CHAPTER - II
The Soviet-Yugoslav relations became friendly in the mid sixties when Leonid Brezhnev became the General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU). The relationship had moved away from the hostility of Stalin’s period to co-existence of the Khrushchev period. The Brezhnev period saw further consolidation of friendly ties. This was possible primarily because of developments at the regional level (in the European context) which promoted to Soviet-Yugoslav friendly relationship.

In this chapter we will focus on the Soviet policy towards Yugoslavia during the Brezhnev era. While discussing Soviet policy framework, a brief outline of Yugoslav foreign policy and mutually beneficial joint statements and Communiqué will also be discussed. In order to understand the undercurrents of bilateral relations, this chapter will contain three different sections of regional, bilateral and international policy formulations. The Soviet desire to develop cordial relations with Yugoslavia will be seen in the context of regional importance followed by mutually beneficial political relations at the bilateral level and some of the international developments will be highlighted keeping in view of the super power status of the Soviet Union and the international recognition of Yugoslavia as the leader of the Non-alignment Movement.

Brezhnev came to power in 1964. By that time Nikita Khrushchev had already begun the process of reconciliation with Yugoslavia. There were
problems, however, at the regional level on the question of Soviet hegemony and ideology. The manifestations of such problems could be seen in 1956 Hungarian crisis, the independence of Yugoslavia and their way of building socialism. In the early 1960s, Yugoslavia opted for non-alignment and took the leadership with the help of developing countries. Yugoslavia's stand on non-alignment brought it enormous prestige and the country got international recognition as the leader of a movement.

In the light of the above developments, Brezhnev saw the region as the most important factor in legitimising Soviet leadership and building socialism in one country. Therefore, he emphasised on regional cohesion and viability including that of Yugoslavia and the best effort at times was to maintain the balance between the two. Cohesion, as the Soviet leadership understood, implied the general conformity of East European domestic and foreign policies to the Soviet prescriptions and the identity of institutional arrangements between the two. Viability suggests the presence of confidence, credible, efficient and legitimate regimes in Eastern Europe that obviate the need for continuous Soviet preoccupation and intervention in the region. Such policy interventions were well manifested in the Soviet military intervention in Czechoslovakia and the subsequent declaration of Brezhnev 'Doctrine of Limited Sovereignty'.

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Soviet Foreign Policy

During the mid-1960's the changing scenario of international relations influenced the Soviet foreign policy. The cold war was loosing its significance and the competition for the spheres of influence by use or threat of force lost its way to suppress the national liberation movement. For the Soviet Union, ideology became the core of the foreign policy. The concept of 'Developed Socialism' was adopted to strengthen international communist movement and to extend solidarity to countries fighting for national liberation elsewhere in the world except Eastern Europe. Developed socialism, according to the Soviet government, was meant to improve the economic conditions, especially the living standards of the people.

The importance of ideology as a weapon in the struggle against imperialism was highlighted in the 1969 International Conference of Communists and Worker's Parties held in Moscow. Supporting the line taken by the Communist Party in 1957 and 1960, the conference adopted a firm stand on the ideological question. The document adopted at the conference declared,

"the policy of joint anti-imperialist actions require that the ideological role of the Marxist-Leninist parties in the world revolutionary process be enhanced (and) ..... the communist will continue to wage an implacable struggle against bourgeois ideology."\(^2\) The above declaration emphasized the need

of mobilizing world communists against imperialism and the core of the issue was ideology. However, the United States of America adopted policies not to provoke crisis in Eastern Europe but to support the people economically and to encourage them to fight against the Soviet system to weaken the international communist movement.

Therefore, the basic trend at the international level was characterised by the growth and consolidation of the forces of world socialism, the successful development of the national-liberation revolution of formerly oppressed peoples and the continued weakening of the world capitalist system. Against this background, the Soviet Union had to face opposition from three different contenders i.e the US, China and Yugoslavia. While the fight between the Soviet Union and the US was seen in the context of the fight between socialism and imperialism, in case of China and Yugoslavia, it was a challenge within the system with regard to the direction of international communist movement.

During 1965-67, Vietnam occupied an important place in Soviet Union’s relations with US, as the US forces stationed in South Vietnam suppressed the national liberation movement of the Vietnam people. The Soviet Union supported the cause of the Vietnamese people by extending material and political assistance along with the Warsaw Pact forces. The Soviet Union declared that the normalisation of relations is incompatible with the armed aggression of American imperialism against the fraternal socialist country
of Vietnam. Hence, there was very little scope to normalise the relations between the two countries. While the Soviet Union continued its support to the Vietnam government, the US continued to encourage the forces of dissidents in Eastern Europe and helped Yugoslavia economically to maintain its independence.

Next to the question of Vietnam, the disagreement between communist China and the Soviet Union inevitably affected the entire international communist movement. In June 1959, the Soviet Union refused to honor an earlier agreement to provide assistance to communist China in developing nuclear weapons. This important step, preceded by other frictions, led to a growing gap between the two countries and ultimately to an almost open break by 1965.

The major conflict was about the direction of the international communist movement. The Chinese argued that their experience has more relevance for communist parties in underdeveloped countries than that of the Soviet. The Chinese communists also felt that they have a particular priority in Asia, especially in Southeast Asia and South Asia. Also there were disagreement on the policy toward India, where there had been open friction between communist China and India. The Soviet Union not only refused to support the Chinese position in this conflict, but also provided economic and military assistance to India.
There were other pressing issues. The Soviet Union and the communist China disagreed vigorously over long-term policy toward the United States. The Chinese communists believed that the US and her allies can be overthrown only through the use of force while the Soviet government emphasized on peaceful co-existence as a necessary policy. Finally, and perhaps above all, the conflict over the boundaries between the Soviet Union and China, a distance of over 4,000 miles, led to the Sino-Soviet War in 1969. And hence, the prolongation of the Sino-Soviet dispute served to enhance still further the political, ideological, and even military value of Eastern Europe to the Soviet Union.

Therefore, during the early years of Brezhnev era, the objective necessity of the foreign policy tasks was to create international conditions to facilitate 'communist construction' in Soviet Union. The Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU), Central Committee (CC) report to the Twenty Fourth Congress (1971) declared that, "the developed socialist society which Lenin referred to in 1918...... had been built by the selfless labour of the Soviet people." However, the CC report to the Twenty Fifth Congress considered the key economic tasks in the stage of developed socialist society as well as the party in the conditions of 'developed socialism'. The Twenty Sixth CPSU Congress, taking stock of the period in the Soviet Union since 1977 indicated that the notion of 'the period of developed socialism' was the "restructuring of all social relations along the collectivist

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The social policy of the party included perfecting the 'socialist way of life' and removing all hindrances from the path of "moulding of the new man." These ideological interpretations were elaborated and demonstrated in the Party Congress. However, major policy decisions with regard to foreign policy formulations was charted out in the Twenty Fourth Party Congress.

From the above statements and the declarations it is understood that apart from ideology, security of the region and the economic development formed the basis of Soviet foreign policy. Beginning with the early 1970s as a superpower recognised by the world community, the Soviet Union was much occupied by the developments in Europe and its repercussions on Soviet security system. The security of the region was viewed as one of the major concerns of the Soviet Union. In the first instance, the political ideology of socialist internationalism or proletariat internationalism was well built up to strengthen the Warsaw Treaty Organisation (WTO) of the socialist community against imperialism and capitalism. Secondly, efforts were made to establish a common security system (Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, CSCE, 1975). Thirdly, the Soviet Union gradually pursued the policy of disarmament and to some extent supported Yugoslavia's stand on non-alignment. However, the support for non-alignment had the reservation of Brezhnev's doctrine of 'limited sovereignty.'

