resolutions

On the same day the Second Emergency Special Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted a resolution (1004-E.S.II)\textsuperscript{14}, which, among other things, condemned the Soviet action in Hungary and called upon

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{11} \textit{Supra}, n. 3, pp. 416-418: Nagy's announcement promising new policies. See pp. 453-454: Nagy's Proclamation restoring political parties (October 30, 1956) and for other developments pp. 455-471.
\item \textsuperscript{12} For the announcement see \textit{Supra}, n. l., pp. 465-468.
\item \textsuperscript{13} \textit{Supra}, n. 3, pp. 463-469. For Nagy's Telegrams of November 1 and 2, 1956 addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations complaining a Soviet troop movement and seeking UN protection.
\item \textsuperscript{14} See \textit{Y.B.U.N.} 1956, pp. 84-85 for the text and the voting record.
\end{itemize}
it to withdraw its forces from Hungary. Krishna Menon, on behalf of India, abstained from voting on the resolution along with many other Afro-Asian delegations, including that of the United Arab Republic. The propriety of this act was questioned by a few friends of the West in the United Nations.

On November 9, 1956, Menon voted against a second resolution (1005 S.E.-II), calling for the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Hungary and the holding of elections in Hungary under the auspices of the United Nations. Then began as shall be seen below, a vigorous attack on India, Nehru and Menon, both in India and abroad. However, India also abstained on a 3rd (1006 E.X.-II) and a 5th (1008 E.S.-II) resolution of the Emergency Session and voted for a 4th (1007 E.S.-II) resolution as it dealt with relief work in Hungary.

When the matter came up before the 11th Session of the General Assembly, it adopted another six resolutions on Hungary, of which India voted in favour of only two, (1128 (x1)) and (1129 (xi)). The former was co-sponsored by Ceylon, India and Indonesia, and sought the

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15. Sec. G.A.O.R., Second Emergency Session, 564th Plenary Meeting; The delegate of "Nationalist China, for example, inquired "whether these delegations of Asia and Africa, mean to tell us that principles of the Charter were good only for Asia and Africa and not for Europe,"


17. Id., p.94.

18. Id., p. 82.

19. Id., p. 95.

20. Id., p.87. This was adopted on November 21, 1956.

21. Id., p.95. This was adopted on November 21, 1956.
cooperation and permission of the Hungarian government for the nominees of the Secretary-General to enter Hungary. The later resolution dealt with relief work. The United Arab Republic voted in favour of the latter and abstained on the former.

The United Arab Republic had abstained on the November 9, resolution of the Emergency Session demanding the withdrawal of Soviet forces and the holding of elections under the United Nations auspices. It also abstained on the rest of the resolutions of the General Assembly along with India, since these demanded the withdrawal of forces and holding of elections and condemned the Soviet intervention.

Nonalignment and Double Standards

What emerges from this voting record of India and the United Arab Republic is, that they were not prepared either to condemn the Soviet Union or to force any action on it, without its consent, through the United Nations' organs.

22. Id., p. 75
23. Id., p. 87
24. Id., p. 95
25. These were 1127(xi) of 21 November, 1130(xi) of 4 December, 1131(xi) of 12 December, and, 1132(xi) of 10 January 1957—pp. 87-89 for the texts and voting record.
It should not have been difficult to understand this policy, after all the unsuccessful attempts made by the Western Powers, headed by the United States, to undermine and subvert the authority and prestige of Nasser and Nehru and their policy of Nonalignment and friendship with the Soviet Union culminating in the Suez Crisis which was at its height at that moment. As against this, the Soviet Union had been supporting them with moral and material help, not only to withstand the pressures of the West but also in their disputes with Western-supported neighbours like Pakistan in the case of India, and Israel in the case of the United Arab Republic.

But, as K.P.S. Menon, India's Ambassador to Moscow and Budapest at the time of the Hungarian revolution, has observed: "Nothing has caused so much misunderstanding... regarding India's foreign policy than her attitude towards the Hungarian Revolution". It would be more accurate to say that it was the misunderstanding of the basic tenets of the Nonalignment of India and the United Arab Republic, that resulted in the total misunderstanding of India's role in this crisis, especially, in India.

