PREFACE

The dominant theme that runs through all the chapters is that relations between the two largest democracies - United States and India, have been far from idyllic. Yet, they have not been devoid of much that is positive. The relationship between the two countries has reflected a curious pattern of interaction in many ways. At the time of Indian independence, expectations of Indo-U.S. cooperation were in the air. These high expectations arose from the fact that India seemed destined to emerge as the world’s largest, and Asia’s first, fully democratic state. It was widely believed that there would be a natural affinity between the two Republics. However, their relations never achieved the degree of harmony expected.

Many factors determined the actual course. Two of these stood out above all others from the very beginning. One was the pre-occupation of the United States, as leader of the Western World with containing Soviet expansionism. The Cold War policies toward the South Asian region exacerbated U.S.-Indian relations. That these policies had such an effect was partly attributable to the second factor, which was India’s pre-occupation under the leadership of western educated elite with a policy that rejected the premises of the Cold War and espoused Non Alignment with either the American led or the Soviet led blocs. Non Alignment appears to have bothered the United States much more than it did the Soviet Union. Evidence suggests that U.S. disillusionment and frustration arose from the initial Western perceptions of Jawaharlal Nehru as an almost archetypal by-product of the Westminster tradition would certainly identify himself with the Western value system, reject Stalinist totalitarianism, and join the crusade against the spread of the RED MALAISE. Nehru’s affection for parliamentary democracy was qualified by the lingering hatred of Western colonialism, a profound commitment to socialism and considerable admiration for the Soviet Union’s success in rapidly industrializing itself under the rubric of Marxism-Leninism.

The undercurrent of mutual annoyance was seldom inimical and never unfriendly. The record shows wide swings in the context of Cold War perceptions. The thesis is an humble attempt to highlight objectively some aspects of American policy keeping in view the positive and negative facets in the embryonic phase (1945-53).
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