6 Documents and Resolutions of Twenty Sixth Party Congress (Moscow, 1976), p. 74
7 ibid, p. 82.
Therefore, the Congress in its resolution reaffirmed the proposal of the socialist countries for a system of collective security in Europe, and following the creation of such system, for the simultaneous disbandment of the defensive Warsaw Treaty and the North Atlantic Bloc or, as a first step, the disbandment of the military organisation of these alliances. The Soviet Union further played an important role in the conclusion of the Treaty on the Prohibition of the Emplacement of Nuclear Weapons and other Weapons of Mass Destruction on the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor and in the Subsoil thereof. This treaty was opened for signature on February 11, 1971 and came into force on May 18, 1972. What was significant in this treaty was that it banned the most dangerous form of military activity on the bed of sea and ocean.

As mentioned earlier, that the Twenty Fifth Congress considered the key economic tasks in the stage of developed socialist society as well as the party in the conditions of 'developed socialism.' Precisely, the idea was to improve the living standard of the people. Greater emphasis was put on the development of science and technology but the economic policy was regulated within the framework of the Council of Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA). The material basis for the further cohesion of the socialist- nations was the expansion and deepening of economic

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8 Report of the Central Committee of the CPSU to the Twenty Fourth Party Congress (Moscow, 1971), p. 22  
cooperation between them and the planned drawing together of their economies.

At its Twenty Fifth session in July 1971, soon after the Twenty Fourth Congress of the CPSU, CMEA, acting on the initiative of the CPSU, adopted a twenty-year comprehensive programme for socialist economic integration of its member nations. This was a strategic programme for the development of economic cooperation among socialist countries to meet the long-term requirements. Apart from CMEA, the Soviet Union attached paramount importance to develop bilateral relations with other socialist countries.

Soviet-Yugoslav Interaction in the Regional Context

Relations with Europe, which was part of the developed capitalist world, formed the core of Soviet foreign policy. It was also in Europe that the socialist Bloc was located. In its fight with the capitalist world the socialist Bloc was an important component. It was in Europe that Yugoslavia was located. Though not a member of the socialist Bloc, Yugoslavia had opted for scientific socialism but preferred an independent path to socialist development. It was obvious that the significance of improved relations with Yugoslavia lay in the regional context. Several landmark developments occurred in Europe, which had an impact on Soviet-Yugoslav relations.
The Military Intervention in Czechoslovakia

The growing friendly ties between the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia were put to test in the late sixties, when the Soviet Union decided military intervention in Czechoslovakia for ideological and security reasons. During the first half of 1968, President Alexander Dubeck of Czechoslovakia introduced a set of measures both at the economic and political levels. The economic reform underlined the need of loosening economic control. The implication of such reform process did not criticize the capitalist system. Moreover, it was carried out in a way that opposed the very basis of Soviet economic system. But the pro-Soviet or conservatives within Czechoslovakia opposed the reform process of equal importance was the attempt to introduce socialism with a human face. As a result, the Dubeck government on one side and their brothers on the other who had opposed the economic and political reform were locked in a war of words. The Soviet government perceived the situation as a threat to the centralised Soviet economic system. Another concern was that such kind of reform if allowed would encourage the other East European countries to such an extent that it might lead to the weakening of the Soviet model of socialism. The domino effect on Eastern Europe was feared. Therefore, the Soviet government on grounds of ideological conformity called on its allies to consider the reform process. A discussion took place with Czechoslovakia in March 1968 and when this did not bring about the desired change in Czechoslovakia policy, they were summoned to Warsaw. They refused to come. So the war saw pact leader's powers assembled in Warsaw addressed a letter to them. The letter was not effective. The
representatives of Czechoslovakia government were invited to the Soviet Union. Again, they refused to go fearing that they might not return.

The Yugoslavia government was enthusiastic about the developments in Czechoslovakia. The reason was obvious that Yugoslavia as an independent state was happy to see countries developing different models of socialism through reforms as suitable by the situation of their own country. In Czechoslovak perception, further economic development of the country required major interaction with the outside world. Hence, it sought cooperation of the developed countries in its economic reforms. Therefore the Yugoslavia government noted that the economic reform did not include demands to abolish the political monopoly of the Communist Party, or to leave the Warsaw Pact, and that the Soviet government should therefore, accept them, however, reluctantly. In this case, President Tito seemed to be fully in line with his own public opinion. Perhaps, he felt that 'liberal communist' governments in Central and Eastern Europe would look to Yugoslavia for guidance. Later during his visit to the Soviet Union in April 1968, he warned the Soviet leaders that any attempt to use force against the Dubcek government would be a catastrophe. 11

During the following Summer (1968), President Tito visited Czechoslovakia amid enthusiasm that a crisis had been averted. He calculated even then that the Soviet leaders had evolved sufficiently from the Stalinist outlook not to risk the political consequences of military intervention, and the shows

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of military force on the Czechoslovakia borders were designed mainly to prevent the Dubeck regime from repeating the mistakes of Imre Nagy of Hungary. However, among its allies the Soviet Union found that Romania was reluctant to support Soviet action in Czechoslovakia.

But the Yugoslav-Romania support to the Dubeck regime failed to mobilise other socialist countries to oppose Soviet military intervention. A few days later, to resolve the Czechoslovakia crisis an agreement was signed between all Warsaw Pact countries in appropriate ceremonies in the Slovak capital, Bratislava. Unfortunately, events took another course. Taking advantage of the weakening of the party leadership of the country and demagogically abusing the slogan of 'democratisation', the forces of reaction triggered off campaign against the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and its honest and devoted cadres, clearly seeking to abolish the party's leading role, to subvert the socialist system and to place Czechoslovakia in opposition to other socialist countries.

At the end of April 1968, a Yugoslav delegation headed by President Tito arrived in the Soviet Union. He told Brezhnev and the other leaders in Moscow that any attempt to use force for the solution of the problems in Czechoslovakia would have infinitely serious consequences not only for Czechoslovakia, but for the Soviet Union itself, and the international

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workers movement in general.\textsuperscript{14} However, President Tito’s visit did not amount to enormous pressure to convince the Soviet leadership to find a political solution to the crisis in Czechoslovakia. After all Yugoslavia was a middle level power in Europe and hence, its support or opposition was not of decisive importance to the Soviet Union. Subsequently, the representatives of the Soviet Union, Poland, Hungary, East Germany and Bulgaria dispatched the ‘Warsaw letter’ to Czechoslovakia threatening dire consequences for the perceived betrayal of socialism in Czechoslovakia. In response to this letter, President Tito issued a statement hopefully declaring that there could be no elements in the Soviet Union so shortsighted as to resort to a policy of force against a fraternal country. The League of Communists of Yugoslavia (LCY) had already expressed its conviction that any outside action representing interference or an effort to limit the independence of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia…. would have grave consequences.\textsuperscript{15}

Despite all these efforts and pressure, President Tito arrived in the Czech capital Prague in August where he was enthusiastically received. After all Yugoslavia was the only country to upheld the reform process in Czechoslovakia. At the same time, or shortly afterwards, the Soviet government reached the conclusion that the alarming trend of events could only be arrested by military intervention. On the night of 20-21 August, Soviet troops moved into Prague, took over all key military and political

\textsuperscript{15} ibid, p. 80
posts and with support from East German, Bulgarian, Polish, and Hungarian units, reasserted total control over Czechoslovakia.