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27. India and the Cold War, op. cit., p. 48.
For, no other crisis prior to this had revealed with such clarity, the real nature of Nonalignment as the pursuit of national interests and not of moral values and human ideals. It is doubtful, if the United States stand itself was inspired by such ideals. It was certainly not so, with regard to Britain, France and Israel, as shall be made clear below.

However, the misconceptions about the real nature of Nonalignment have been so deep rooted that all sorts of arguments have been advanced to explain the policy of the nonaligned states, especially India. Thus, motives like anticolonialism, antiracialism, antieuropeanism and, of course, procommunism or belief in Marxism-Leninism, have been attributed to support what was supposed to be a 'double-standard' in the approach of the nonaligned states to Western Powers and the Soviet Union. 28 It has already been explained that these factors have not been the main determinants of the Nonalignment of India and the United Arab Republic.

And what is this charge of a 'double-standard'? It is in the main, an attempt to apply moral standards, which are irrelevant in the evaluation of foreign policy. Hence such criticism appears to have been motivated, at least in certain quarters, by a desire to 'discredit India's Non-alignment'. It is, therefore, necessary to examine this charge in some detail.

Professor Brecher, for example, has written that Nehru was 'slow, painfully slow' in reacting to the events in Hungary and that the demand for the withdrawal of forces was immediate and sharp in the case of Suez, it was not in the case of Hungary, at least for a long time. Among the Indians, Asoka Mehta and Jayaprakash Narayan took this line of argument, the former in Parliament and the latter outside it. I do not, however, think that Nehru was as slow as is made out by Professor Brecher, a little dramatically, in reacting to the Soviet suppression of the Hungarian revolution. The moralist in him asserted itself immediately. For, speaking at the Ninth General Conference of the UNESCO in New Delhi, on November 5, 1956, he said: 'We see today in Egypt as well as Hungary

29. Supra, n. 27 p. 50 See quotation at n. 38 below.
31. See Lok Sabha Debates, Volume IX No. 4, 19 November, 1956, cols. 403-416.
32. See The Hindu, 11 November, 1956
both human dignity and freedom outraged and the
forfe of modern arms used to suppress peoples and to
gain political objectives. Old colonial methods, which
we had thought, in our ignorance, belonged to a more
unenlightened age, are revived and practised. In other
parts of the world also, movements for freedom are
crushed by superior might.'

He also made a specific reference to the "Five
Principles", and said 34: "we now see that those Five
Principles are also mere words without meaning to some
countries who claim the right of deciding problems by
superior might." This could have been a reference to
the Soviet Union, only, which had declared adherence
to the Five Principles with India 35. And in his letter,
in reply to Bulganin's letter promising the facts of the
Hungarian crisis, Nehru was reported to have said 36
that all declarations of adherence to the Five Principles
seemed to "have no meaning left and the world reverts to
international barbarism". And K.P.S. Menon 37 has
written: "I myself made repeated representations to
Mr. Sheppilov, then Foreign Minister, to Mr. Bulganin,
then Prime Minister, and Mr. Khrushchev, then Secretary
of the Communist Party, expressing our grave concern at

34. Ibid.
36. For the correspondence See The Hindu, November 9,1956
37. Supra, N. 27,pp.48-49.
at the turn of events in Hungary". He is, therefore, right in asserting that "The accusation of having adopted double standards, which are persistently levelled against India by those who would stop at nothing to discredit her policy of non-alignment and which was unfortunately swallowed by many of our own people, has no substance".

But, in my opinion, this talk of Panch Sheel by Nehru was unnecessary, if not also improper. Firstly, it was this type of talk that supplied ammunition to his critics. Thus he was himself responsible for some of misunderstanding about his foreign policy. Secondly, Krishna Menon had already abstained from voting on the November 4, resolution of the Emergency Session of the General Assembly, calling for the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Hungary. Finally, it was not in the interests

38. Id., p.50 Some Indian scholars appear to admit of 'different' if not 'double' standards in India's attitude to Hungary and the Suez Crises. See M.S. Rajan, India in World Affairs, op. cit., pp.146-147. He accepts the theory that Indians believe that there is no use criticising the Soviet Union in contrast to the Western democracies where public opinion moulds policy. See also Surjit Man Singh, "India and the Hungarian Revolution". India Quarterly (XXI, No.2, April-June 1965), p.141. But as Asoka Mehta pointed out in Parliament (Supra, n.31, cols.414-415) this would have called for a stronger reaction against the Soviet Union for, in the Western democracies the opposition parties could take care of the situation as in England during the Suez crisis.
of the country. It was the realisation of this fact that appears to have made him, in fact, more cautious and less unequivocal, in his subsequent utterances, contrary to the general impression that it took a long time for Nehru to speak out the truth.

