CHAPTER - VII

CONCLUSIONS

In the present world no country is totally self-sufficient. As a result, the countries of the world have to depend upon one another and vice-versa to achieve self-sufficiency by way of fulfilling their desires and needs. Therefore, while fulfilling their demands the countries come into contact with each other, which ultimately results in interdependency. This interdependence among the countries gave rise to involvement of countries in the international relations. To give a definite shape to these relations certain principles were adopted, which came to be known as rational guide i.e., foreign policy. Today in the modern world the foreign policy has become an instrument of protecting the national interests of a country.

In the formulation of a country's foreign policy the leadership factor plays an important and predominant role. According to the present world situation, the very survival of the human race is directly dependent upon the pursuance of the right kind of foreign policy and the leaders who determine it. This kind of foreign policy, no doubt, helps not only to strengthen friendly relations between countries but also helps to reduce conflicts and tensions in the world. Therefore, the responsibility of a leader in formulating a sound foreign policy has increased manifold, as he has to keep in
mind the interest of the country, which is of paramount importance. In a democratic country like India the common people have a very little role to play in the formulation of country's foreign policy. Since they were not aware of the international happenings due to lack of interest in the international affairs and also entangled with day today problems of their own. Obviously this increased the responsibility of the leaders representing the people in the formulation of the country's foreign policy.

The study reveals that the leadership of Rajiv Gandhi played a crucial in the formulation of India's foreign policy. In the Indian context, Rajiv Gandhi's leadership made a substantial contribution to deal with the problems of foreign policy. It reveals that Rajiv Gandhi played a significant role in improving the relations with India's immediate neighbours, particularly with Sri Lanka and China. Further, his policy towards Super Powers of the world strengthened the friendly relations especially with the US. Certainly, it was Rajiv Gandhi's able leadership that succeeded in getting the transfer of sophisticated technological know how from the US.

The study of Rajiv Gandhi's foreign policy reveals that Rajiv Gandhi did not dominate the Policy Planning Machinery on foreign policy as criticized in some quarters. However, Rajiv Gandhi firmly believed in the democratic method of formulating the foreign policy of India by giving an opportunity to all the actors. Nevertheless, he
was the key instrument behind the foreign policy mechanism that chalked out the policies, and it was the External Affairs Ministry, which implemented them. Indeed, Rajiv Gandhi had the hold on the foreign policy mechanism to effectively monitor the external affairs. Though Rajiv Gandhi had established domination over the External Affairs Ministry, he was very much liberal in giving scope to the respective wing of the Policy Planning Committee to formulate the effective foreign policy. This naturally resulted in the stability of the foreign policy machinery. He even utilized properly the talent available among the Indian Foreign Service personnel, especially G.Parthasarathy who was well versed in dealing with Tamil problem since Indira Gandhi's period. Further, he even appointed the then Foreign Secretary, Romesh Bhandari as Prime Minister's special envoy to deal with the Sri Lankan crisis. Even, J.N.Dixit the then High commissioner to Sri Lanka, was entrusted with the task of draft preparation of the Indo-Sri Lankan Accord to be signed by Rajiv Gandhi and Jayewardene. This clearly shows that Rajiv Gandhi was democratic in the foreign policy making process.

Rajiv Gandhi adopted the democratic way in formulating the foreign policy as could be seen from the responsibility assignment to the bureaucrats in the External Affairs Ministry. However, in respect of Sri Lankan ethnic conflict the ineffectiveness (mis-handling) of the various agencies of the government of India and the emissaries who have been assigned in dealing with the ethnic
crisis failed in their responsibility. As a result, it is believed that during Rajiv Gandhi’s period that India primarily found it difficult to formulate an effective policy towards Sri Lanka. Therefore, Rajiv Gandhi, who was instrumental in signing the Indo-Sri Lankan Accord and sending the IPKF had to sacrifice his life at the cost of the so-called Accord, which is an irony. The Agreement with Sri Lanka proved to be very costly to Rajiv Gandhi, who was bent upon establishing peace in the war-torn island.

The brief history of India’s foreign policy also reveals that its foreign policy was not rigid and in fact, was flexible. Besides, it was also not clear especially while dealing with Sri Lankan ethnic issue and China’s relations. India’s foreign policy also proved that it is not static but adjustable. This has been proved in the case of America, where India had moved towards West during Indira Gandhi’s period (1982-84) and Rajiv Gandhi’s period (1984-88) respectively to normalize the relations. This naturally created a sense of mistrust/discontentment in India’s relations with Soviet Union. India’s shift in policy towards West especially during Rajiv Gandhi’s period was generally construed as deviating from the actual path as set forth by his predecessors. However, it is proved beyond doubt that there was no shift in India’s foreign policy towards West during Rajiv Gandhi’s regime to acquire the technological know how from the US with a view to developing the country economically. He extended the hand of friendship towards the US with a view to improving India’s relations with it to get
transfer the Western technology from that country. This is because he was pursuing the liberalised policy ever since he became the Prime Minister of India.