The Essence of Brezhnev Doctrine

The military intervention in Czechoslovakia had also to be justified ideologically. The "Brezhnev Doctrine" as it came to be known in the West or "socialist internationalism", or 'limited sovereignty' as it is sometimes called in the socialist Bloc, had been enunciated in the wake of Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia in 1968.\(^\text{16}\) It was then taken to mean that "each communist party is responsible not only to its own people but also to all the socialist countries, that the sovereignty of individual socialist countries was of lesser importance than the interest of world socialism and that it is not only the right but also the positive duty of all socialist countries to come to the aid of any socialist state where socialism is threatened."\(^\text{17}\)

Surprisingly, much before the Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia and the declaration of Brezhnev Doctrine, the resolution adopted by the CPSU Central Committee Plenum in early April 1968 did indeed commit the party 'to do everything necessary for the steady political, economic and defensive consolidation of the socialist commonwealth'. The social policy of the party included perfecting of the "socialist way of life" and removing all hindrances


from the path of "moulding the new man." 18 In other words, the sovereignty of a socialist country was not unlimited, as it is understood in the West.

Meanwhile, within the CPSU all were not hardliners. For example, Prime Minister Kosygin was still advocating non-interference in the internal affairs of Czechoslovakia. However, his views were overruled at the Warsaw Meeting of Bloc leaders from the Soviet Union, Poland, Bulgaria, Hungary and GDR (German Democratic Republic). At that conclave, the ‘five leaders sent a letter to the Czechoslovak Central Committee making it clear that the leading, controlling, and monopolistic role of the communist party could in no way be dismantled without posing a serious threat to socialism within that country and consequently to the security of the entire Bloc. 19

The final component of the Brezhnev doctrine was then added at the Bratislav Meeting in early August when the Bloc states (excluding Romania but including Czechoslovakia) declared that proletarian internationalism included not just the right, but the positive duty of all socialist countries jointly to defend socialism wherever it is threatened. With this communiqué, all the major elements of the Brezhnev doctrine were in place. 20 The process of consensus building had taken nearly six months, but by the beginning of August no one within the Soviet leadership or within the Bloc could any longer argue that military intervention would be inconsistent with

18 Documents and the Resolutions of the Twenty Sixth Party Congress, (Moscow, 1981), p. 82.
20 ibid, p. 20
the stated Soviet principles. According to a well known Sovietologist, Donald Treadgold, the Brezhnev Doctrine represented a reassertion of Moscow's traditional role in Eastern Europe (minus Yugoslavia and Albania), underscoring the fact that the Kremlin considered Eastern Europe de facto an internal rather than an external Soviet matter. The Brezhnev doctrine also demonstrated that the Soviet Union would use power with its Bloc. It also reflected that this being its special area, the West was not likely to intervene or at least should not intervene.

Thus, the Brezhnev doctrine legitimised the ideological conformity between the Soviet Union and at least the Soviet Bloc comprising East European communist states with the membership of the Warsaw Pact. This unity and joint political strength could be maintained only with the dominant role of the communist party in the policy, and with a "fraternal solidarity with other socialist countries." It made its first appearance in Moscow's Pravda on 26 September 1968 in an article entitled 'Sovereignty and International Duties of Socialist Countries' written by Sergei Kovaler while justifying the military intervention in Czechoslovakia, it delineated the rationale for limited national sovereignty. This became subsequently known as Brezhnev doctrine.

Although, Brezhnev was "resolutely opposed to interference in the affairs of any state" he declared that "when a threat arises to the cause of socialism"

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in a given communist country, it becomes "also a general problem, the concern of all socialist countries." This Brezhnev doctrine, thus asserted that Soviet forces might cross the border of any communist country when it is deemed necessary to do so. The threat to invoke it in China's case had been mentioned because of the obvious rift with China. The Soviet Union did not want fissiparous tendencies within the Bloc. The socialist Bloc had to be absolutely united on every issue. But for many months, the Romanians and Yugoslavs thought about what the Brezhnev doctrine might mean to them.

Since then (Spring of 1968) Brezhnev's attempt to redefine the limits of autonomy contained a fair measure of ambiguity as to what extent the sovereignty of a Bloc country is limited and to what extent non-interference is justified. As stated by Brezhnev in his Warsaw speech, it is the common concern of socialist countries to determine whether in any given country, there exists a risk of 'deviation' from the common natural laws of socialist construction', which might risk the restoration of the capitalist system. This change of attitude was very much reflected in the nature of the Soviet Union's policy formulation until the Polish Crisis of 1980-81. The Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) in 1975 and the Berlin Conference of 1976 along with many other mutual bilateral agreements strengthened the possibility of the countries pushing forward different road to socialism in the region.

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24 H. Hanak, n. 12 p. 271.
However, Yugoslavia assumed a special case, given especially that Western states had adopted a deterrent posture contrasting with their more resigned approach to the rest of Eastern Europe. While the ambiguities of the Brezhnev doctrine was such that it could be applied with respect of any 'socialist' state, the Soviet policy was in practice likely to be much influenced by the Western attitudes, together with Yugoslavia's standing in the non-aligned group. Similar consideration was applied to the possibility of the Brezhnev doctrine's being invoked in the case of Albania. Albania's non-membership of the Warsaw Pact was one such factor. Another possibility was that Western countries likely to be extremely sensitive to any risk that the Soviet Union might, by intervening in Albania, aim to acquire for itself port facilities in the Adriatic.

Therefore, the 1969 statement of the Communist Party recognised the possibility of divergence within the socialist states of difference in levels of economic development, in social structure, national distinctions etc. These differences could and should be settled on the basis of 'Proletariat Internationalism through comradely discussions and voluntary fraternal discussions. It is clear from the above stand point that the Brezhnev doctrine of limited sovereignty was once again a deliberate effort of the Soviet leadership to reiterate the importance of socialist internationalism thereby justifying the Soviet dominant role in the affairs of the East European allies except Yugoslavia and Albania. The doctrine had nothing to do directly with Yugoslavia and Albania but it did threaten the other East

25 Hanson, n. 19 p. 36.
European allies not to follow the path of Yugoslavia and Albania. On the other hand, by saying limited sovereignty and at the same time keeping Yugoslavia and Albania out of the context, the Soviet leadership pursued an independent policy of fraternal relationship at the bilateral level with these two countries.

The Soviet authors maintained that this inequality with regard to Yugoslavia and Albania and other dissident socialist states as well could be removed by application of the "principle of equality under socialism." 27 In fact, the Soviet authors time and again, declared that 'socialist internationalism' had already become a major principle of contemporary international law. All bilateral relations of socialist states were based on socialist internationalism. 28 Similarly, under 'socialist internationalism' the respect for state sovereignty, it was held, went beyond the principles of sovereignty in general international law. "The entire socialist community guards independence and territorial integrity of the socialist countries. This would help in strengthening the sovereignty of each." 29

These above statements drive home the point that the Soviet Union was opposed to any reform that sought to dilute Soviet domination because of the apprehension that it could lead to similar demands at home. But the

underlying principles of the doctrine legitimized the fact that while independent reforms in the Bloc countries is not permissible without Soviet prescription, if at all any one dared to go against it would have to face the fate of Czechoslovakia. At the same time, it was also contained in the doctrine that to promote socialist internationalism and the unity of the socialist countries such ideological parameters is the objective necessity to fight against imperialism. The strength of the socialist countries is the unity of the countries believing in a set of ideology that is guided and promoted by the Soviet Union.

**Warsaw Treaty Organisation (WTO)**

The establishment of the multilateral military alliance system in Eastern Europe that was announced by Moscow came ostensibly as a response to West German's membership in North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO). But the true reason for the Warsaw Treaty Organisation was probably the Soviet Union’s desire to obtain legal justification for stationing its troops in East Central Europe.\(^{30}\) The pact was initiated in the capital of Poland on 14 May 1955 only one day before the signing of the state treaty in Vienna that restored sovereignty to Austria and obligated Moscow to evacuate its forces from Hungary and Romania within 40 days after the Austrian state treaty had gone into effect. Also the treaty provided an additional legal basis for the continued presence of Soviet troops in Poland and the German Democratic Republic (GDR). However, in the case of the GDR,

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such provision appeared to be superfluous, due to the absence of a peace treaty.