Anglo-French-Israeli Betrayal

Among the factors that were responsible for the change in Nehru's tone was undoubtedly his disgust at Western, especially British and French, attempts to exploit the Hungarian situation to cover up their crimes elsewhere. He told Parliament on November 19, that "every attempt is being made by one party to lay stress on what has happened in other places so as to hide its own mis-demeanour. There was the Anglo-French action in Egypt and there was a world outcry against it in the United Nations. Then came Hungary, Bad enough.

39. See Nehru's speech at the All India Congress Committee (A.I.C.C.) meeting at Calcutta on 9 November, 1956-The Hindu, 10 November, 1956 and his speech to Parliament on November 19 - Supra n.31 cols.377-386.

40. Commenting on Nehru's observation in his speech to Parliament on November 19, that "the desire of a majority of the people for a change had been suppressed by Soviet armed might", Ross. N. Barkes and Mohinder S. Bedi (op.cit.,p.53) have observed that this "as a statement was chiefly remarkable in that it took official India so long to make it". This is to overlook Nehru's observation at the UNESCO meet in Delhi on November 5, and his correspondence with Bulganin.

41. Supra, n.31 col.382.
But immediately it was made use of to hide what is happening in Egypt. The struggle in Hungary was the basic thing so as to somehow cover up the misdeeds in Egypt. Now on both sides this is happening'. And on November 20, he went further and declared\(^{42}\) that the "warfare in Hungary... would probably have taken a very different turn if there had been no invasion of Egypt."

The significance of this statement is two-fold. Firstly, it was a fairly accurate statement, as it is, more or less, an established fact that the Anglo-French attack on the United Arab Republic was to some extent responsible for the hardening of the Soviet and also Yugoslav policy towards Hungary\(^{43}\). And it cannot be denied that it was this attack that made it easier for the Soviet union to crush the Hungarian revolution with ease\(^{44}\). Secondly, Nehru seems to have realised that England, France and Israel, had deliberately chosen this moment to achieve their evil designs against the United Arab Republic, as indicated above. It is

\(^{42}\) Id., No. 5, 20 November, col. 579.
\(^{43}\) See Richard Lowenthal, op. cit., pp. 82-83. Also Supra, n. 2, p. 115.
\(^{44}\) See M. S. Fajan, *India In World Affairs*, op. cit., p. 148.
difficult to say whether or not Britain and France realised that their folly would make it impossible for the United States to take a firm stand against the Soviet Union on Hungary. It was this among other reasons, rather than real sympathy for the United Arab Republic, that led Eisenhower and Dulles, to demand an end to their aggression and withdrawal from occupied territories. For, after all, the Soviet Union was, and is the first concern of the United States.

It was thus England, France, and Israel, that chose to exploit the sufferings of an European people, cynically one might add, to inflict humiliation and suffering on an Asian people, and not India and the United Arab Republic. The latter had simply refused to be diverted from their primary object of protecting their vital interests from the ambitions of the very same Western powers. No doubt, the United States had condemned the aggression against the United Arab Republic and had thrown, its weight on the side of the victim of aggression. But, it was an act dictated by the need to protect the vital interests of the West as a whole.

There was no other way in which the prestige of the west could be saved from utter disaster. Here also it was its struggle against the Soviet Union that was dominant, for if it had failed to act as it did, it would have conceded a walk-over to the Soviet Union in the struggle for influence in the uncommitted world. Therefore, it might not have been difficult for Nehru and Nasser to see that once the crisis was over, the United States would revert to its policies against the nonaligned states, as it in fact did through the Eisenhower Doctrine for West Asia, which was opposed by Nasser and Nehru.

Defence of National Interests.