Rajiv Gandhi's visit to China in the second half of 1988 opened a new chapter in the Sino-Indian relations. It broke the barrier of hostility and suspicion and established mutual trust between the two countries. Both the countries agreed to strengthen the relations and to have cooperation in all fields. In response to Rajiv Gandhi's visit, the Chinese Premier Li-Peng visited India and both countries decided to have periodic meetings on military and trade issues and also high-level exchanges between the two countries. The establishment of the Joint Working Group (JWG) provided an opportunity for the two countries to discuss and sort out the problems between them. The JWG met in July 1989 to discuss all outstanding issues, including the border dispute. Again in 1990, JWG decided to institutionalize the meeting between the military personnel on the border and agreed to maintain peace and tranquility along the Line of Actual Control.

With regard to the first hypothesis that Rajiv Gandhi's leadership was primarily responsible for improving relations with the US, it is proved in the study that Rajiv Gandhi made strenuous efforts to improve the Indo-US relations despite certain disagreements. It was the dynamic leadership and charismatic quality of Rajiv Gandhi that enabled India to acquire the
sophisticated technology. It was his clear vision to take India to the 21st century by making use of the US technological know-how. Rajiv Gandhi's leadership was mainly responsible India's achieving self-reliance, which was possible with the improvement of India's relations with the US. Rajiv Gandhi continued the foreign policy as set forth by his predecessors in order to make India strong in the comity of nations, thereby getting the sophisticated technological know-how from the US.

Regarding the second hypothesis that the responsibility of formulating policy towards Sri Lanka under the leadership of Rajiv Gandhi became more difficult primarily due to the complex nature of ethnic problem in Sri Lanka. The study has proved the validity of this hypothesis, when Indian foreign policy mechanism found it difficult to formulate a clear foreign policy strategy towards Sri Lankan ethnic conflict. Rajiv Gandhi, who was instrumental in signing the Indo-Sri Lankan Accord and sending the IPKF had to sacrifice his life for the so-called Accord, which is an irony. The Agreement with Sri Lanka proved to be very costly to Rajiv Gandhi, who was bent upon establishing peace in the war-torn island.

As regards the third hypothesis that the leadership of Rajiv Gandhi was basically responsible for taking concrete policy initiative to normalize India's relations with China, the study has proved that this hypothesis is valid. He undertook several confidence-building measures to improve the Sino-Indian relations.
He mainly concentrated on the bilateral agreements to improve India's relations with China. Rajiv Gandhi's strategy of improving the Sino-Indians relation through the bilateral agreements proved to be successful. The best example would be the resurfacing of the 1950s sentiment "Hindi Chini bhai bhai", which had receded in the history for the past several years. Therefore, Rajiv Gandhi's leadership proved that he was mainly responsible for the improvement of strained relations between India and China.

The findings of the present study are as follows:

1) In this study, it is found that Rajiv Gandhi played a predominant role in formulating India's foreign policy. In so far as the improvement of relations with the US, Rajiv Gandhi succeeded in improving the relations to a certain extent, despite some irritants. His leadership proved that he did not compromise with the national interest while acquiring sophisticated technology to India. During his regime there was no shift in India's foreign policy, it was an attempt to normalize relations with the US.

2) This study reveals that Rajiv Gandhi’s leadership was mainly responsible for further cementing the bond of friendship with the Soviet Union. He played a crucial role in signing bilateral agreements with the Soviet Union, which resulted in strengthening the mutual trust and co-operation between the two countries.
3) This study indicates while dealing with Sri Lankan ethnic problem Rajiv Gandhi's strategy did not work effectively. This naturally resulted in the non-implementation of the Indo-Sri Lankan Accord in letter and spirit.

4) In this study it is noticed that under the leadership of Rajiv Gandhi, India could improve the Sino-Indian relations, which had remained strained for the past several years. He undertook several confidence-building measures to improve India's relations with China. During his time, the bilateral agreements were given top priority. This may be regarded as a substantial contribution of Rajiv Gandhi to the Sino-Indian relations.

5) This study demonstrated that Rajiv Gandhi's leadership was responsible for establishing world peace that waged a relentless war against the proliferation of nuclear weapons. It is because of his endeavour that the nuclear holocaust was avoided in the globe. To achieve this objective Rajiv Gandhi made use of all the international forums wherein he could draw the attention of the world leaders about the danger of nuclear weapons. Rajiv Gandhi was considerably successful in convincing the leaders of the Super Powers to sign the INF (Intermediate Nuclear force Treaty) thereby paving the way for the disarmament in the globe.

6) The study indicates that Rajiv Gandhi's leadership succeeded to a great extent in accomplishing the laborious task of eradicating the inhuman and obnoxious practice of apartheid from the
South African Continent. He proved himself a great organizer of funds to the economic development of African frontline countries, despite non-co-operation from the Western and developed countries of the world.

7) His leadership was successful in further strengthening the regional co-operation among the SAARC countries. He was responsible for introducing several new areas of co-operation along with trade and industry in the SAARC agenda.

In the light of the findings of the present study the following suggestion may be considered:

This study points to the need for an extensive and intensive study of the political leadership of Rajiv Gandi and its impact on the Indian democratic politics.