Since then the Warsaw Treaty's most important task had to serve as a Soviet Union's tool of political integration of Eastern Europe. This particular objective was implicit in the treaty's creation in 1955, when Khrushchev decided to replace the discredited Stalinist system of multiple informal controls with a more formal and structured organization to ensure the Soviet hegemony. This aspect of the treaty received a powerful boost in the aftermath of the intervention in Czechoslovakia in 1968 with the proclamation of the so-called Brezhnev doctrine, by virtue of which the Soviet Union assumed the role of guardian of the alliance, responsible for its security and integrity. Any attack from the outside or changes from within, that threaten the socialist achievements of any member country were to be considered as attacks on the treaty as a whole, triggering an automatic response by the Soviet Union and the rest of the membership.31

The pact was later described as "institutional means for conducting intra-Bloc relations, relations whose dimensions and intensity were determined to a great extent by the Soviet Union."32 However, it was not an alliance system originally designed to execute joint military operations in wartime. In this respect, it was not the mirror image of NATO. Rather, the Warsaw Pact provided a system of collective security for the Soviet Union, Albania,

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31 Byrnes, n. 21 p. 310.
Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania and Poland during 1945 (the GDR joined in 1956, Albania left in 1961, and Yugoslavia, for reasons of ideological differences with the Soviet Union, remained outside).

However, the prime reason for its creation was to provide a system of collective security for what the Soviet Union had come to define as its 'spheres of influence'. That is, it was there to protect the ideological integrity of Marxist-Leninist regimes and use the threat of physical force, if necessary, to dissuade opposition towards the Soviet leadership. 33

Although ostensibly created as a loosely organised "socialist, military coalition" to counter "possible aggression", the pact was equally important to the Soviet Union as an institutionalised substitute for Stalin's personalised system of asserting hegemony over the Eastern European militaries. Nevertheless, in military terms, this remained a paper organisation during this period. For example, primary history of the pact lists only one major military exercise during the period. As Thomas Wolfe put it, "the Soviet Union made no effort to wield the Warsaw Pact into an integrated military alliance" during its early years. 34

The Brezhnev-Kosygin regime that replaced Khrushchev in 1964 did not radically revise his policies toward Eastern Europe. In keeping with their overall preferences and priorities, the new leaders placed some what more

33 ibid, p. 393.
emphasis than Khrushchev did on military integration and some what less on Council of Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA). In 1965, Leonid Brezhnev called for “further perfecting” of the Warsaw Pact, by which he seemed to mean the creation of new institutional machinery to enhance supranational control.\textsuperscript{35} With regard to the Soviet foreign policy he reiterated that:

"the goal of our foreign policy are well known - they were clearly defined by the Twenty Third Party Congress. We are striving to create the most favourable conditions for the construction of communism. The building of communism is the basic interest, the vital goal of the Soviet people. But the construction of communist society is also the fulfillment of our international duty to the world working class and the liberation movement, our decisive contribution to the world revolution, to the cause of the liberation of all the peoples.\textsuperscript{36}"

But the Soviet leadership was unable to achieve anything in the face of East-European resistance.

The obvious reason in terms of its position in Europe is that neither all East European states were member and nor were the members altogether acquiescent to the lead from the Soviet military. Some of them in due course of time managed to wriggle under the perimeter fence of the Soviet Bloc and embraced non-alignment as a negotiating position. In addition to this, there remained the problem of the two former members of the Soviet Bloc - Yugoslavia and Albania who defected in 1948 and 1961 respectively. The Soviet leaders had neither forgotten nor forgiven these countries.

\textsuperscript{35} ibid, p. 108.
\textsuperscript{36} L. I Brezhnev, "Speeches and Articles", CDSP, vol. XVIII, no. 23, (1966), p. 16
desertion — in political and ideological terms, there was no doubt that ultimately the Soviet Union tried to secure their return to the Bloc.

However, the major problem occurred after the death of President Tito on May 4, 1980. Tito's long illness enabled the Yugoslav party and government leadership to prepare for the succession. The post-Tito regime functioned well, although there were clearly anxieties and suspicious in Belgrade as to future Soviet policies towards Yugoslavia. But in all probability, the Yugoslav leadership held the view that any early attempt to use force against a post-Tito Yugoslavia by the Soviet Union would be unsuccessful and indeed counter productive. Any attack of that kind would arouse Yugoslav patriotic feelings and perhaps lead to Soviet involvement in a long drawn-out guerrilla war in the Yugoslav mountain in which the Yugoslavs might receive some Western military aid. However, it was the Gorbachev regime that paid less attention to the military prowess of the Soviet Union and left much space for liberal democracy to grow up. Due to the economic depression of the 1980s the Soviet Union had to withdraw much of its forces stationed in the Bloc countries. That weakened the military integration of the member countries in terms of collective security in the region against a Western attack.

As a result, the Soviet Union adopted a position of formal acceptance of the Yugoslav federal state in their continued non-aligned role, while engaging less formal support for regional or national groups anxious to change the

37 Hanson, n. 19 pp. 145-146.
regime in Belgrade- such as the pro-Soviet so called "Cominformists" – most of whom were by that time either in prison in Yugoslavia or living in exile in the Soviet Union. All these issues and concerns shattered the hope of plausible Soviet military intervention in Yugoslavia along with the WTO member countries and hence, the Yugoslav federation remained intact till the ethno-national upsurge contaminated the idea of separate statehood of different ethnic groups.

**Lessons of 1968**

The Soviet military intervention in Czechoslovakia demonstrated that the Soviet Union could mobilise some of its East European allies to interfere in the internal affairs of one of them. It did not demonstrate, however, that East European forces could contribute effectively to military operations against one of their number. For the Soviet Union, it was observed that the leading role of the party, with democratic centralism as its key organisational principle must be maintained as the cornerstones of party rule, thus, effectively eliminating the possibility of any substantial reform of political structures in the foreseeable future. The Soviet Union believed that anything short of capitalism itself could be reintroduced provided it was done under the leading role of the Communist Party. It was recognised that the operation of these conditions for objectively determined mutual assistance presupposed "stable inter-state relations" founded on division of

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38 ibid, p. 146.
39 Griffith, n.34 p. 137.
40 Hanson, n. 19 p. 23.
labour which could be achieved by "improving the system of treaty-based concerned plans."\(^1\)

Yugoslavia was one adherent to this view that the Soviet Union would not have intervened in Czechoslovakia if it had the risk of global conflict. The Yugoslavs had sought to deter an invasion of their own country in the early years of its existence by obtaining American security guarantees and making it clear that an invasion of Yugoslavia would escalate a global confrontation.\(^2\) Given Czechoslovakia's special strategic position in Central Europe, it was commonly believed that the Soviet leaders were prepared to pay a higher cost to keep Czechoslovakia within the Bloc. Thus the International Conference of Communist and Workers Parties held in 1969 endorsed the line of the Twenty Fourth Party Congress of the CPSU, in which Brezhnev had said: "We.... shall never make any concession in the question of ideology."\(^3\) With the socialist world getting diversified the Soviet interpretation of socialism had to be maintained. This would, according to the Soviet leadership, keep the Bloc intact, though certain flexibility was allowed within broad parameters.

In these case, the Yugoslav apprehension was that any armed intervention in the region would have repercussion in the country and of course given their non-aligned strategy, Yugoslavia would loose its autonomy if at all

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\(^{1}\) M. Senin, "Forms and Methods in Relations Between Socialist Countries", *International Affairs*, no, 5, (1966), p. 17.

\(^{2}\) ibid, p. 22.