In the circumstances, it was not open for India and the United Arab Republic to antagonise the Soviet Union by supporting the Western Powers on Hungary. This would have been the surest way to lose the goodwill of the Soviet Union and other Communist Powers, with no

46. See Documents for 1967, pp. 233-240. Eden claimed in his Memoirs that this was a direct consequence of his military adventure. See Anthony Eden, op. cit., p. 577.
47. For the various joint statements issued by Arab leaders including Nasser, See Documents for 1957, pp. 257-267.
prospects of a better deal from the Western Powers. For, an East-West entanglement on Hungary would have given an opportunity for England, France and Israel to continue to remain in possession of the territories of the United Arab Republic, occupied by them through aggression, not to speak of other dangers, like the occupation of the Suez Canal itself. For England, which had bombed for days the Air fields and other military targets in the United Arab Republic to cripple the latter's defence forces, it would have been easier to force its way into the Canal Zone if the other big powers did not interfere. As long as the forces did not withdraw from the territories of the United Arab Republic, the Suez Canal would have remained closed putting India's economy and plans in jeopardy. And a long drawn-out struggle between the Soviet Union and the United States might have put a heavy strain on the former's aid programmes to India and the United Arab Republic, which would have further increased the strain on the economy and even the defence preparations of these countries.

The Soviet Union might have made this clear to India through Bulganin's letter to Nehru received on November 8, 1956 containing its version of the Hungarian Revolution, which Nehru explained to the All India Congress Committee meeting on November 9, thus bringing a greater sense of reality into his pronouncements. Even if the Soviet Union had not issued any warning, a little reflection on the part of Nehru and the External Affairs Ministry would have made things clear to them and they might well have reflected on things. Tito also had written to Nehru and might have stressed these points. Nehru told Parliament on November 20, that he was to some extent guided by the former's views on Hungary.

Besides, the measures advanced by the Western Powers, for the solution of the Hungarian crisis, viz., withdrawal of Soviet troops, and particularly, the holding of elections under the auspices of the United Nations, were diametrically opposed to India's stand on Kashmir. It would, therefore, have been an act of extreme indiscretion, if Menon had voted for, or even abstained, on the November 9 resolution which included a call for holding

50. Supra, n. 39  
51. Supra, n. 42 cols 582-583. Nehru said that he attached great importance to Tito's views on Europe.  
52. See above, pp. 135-143, 195-200
such elections. The suggestion that India should have abstained from voting on the resolution was ill-considered for it would have meant an acceptance of the principle of holding elections under the auspices of the United Nations. Therefore, Mônôn voted against the paragraph containing this clause while he abstained on all other paragraphs of this resolution when a separate vote was taken on each paragraph before it was put to vote as a whole—explaining the para-wise voting on this resolution to Parliament, Nehru pointed out that when India abstained on the clause on the withdrawal of forces from Hungary, it stood for withdrawal, but voted against the resolution as a whole because it contained the clause on which India voted against. It is significant in this connection to add that the United Arab Republic only abstained on this resolution since it contained no such threats to its vital interests.

This negative vote of Mônôn, as already indicated, had given rise to a storm of protest in India and abroad. It was also reported that Mônôn had acted without instructions. And the instructions, I think, even if

53. See 'A double standard', Eastern Economist, Supra, n. 28.
54. Supra, n. 31, cols. 389-392.
55. Id., col. 391.
56. See below, n. 57.
they had not reached in time, would not have been different from what Memon did. Nehru told Parliament that Memon's vote "was entirely in consonance with our general policy and instructions". And explaining the reasons for Memon's vote Nehru said: "The resolution was, in our opinion, improperly worded. But the most objectionable part of it demanded that elections should be held in Hungary under the supervision of the United Nations. We took strong exception to this because we felt this was contrary to the Charter and would reduce Hungary to less than a sovereign state. Any acceptance of intervention of this type, namely foreign supervised elections, seemed to us to set a bad precedent which might be utilised in future intervention in other countries."

Though Nehru did not spell out the country where such intervention might occur, the Communist spokesman in Parliament, A.K. Gopalan, did it for him: "As far as the Indian vote in the United Nations is concerned..... India had acted perfectly well. It is significant

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57. See Nehru, op.cit., p.556 Also Supra, n.42,cols589-594. In view of this, it seems improbable that the Foreign Ministry was surprised at Memon's vote as the New York Times correspondent in New Delhi is said to have reported, unless the Foreign Ministry was ignorant of the contents of the resolution—See Ross N. Berkes and Mohinder S. Bedi, op.cit., p.52.
58. Nehru, op.cit., p.556
59. Supra , n.31, col.402.
that one of the chief sponsors of the resolution was Pakistan which illegally grabbed part of Kashmir and its attitude towards this whole crisis had been of a dubious character. The elections under the United Nations auspices constitute a violation of sovereignty of any country. Tomorrow, the same logic may be applied as far as Kashmir is concerned, so, those who criticise India's stand on the resolution should ponder over this aspect."