\(^{3}\) L.I Brezhnev, "A Historic stage on the Road to Communism", *World Marxist Review*, no. 53, December, (1977), p. 120.
President Tito failed to counter such interventions with Western support. The Brezhnev leadership as it would be seen in his doctrine attempted to make it clear to all the East Europeans that any one who follow the example of Yugoslavia and would venture to remain independent would be dealt with military intervention.

After 1968 – Push for integration in the East-European countries

The August 1968 Soviet military intervention in Czechoslovakia ushered in a new era in Soviet-East European relations that marked the beginning of a sustained Soviet effort to make Khrushchev's policies both more effective and more palatable to the East European regimes. The events of 1968 forced the Soviet leadership to pay closer attention to the Bloc, whereas the military intervention gave the Soviet Union new leverage over its recalcitrant allies, which could no longer doubt Soviet seriousness, even as they reevaluated the worth of separate ties with the West. It also demonstrated the Soviet will to take action, if any member of the Bloc sought a new path. It also demonstrated Soviet military capability.

Brezhnev followed Khrushchev in upholding the view that while inter-state relations must be based on the principles of peaceful coexistence, it was "inapplicable to the relations between the oppressor and the oppressed, between colonisers and the victims of colonial yoke." In other words, it implies that the principles did not apply to national liberation movements.

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44 Indian Centre for Regional Affairs, "New Contours of Soviet Foreign Policy", New Delhi, 1989, p. 7
While pressing for greater Bloc cohesion, Brezhnev continued to share Khrushchev's view that integration did not require complete uniformity. The Soviet Union thus permitted the individual East European leadership to work out within certain well-defined limits, their own roads to socialism and prosperity. Hungary continued with its new economic mechanism, which it had launched in 1968. In Czechoslovakia, 'normalisation' was achieved in large part encouraging the population to re-focus its attention on private economic welfare.45

The restructuring of relations, however, did not imply abandonment of class struggle. In fact the Soviet theorist maintained that the restructuring of international relations would proceed "amidst mounted class struggle."46 Brezhnev expressed this idea in his speech on June 14, 1975 when he said, "Having evaluated the overall balance of forces in the world, we arrived at the conclusion few years ago that there was a real possibility for bringing about fundamental change in the international relations."47

**Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE)**

The European problems occupied a prominent place in the Peace Programme adopted by the Twenty Fourth Congress of the CPSU. The Central Committee report advanced an action programme with the aim of achieving further improvement of the situation in Europe. The programme called for a European Conference which was desired by the majority of the

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47 ibid, p. 7
European countries and the preparations for which were entering the phase of practical politics.\textsuperscript{48}

In fulfillment of the Twenty Fourth Congress decisions on foreign policy, the CPSU Central Committee and the Soviet government initiated new major moves towards the consolidation of peace in Europe. Leonid Brezhnev visited France and Yugoslavia; Alexei Kosygin visited Canada, Denmark and Norway. Visits to a number of countries were made by the Soviet Party and government delegations. Many agreements were signed on trade, economic, scientific and technical co-operation and on cultural exchanges.

As a result of these efforts of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, the idea of consolidating peace in Europe gained more and more adherents. Firm support for this idea was expressed by the Assembly of Public Opinion for Security and Co-operation in Europe held in Brussels in June 1972.\textsuperscript{49} Progressive public opinion helped to achieve an understanding on multilateral consultations on preparations for a European Conference. These consultations took place in Helsinki from November 1972 to June 1973. They ended with a decision to hold the conference in three phases and with agreement on the agenda; security in Europe, economic, scientific and technical co-operation in humanitarian and other areas, further steps after the conference.

\textsuperscript{48} Reports of Twenty Fourth Congress of the CPSU on the Task of Strengthening Peace and Security in Europe, (Moscow, 1971), p. 38

These decisions reflected the success of the efforts of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, and of all other peace forces. Soviet efforts to convene a European Security Conference were successful partly because it had been acknowledged as a power with global capability and partly because the European countries also desired peace. It was also because of the need to recognize the ground realities and recognize the existing borders.

Alongside collective actions, there was an ever more intensive exchange of delegations of working people, party and government leaders, and public figures at all levels between the socialist nations. Particularly, during the period 1971-1975, the Soviet Union hosted many visits by leaders of fraternal parties and heads of top-level government organs of Bulgaria, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, the GDR, Hungary, Mongolia, Poland, Romania, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, and Yugoslavia. They had comprehensive talks with leaders of the CPSU and the Soviet government and were hospitably received by the Soviet people.

Also, during these years, there were visits by top-level party and government delegations from the Soviet Union to fraternal countries. Note must be made of the significance of visits by Leonid Brezhnev in 1971-1975 to Yugoslavia, Hungary (three), Bulgaria (two), the GDR (two), Czechoslovakia (two), Poland (four), Mongolia, and Cuba for further development of friendship and cooperation between the Soviet Union and these fraternal states.
The culminating point of the extensive works conducted during these years to strengthen peace in Europe was the European Conference on Security and Cooperation (CSCE), whose convocation and successful completion was one of the central goals listed in the Soviet Peace Programme. The Final Act of the Conference adopted a set of goals for lasting peace through mutual and productive cooperation among European nations. It recorded the fundamental principles of relations between states, including respect for independence and sovereignty, territorial integrity, inviolability of frontiers, renunciation of the use or threat of force, and non-interference in internal affairs of other countries. Moreover, the understanding reached at the conference created a good foundation for expanding mutually beneficial, economic, scientific, technical, cultural and other cooperation on the scale of the entire continent. The recognition of inviolability of existing frontiers implied that Poland and East Germany had nothing to fear from the then West Germany. The Oder-Neise Line acknowledged the political map of Europe.

In our view, Leonid Brezhnev said at the conference that "the aggregate result of the conference is that international détente is being increasingly invested with concrete material content. It is the materialisation of détente that is the crux of the matter, the substance of all that should make peace in Europe truly durable and unshakeable." 51

50 L. I. Brezhnev, "Our Course: Peace and Socialism" (Moscow, 1975), p. 580
51 ibid, p. 580
While at the same time, the signatories of the Helsinki Meeting held the Helsinki Final Act as a single whole to reach agreement on concrete measures and steps for the development of cooperation and the attainment of genuine security in the European continent and the world over. 52

Thus, the signatories of the 1975 Helsinki Final Act of the Conference on Security Cooperation in Europe recognised the need to address both the security of states and the security of people. The broadening of this concept of security was held to be of fundamental importance to the East Europeans, who previously had good reasons to believe that the security of Europe was being constructed at their (East European's) expense.

Somewhat comparably, the agreement of the Helsinki provided clear benefits to the Soviet Union. It confirmed East European borders and made less likely any future revival of the Eisenhower administration talk of "liberation", but it assumed continued embarrassment as calls for real enforcement of human rights affirmed at Helsinki were promptly issued in both communist and non-communist countries by a variety of "Helsinki watch" groups. 53 As a result, the CSCE developed into an ongoing 'process' of follow-up meetings and specialist forums which provided for a framework of deepening East-West cooperation and consultation.

53 Treadgold, n. 23 p. 390
The Soviet leaders regarded the Final Act at Helsinki as an important stage of détente. The principles of inter-state relations to which the Soviets agreed in Helsinki Final Act were: "sovereign equality, the non-use of force, the inviolability of frontiers, non-interference in internal affairs, respect for human rights and the rights of the peoples to be their own master, cooperation between states and the conscientious of obligations." 54 The CSCE thus emerged as one of the promotion of democratic institutions and civil liberties in Europe and its activities strengthened the resolve of East Europeans to build and consolidate stable liberal democracy. This was continued till late 1980s of encouraging the liberal democratic institutions to grow up. The Helsinki Final Act ensured that the Soviet Union had a role to play in Europe, apart from the recognition of inviolability of existing borders.

A notable landmark in the implementation of the Helsinki accords was the Belgrade Meeting of representatives of the parties to the all-European conference. The Soviet Union and the other socialist countries presented to this meeting a comprehensive program for continuing the process of strengthening security and promoting cooperation in the continent. In Belgrade, an agreement was reached on new initiatives in the field of multilateral cooperation on developing mutually acceptable, peaceful ways of settling disputes among the signatories to the Final Act; on preparing an all-European scientific forum and on developing economic, scientific, technical and cultural cooperation in the Mediterranean....... 55 By these

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54 A. Valentinov, "One Year After Helsinki", International Affairs, no. 9, (1976), p. 24
developments Yugoslavia gained a lot. It further confirmed that there was no Soviet threat to its sovereignty and integrity.

During the Gorbachev period, due to Perestroika and Glasnost, it was possible for the CSCE to make great strides forward in the sensitive area of human rights formally one of the most contentious issues in east-west relations. 56 Owing to all these underlying principles, the liberal democratic institutions developed in Eastern Europe and Yugoslavia. These institutions became instrumental in raising the issue of human rights in the region and thus promoted nationalism on grounds of ethnic origin. Hence, the underlying principles of CSCE as an uniting factor in the region lost its significance and the national liberation movement gained momentum.

The Berlin Conference of European Communist and Workers Parties (June 29-30, 1976)

The military intervention in Czechoslovakia and the declaration of Brezhnev doctrine legitimised the Soviet hegemony over the socialist Bloc countries. While at the same time, the promulgation of such ideology was criticised by a number of non-Warsaw Pact socialsit countries. To counter such criticisms and to justify the intervention and the doctrine as well, the Soviet Union called for the International Conference of Communists and Workers Parties in 1969.

The conference in its document did note the divergences of opinions with regard to communist construction but unanimously adhered to the fact that these differences could be sorted out through discussions and comradely relations. But the Soviet Union failed to reduce the differences of opinion by way of organising meetings and exchange of views. On the other hand, the Twenty Fourth Congress of the CPSU adopted the Peace Programme and categorically emphasised the need of building collective security system in the continent. During the process of convening the CSCE, Soviet Union was faced with lot of protests and ideological differences. Therefore, the conference while achieved success in building the collective security system failed short of legitimising Soviet ideological stand.

While there was agreement on many issues of regional significance between the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, there were areas of differences. These differences were largely ideological in nature but having a potential outcome. The coalition of Southern European Communist Parties (SECP), in whose formation Yugoslavia played a key role was not including the Romanians, and to a lesser degree, the Italian and Spanish parties. This group apprehended likely attempts by the Soviet Union to use the proposed European Communist Conference to reestablish the CPSU as the "World Communist Centre", thereby undermining the Yugoslavia's "separate road to socialism." \(^57\) It was then in 1975 that the CPSU held its Twenty Fifth Congress in Moscow from February 24 - March 5. On behalf of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia (LCY), the congress was attended by a

\(^{57}\) Gavriel D. Ra'an'an, *Yugoslavia After Tito: Scenarios and Implications*, (USA, 1977) p. 50.
delegation headed by the Secretary of the Executive Committee of the
Presidium of the LCY Central Committee Stane Dolanc. In his address, he
presented LCY's views on relations between the Socialist Federal Republic
of Yugoslavia (SFRY) and the Soviet Union, the LCY and the CPSU and on
relations among communist and workers parties in general. "I wish to
emphasise" said Dolanc, "we attach great significance to cooperation
between the LCY and the CPSU. The existing difference and specificities
are a reflection of different roads followed in the development of
contemporary socialism and its practice, and of the specific international
position of our countries. They are objective historic and social law-
governed phenomena and therefore they should not in any way, be an
obstacle to further all-round development of relations. This approach is
natural and is in mutual interests." 58

Despite all these hurdles, when the much awaited meeting of communists
parties finally materialised in the Summer of 1976, President Tito issued
statements asserting "the principles of independence, equality and
noninterference as the basis of cooperation among communists and
workers parties", voicing opposition to all forms of interference in the
internal affairs of other countries" and criticised the concept of spheres of
influence. 59 This Yugoslav attitude was shared by the Romanian party,
found expression in the Romanian leadership's statement that the
participants in the 1976 conference "should not criticize or blame any other
communist parties, regardless of whether they are or not attending the

58 Yugoslav Survey (Foreign Policy), (Belgrade, 1982) p. 142.
59 Ra'anan, n. 57 p. 50.
conference”. The constant threat posed by the Soviet Union was a perception that did not leave the mind of Yugoslav leadership.

Moreover, in what can not be regarded as an insignificant event, when visiting Moscow in August 1976, Ceausescu adopted the Soviet position concerning the need for “Proletarian internationalism”. That term was highly reminiscent of the language of the Brezhnev doctrine which Belgrade had opposed violently in the past. Consequently, the joint document issued by the 1976 East Berlin Conference specifically omitted this phrase in favor of a more neutral reference to “internationalist”, comradely and voluntary cooperation and solidarity, on the basis of the great ideas of Marx, Engles and Lenin.60

However, the Soviet leadership perceived these as two of their most spectacular foreign initiatives in recent years – Helsinki in 1975 and East Berlin in 1976 as mixed blessings indeed. East Berlin was a definite reserve. Helsinki brought its advantages, but it became a rallying cry for self-assertion for even disaffection in Eastern Europe to an extent that the Soviets probably underestimated. Both Helsinki and East Berlin were seen by the Soviet Union as securing, even legitimizing, its dominance in vitally important aspects of international politics.

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60 ibid, pp. 91-92.
Eurocommunism

An effort to mobilise European Communist parties had been made by the Soviet Union at a conference in Karlovy Vary in April 1967 and was boycotted by the Albanians, Yugoslavs, Romanians, Dutch, Icelanders, and Norwegians. A second conference was held in East Berlin in June 1976, a year behind schedule, after obvious difficulties in preparation. The spotlight was occupied by three leaders of what had become recognized as Eurocommunism. Enrico Berlinguer of Italy, Santiago Carrillo of Spain and George Marchais of France. Carrillo called for the withdrawal of troops by socialist states from foreign countries, Berlinguer directed a socialist society of the future with multiple parties, alternating governmental majorities, and freedom in all areas. The idea of 'Eurocommunism' emerged after the Soviet military intervention in Czechoslovakia in 1968. It was an attempt to ensure their independent existence without being tied to the Soviet Union.

The most complete presentation of independent Western communist positions came from Berlinguer of Italy and he made it significantly clear that he is not speaking only of or for his own party. He noted that other West European communist parties now shared the PCI's perspective of a socialist society based upon "the principles of the secular, non ideological nature of the state and its democratic organisation, the plurality of political parties and the possibility of alternation of government majorities, the autonomy of trade unions, religious freedom, and freedom of expression, of

61 Treadgold, n. 23 p. 400.
culture, arts and sciences." 62 This view was shared and supported by Spain and France communists. This emergent ideological challenge posed to Soviet authority, and more generally to the East European regimes, came to be known as "Eurocommunism".

Eurocommunism was described as the tendency of communist parties in advanced societies of constitutional democracy to adopt to their socio-political environment by committing themselves to a gradualist, nonviolent struggle in collaboration with other political forces, for the creation of a "socialist" democracy in which existing bourgeois liberties (opposition protest, alternation of governments and so on) would be guaranteed and extended. 63 This commitment involved an effort to establish electoral credibility by emphasising each communist party’s independence, by rejection of the East European "model", by criticism of repressive regime policies, and by the development of ideological rationale increasingly divergent from that of the ruling parties.