**Western Double-Standards**

It was unrealistic on the part of the Western Powers to condemn the Soviet Union for its suppression of the Hungarian Revolution and to demand the withdrawal of its forces from Hungary, a country which the Soviet Union considers so vital for its security, when all of them, including the United States, felt that the nationalisation of the Suez Canal Company by the United Arab Republic, a legally a politically justifiable act, was an act of Hitlerism, justifying military action on their part. Therefore, the attempts to equate the two crises, deliberate or otherwise, were and are misleading, to say the least. As
K.P.S. Menon has aptly remarked "the Revolution in Hungary, as it developed, threatened not merely the prestige but the security of the Soviet Union and the existence of that belt of States, the cordon sanitaire, which the Soviet Union had so laboriously erected all along her vulnerable Western and Southern frontiers. If reasons of State ever constitute a justification for a state's conduct, they existed in this case but they did not exist in the case of the British action in the Suez."

Inspite of this basic difference and the totally unjustified attack by England, France and Israel on the United Arab Republic, leading Western diplomats made all attempts to prevent a condemnation of England and France as aggressors, while they went all out to condemn the Soviet Union. As Terence Robertson has written "Every one asked what was the difference between the Soviet Union crushing Hungary, and the British and French assaulting Egypt? Was it because an attack on an African or Asian country was more acceptable than an attack on a

60. Supra, n. 27, p. 50. Also Supra n. 2, p. 116, It has to be pointed out that Nehru also committed the mistake of equating the two on occasions—See his speech to the A.I.C.C., at Calcutta on November 11, 1956: The Hindu 12 November, 1956. On November 16, 1956, he told the Lok Sabha, on the contrary, that both differed in nature—See Nehru, op.cit, ,p. 555.
a European country?... Typically, however, neither Pearson nor Hammarskjold was diverted from the conviction that Britain and France should at all costs remain untarnished by the brand of aggression."

And according to Prof. Francisco W. Wilcox62, "Actually, the Assembly resolutions condemning the actions of the Soviet Union and the Hungarian regime were more vigorously worded than those addressed to the guilty parties in the Suez crisis."

In spite of all this, as has already been indicated, India did its best to restrain the United Arab Republic at every step, even when the actions of England and France were highly provocative, and, after the initial outburst against England and France, Nehru quietly worked with other Commonwealth countries to rescue Her Majesty’s Government and their allies from disgrace.

But, from the point of view of India and the United Arab Republic, the security of their vital interests lay in not antagonising the Soviet Union rather than the Western Powers in the Hungarian crises. Nasser who had

been attacked by the major allies of the United States could only look to the Soviet Union for support. And Nehru, who had written in the early forties that the Soviet Union could not be indifferent to India in its own interests, and who was to claim later that the Soviet Union was India's second line of defence and vice versa, could not, indeed, have been indifferent to the threats to the former's security from the Western Powers in the then prevailing tension between the two blocs. Tito was also motivated by similar considerations of self-interest.

A. Balancing Act

Thus once again the three nonaligned nations found themselves in full agreement over the need to maintain the balance of power between the two super Powers, in their own interests, as well as in the interests of world peace. For, a serious disturbance

63. See above p.92
64. Id., p.95
65. In the early forties Nehru gave indication of his future policy towards the Soviet Union in his reactions to the Soviet claims in Iran which is highly reminiscent of his stand on Hungary—See Bimal Prasad, The Origins of Indian Foreign Policy, op.cit., pp.242-243.
66. See his speech at Pula in which he justified the Soviet action in crushing the Revolution—Supra n.3, pp.527-530. Nehru told Parliament on November 20, 1950 that Tito's speech at Pula was sent to him by telegram—Supra n.51. See also Lowenthal, op.cit., pp.81-87 for a very able analysis of Tito's role in this crisis.
67. As G. Barraclough has aptly observed the 'long term' contd.
of the balance of power which the Hungarian Revolution threatened to do, was fraught with dangerous consequences for world peace and security and for the position of the nonaligned states.