Not loosing the sight of these developments, some Soviet speakers present at the congress made guarded criticisms of “right-wing opportunism” but in the due course of the year, the developing debate between loyalist and Eurocommunists found more explicit expression in statements by regime spokesmen – notably Soviet, East German, Bulgarian and Czechoslovakia and in Western communists reactions. The debates, which at times

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63 ibid, p. 27.
reached the level of open polemics, generally concerned such doctrinal questions as proletarian internationalism, the dictatorship of the proletariat, and "general laws" for the building of socialism. Another controversial question was the extent to which Western communist parties should seek political progress through "compromising" alliance with other forces. But behind these lay a more basic issue the challenge to Soviet authority posed by major western communist parties increasingly determining to give their own political interests priority over those of the Soviet Union, and to reinforce their claim to independence by selective criticism of regime policies. This challenge was more significant, in that it came at a time when the Soviets were making obvious efforts to strengthen integration among the East European regimes in many areas – a fact that had much to do with the vigorous Yugoslav interventions in the ongoing debate, on the side of the Eurocommunists.

As a result, certain central tenets of the Leninist theory of party organisation and the nature of the transition to socialism came under attack. But coming as it did, during the full flowering of détente, and after the Helsinki Accord of 1975, it provided legitimate encouragement for the growth of dissident movements in East European countries. 64 Their significance for domestic politics and the cohesion of the international socialist commonwealth was considerable, as illustrated by the events in Poland during 1980-81. If nothing else, such developments surely illustrated the link between domestic and international policy making arenas

64 Woodwall, n. 32 p. 389.
and that East European regime are not obedient puppets which dance to a tune played from Moscow.

Therefore, the European Conference was a major challenge before the Soviet leadership to legitimize the dominant role of the CPSU with regard to the world communist movement. Because, in the conference document, the independent parties had their ways in almost every major issue. It was a lowest common denominator text based on the new principle of consensus, itself a formal recognition of equality and autonomy of all communist parties.

It contained no criticism of the Chinese and no praise of the Soviets; it dealt with political parties (in fact, it was not even signed by any of them). The victory of the independent parties on these central issues was emphasized by the unexpected arrival of a 29th delegation, that of the independent Dutch party, which had boycotted all the preparatory meetings, so that in the end the only absentees were the isolationist Icelanders and the intransient Albanians.

The document was more important for which it did not say than for what it did say. Most striking was the fact that the sacrosanct formula, “proletariat internationalism,” was omitted and replaced by a distinctly “Italian” one. That is ‘communist parties’ will develop their international, comradely, and voluntary cooperation and solidarity on the basis of the great ideas of Marx, Engels, and Lenin, strictly adhering to the principles of equality and the
sovereign independence of each party, non-interference in internal affairs, and respect for their free choice of different roads in the struggle for social changes of a progressive nature and for socialism.”

Again, no special status was accorded to the CPSU or the Soviet Union. But what it did say was also significant. For example, the “Eurocommunist” emphasis on communist parties’ dialogue and collaboration with “all other democratic forces, each of these forces fully retaining its identity and independence”. Finally for the first time in a collective communist documents there was recognition of the non-aligned countries, movement (as) one of the most important factors in world politics—an important point for the Yugoslavs. Moreover, the emergence of a revised “Eurocommunism” in an East European country traditionally was seen as being equally destabilising for Soviet control in the Bloc and inside the Soviet Union.

President Tito perceived the concept of Eurocommunism as an attempt “to dress the communist movement in Western Europe in a uniform, or to use it to mark out a new center for these parties.” Thus, he did not like the term Eurocommunism, which, he claimed, “originated in the vocabulary of bourgeois circles.” He had a similar aversion to the term “national communism,” which had been used in the West to describe the Yugoslav

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65 Brown, n. 62 p.25.  
66 ibid, p. 27.  
67 Speeches by Tito, Kardelj and Dolanc: Ideological and Political Offensive of the LCY (Belgrade, 1972), pp. 9-10  
68 ibid; p. 10.
system. But President Tito welcomed the phenomenon of Eurocommunism as yet another road to socialism which “differs from the Soviet one”, a different approach by the parties in these (West European) countries to the CPSU.” 69

All these developments, despite the Soviet claim of securing the space of leadership in both the context of European and East European communist parties thereby denying the passage for Yugoslavia’s separate road to socialism, suffered a major set back in the coming years. The concept of the leading role of the communist party and the protection of the socialist internationalism lost its ground in the region. Both these aforesaid conferences in mid-seventy boomeranged the Soviet domestic and international policies that Gorbachev had to face in the near future. For Yugoslavia, all these developments strengthened her position as the pioneer of non-aligned Third World movement and the independent socialist state and brought in enormous recognition in the international scenario for its foreign policy formulations.

Soviet-Yugoslav Bilateral Relations

Yugoslavia Foreign Policy

The foreign policy of Yugoslavia had been a strange resultant of economic needs, political calculation and ideological loyalty. Yugoslavia, however, categorically denied the polarization of socialist ideology and maintained their independence as different from other socialist countries. The major

69 ibid; p. 10.
initiative taken during the early 1950s and late 1960s was to keep Yugoslavia away from the Soviet Union and to differentiate their model of socialism as different from the Bloc countries. At the same time, Yugoslavia endeavoured not to get along with the imperialist camp. Yugoslavia sought to preserve its independent identity by seeking non-alignment. Incidentally, Yugoslavia was one of the founder members of the Non Aligned Movement (NAM). Its independent foreign policy led to its refusal to attend the preparatory conference of International Communist and Workers Parties held at Budapest on behalf of the Soviet Union and its Bloc countries in February-March 1968. This was precisely because of the reason that the new conference of world communist parties, which was supposed to held next year, was to accept the conclusion agreed by the conference last held in the series (Moscow, 1960), which included strong condemnation of Yugoslavia ‘revisionism’.

Another important factor in moulding the Yugoslav foreign policy was the Soviet military intervention in Czechoslovakia. The most important reaction to the intervention in Czechoslovakia was the public announcement and practical evolution of a new defence policy. After the initial round of public meetings and resolutions pledging the Yugoslavia people as a whole to defence, a new ‘Law of All-National Defence’ was rushed through the Federal Assembly.  

For long it had been impolitic to suggest that, in case of aggression the regular Yugoslav army would be unable effectively to
resist overwhelming numbers and equipment in the northern plains or the comparatively level country of eastern Serbia.

It was then made clear that any invader would have to face not only the regular army, but also a sort of popular militia integrated with it on a local basis and comprising all Yugoslavs from the ages of 18-65, all units being trained in advance to fulfil particular combat tasks, and armed as far as possible with comparatively cheap defensive weapons (especially anti-tank guns) produced in Yugoslavia. 71 However, the defence policy of Yugoslavia seemed somewhat vague because of apparent official position of Yugoslavia to push for non-alignment.

The Soviet Union and the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

Soviet-Yugoslav friendship has its roots deep in the past. On April 11, 1945 the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia signed a Treaty of Friendship, Mutual Assistance and Post-War Co-operation. The foundations of a people's state were being laid in Yugoslavia at the time. For a number of years, political and economic relations were fostered with the Soviet Union, but in 1948, this development was cut short. Relations were normalised only in 1955 as a result of talks held in Belgrade (May 26-June 2, 1955) on Soviet initiative.

The Belgrade Declaration, signed on June 2 1955, recorded the sincere striving of the governments of two countries to promote comprehensive co-operation. The steps taken by the Soviet government related to Yugoslavia

71 ibid, p. 10
were approved unreservedly by the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU. The other members of the world socialist community supported the Soviet initiative, stressing the international significance of solidarity of all the forces of socialism and of unity between all the fraternal parties.