It is from this point of view that one has to judge the frequent mention of the cold war and the cold war pacts by Nehru in his speeches in Parliament and outside it, during the Suez and Hungarian crises. There was also no point in trying to force United Nations' resolutions on the Soviet Union which it was not prepared to accept. And there was no way in which it could be made to do so, short of a war with it, for which, the United States, least of all, was prepared. And it was most unrealistic on the part of the United States to believe that it would be able to make the Soviet Union accept the United Nations' resolutions when it could not or would not make a state like Israel, which depends upon it entirely for its very survival, to do it, as already indicated.

Contd...

Consequence of the Hungarian crisis was that "the division of spheres of influence agreed in 1945 at Yalta and Potsdam was irreversible so far as could humanly be foreseen..." - Supra, n. 2. p. 137. The invasion of Czechoslovakia in mid-1968 by Russia only confirm the truth of this observation.

68. Supra, n. 39. and see Nehru's speech at the A.I.C.C. Meeting on 11 November - The Hindu, 12 December 1956.
69. See Wood Rouse, op. cit., p. 61.
Thus, though Nehru had expressed genuine sympathy with the Hungarian people and their aspirations, and even criticised Soviet excesses, his policy was one of avoidance of any condemnation of the Soviet action in Hungary. Krishna Menon said in the General Assembly on December 12, 1956, that India did not want to call for the withdrawal of Soviet forces either from Hungary or from other East European states, but was only opposed to the intervention of Soviet forces in the internal affairs of Hungary, for which there was no justification. Nehru endorsed this argument in Parliament on December 13, 1956.

70. See the A.I.C.C. resolution passed on November 9, 1956, The Hindu, 10 November 1956. This was criticised as weak on Hungary. Nehru defended it saying that this "did not imply any difference in our way of judging events" and that it was "difficult, having regard to facts before us, to say more"—see The Hindu, 12 December 1956. See also the joint statement of the Prime Ministers of Burma, Ceylon, Indonesia and India issued on November 14 1956 in New Delhi regretting the Soviet action in Hungary and demanding the withdrawal of its forces—Supra, n. 35, pp. 267-70.


India's Mistakes

But to jump from this to the conclusion that Nehru lacked moral fervour or applied double standards is to commit a grievous mistake. Nehru was, in fact, more agonised over the events in Hungary, than many of his counterparts in Western countries, who had chosen to exploit the situation, as was evident from his weak, ambiguous and somewhat apologetic explanations of his policy in Parliament and outside it, instead of a vigorous and forthright defence of it, as it was largely in the interests of the country, as they stood then.

Another, and perhaps a more important reason for Nehru's ambiguity, was of course, the impossibility of reconciling the policy in this case with the laboriously built conception of Nonalignment as a moral alternative to 'power politics', a term which the Indian politicians have found it too easy to condemn with or without justification and in or out of context.

73. This is the inescapable impression that one gathers from a study of Nehru's speeches. One undesirable result of this ambiguity was attacks on our diplomatic missions abroad in and outside Parliament. Nehru was forced to defend them in Parliament. Supra, n. 31, col. 375 and Supra n.42 cols 586-589.
It is also doubtful, if many of the Indian scholars are any better in this respect, who find it easy to dismiss India's stand on Hungary, as a departure from, or inconsistent with the so-called theory or principles of Nonalignment\textsuperscript{74} by which they mean the Panch Sheel, etc. It is hardly necessary to reiterate that India had never adhered to the Panch Sheel whenever its security was threatened.

It has, therefore, to be admitted, in fairness to the foreign critics of India's policy, that their criticisms are understandable, though hardly justifiable. It is difficult not to lament the failure of Indian scholars to interpret the country's foreign policy in realistic and intelligible terms. Nothing appears to have contributed more to the misunderstanding of India's foreign policy and worse still to damage its image abroad, than the misplaced moral fervour of many Indian scholars. This is not to forget the role of our diplomats who seem to have been well trained to project this false image of India in the outside world. This will, however, be examined in the concluding chapter.

\textsuperscript{74} See above, Chapter 2, p.\textsuperscript{30}