The Belgrade Declaration, as the communiqué came to be known, marked the formal ending of the seven-year rift between Belgrade and Moscow. Though couched in general terms which left many outstanding issues to be settled, it denoted important concessions to the Yugoslav claim that "each country had the right to build socialism in its own way, without interference or pressure from another, and to maintain the foreign links it saw fit." The Yugoslavs preferred to see things in terms of what they came to describe as ‘active coexistence’, which implied a loosening up of the opposing Blocs until differences of ideology and social system no longer proved determining factors in inter-state relations. 73

One year later, in response to pressing Soviet invitations, President Tito paid a state visit to the Soviet Union. In Moscow, on June 20, 1956 the leaders of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia adopted a joint statement in which they reiterated their determination to expand friendly co-operation between the two countries. Also they signed a declaration on relations between the CPSU and the League of Communists of Yugoslavia, which stated that the appropriate contacts had to be promoted between the two parties.

72 Stephen Clissold, n. 14 p. 64.
73 ibid, p. 65.
The Moscow Declaration, signed between Tito and Khrushchev on behalf of their respective parties, reaffirmed the principles of independence and equality enshrined at the state level in the Belgrade Declaration. Both the leaders pledged their parties for closer co-operation through discussion, consultation, the exchange of views and experience, always within the context of the 'internationalist principles of Marxism-Leninism', equality and mutual respect.  

Since then, the Soviet Union made consistent efforts to enable inter-state relations with Yugoslavia to develop normally despite the distinction in approach to the problems of the theory and practice of socialist construction. Much was done in the course of the 1960s to strengthen the relations between the two countries. Reciprocal visits by the Soviet and Yugoslav statesmen became standing practice.

In the beginning of the early 1970s, the Secretary General of the CPSU Central Committee, L.I.Brezhnev held the view in its Twenty Fourth congress saying: "in the period covered by this report the Soviet-Yugoslav relations continued to develop. The Soviet people wish for socialism to be strengthened in Yugoslavia, for its links with socialist community to be reinforced." 75 Expressing the sincere striving of the Soviet Union, the Twenty fourth Congress of the CPSU declared: "the Soviet people want to see socialism in Yugoslavia strengthened, and her ties with the socialist

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74 ibid, p. 66.
75 Yugoslav Survey n. 58 p. 137.
community growing stronger. We stand for Soviet-Yugoslav co-operation and for developing contacts between our parties." 76

As regards mutual relations, in the joint communique it was stated that the "two sides consider it indispensable to continue to develop friendly relations between the LCY and the CPSU, as parties responsible for socialist and communist construction in their countries, and to reinforce the confidence which should characterise relations between the two parties and between the two sovereign states". It was further stated' "the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) and the Soviet Union, the LCY and the CPSU advocate the development of broad and egalitarian cooperation among countries and peoples with the aim of strengthening peace and international security. With their policy, they will actively contribute in international relations to the assertion of peaceful co-existence among states, regardless of their social system". 77 However, Brezhnev did not specify as to how long the road to communism would be. On the contrary, in an article written in December 1977, he referred to Engel's views on the stages of transition to communist society was the most difficult of any that existed. 78 He also wrote that in the further development 'socialist statehood and socialist democracy' the key role belongs to the communist party. 79

76 Documents and Resolutions of the Twenty Fourth Party Congress of the CPSU. (Moscow, 1971), p. 15.
77 Yugoslav Survey, n.58 p.139
It can be concluded that there was sound basis for further development of Soviet-Yugoslav relations and for deepening co-operation between the CPSU and the LCY. As a result, the beginning of the renewed and dynamic economic cooperation was put forward in the joint statement of Brezhnev and Tito's Declaration in 1971. It was said, "the two sides are convinced that there are great possibilities for expanding and deepening economic, scientific and technical cooperation between the SFRY and the Soviet Union. The basic aim of further development of Yugoslav-Soviet relations are the expansion of trade, mutually useful cooperation and specialization of production, and also of design and research activities, especially in those branches which determine modern scientific and technical progress. 80 This cooperation was basically regulated by a ten-year economic, scientific and technical cooperation programme.

The Soviet - Yugoslav statement of September 25, 1971, signed by the Secretary-General of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, L. I. Brezhnev, and by the President of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia, J. B. Tito, declared that "cooperation between the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia is based on the similitude of their historical destinies; the identity of the foundations of their social system; the similarity of approach to many international problems; the dedication to the principles of socialist internationalism, to the general struggle for peace,

independence, equal international cooperation and to the struggle against imperialism." 81

In November 1973 when Secretary General Leonid Brezhnev and President Josip Broz Tito met at Kiev they informed each other of the progress of socialist and communist construction in their countries and noted with satisfaction that political, economic, scientific, technical and cultural relations were developing successfully. They spoke highly of the expanding co-operation between the CPSU and the LCY, stressing that improvement of relations on the party and government level and the enrichment of the co-operation between the two countries were consistent with the building of socialism and communism. "The prevailing trend in the relations between the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, which are countries with the same social system," Leonid Brezhnev declared in Kiev, "is determined by what unites and draws us close together. It is determined by the immutable laws of the development of socialism formulated by Marx and Lenin and borne out by the experience of many communist and workers' parties." 82

Subsequently, in 1973, another agreement was executed between the two countries that provided for the Soviet shipment to Yugoslavia of moderate quantities of M1-8 helicopters, Yak-40 airplanes, aviation fuel, roller bearings and other goods of potential military value. In addition to this,

81 ibid, p. 3
82 Brezhnev, n. 79 p. 120.
Belgrade granted the Soviet Union over flight rights (so that the Soviet Union might give logistical support to its overseas clients). 83

The visit paid by Leonid Brezhnev to Yugoslavia in 1976 and the return visit paid by President Tito in 1977 and 1979 showed the signs of development of friendly relations between the two countries. The documents signed during these meetings confirmed the intention of both sides to strengthen the ties of friendship between the peoples of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, and defined concrete measures for further developing cooperation between the two parties and states. The Soviet-Yugoslav communique issued on November 17, 1976 declared: "friendly relations and wide-ranging cooperation continue to serve the interests of the peoples of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia and the cause of peace, democracy, national independence and socialism." 84 Both sides once more expressed their determination to continue the development of comprehensive cooperation on the basis of equality between the Soviet Union and the SFRY, between the people's of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, and to constantly strengthen Soviet-Yugoslav friendship and mutual trust.

It is clear that at the bilateral level, relations between the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia were on an even keel. It appeared that Yugoslav apprehension about the Brezhnev doctrine were not going to apply to Yugoslavia. On the other hand, Yugoslav foreign policy was strengthening its independence by

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83 Ra'an'an, n. 57, p. 49.
84 Ponomarev, n.9 pp. 435 - 36.
getting into the regional affairs in Europe. It took keen interest in the development of Eurocommunist concept.

On the death of President Tito, on May 4, 1980, the Soviet government sent a telegram of condolence in which they reiterated that the Soviet Union wish to maintain friendly relations with Yugoslavia on the basis of "jointly agreed principles and agreements, reached at the highest level, on non-interference in internal affairs, equality, strict respect for sovereign rights and in the spirit of mutual understanding and trust." While sending the condolence message Brezhnev said "it has always been the wish of Soviet people to see Yugoslavia united and prosperous country successfully building socialism". 85

The friendly tenor of Soviet-Yugoslav relations continued even after President Tito's death. On July 8-13, 1980, a delegation of the Supreme Soviet, headed by Vasily Kuznetsov, candidate member of the Politbureau of the CPSU Central Committee and First Deputy Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet paid an official visit to Yugoslavia to discuss important questions relating to the development of Soviet-Yugoslav cooperation (on issues of economic, political and cultural) and a number of international problems. This visit greatly contributed to the successful all-round development of Soviet-Yugoslav relations and revealed their diversity and stability.

85 ibid, p. 440.
86 Yugooslav Survev. n. 58 p. 144
Soviet-Yugoslav Interaction in the Global Context

Soviet-Yugoslav Perception of Non-aligned Movement

In the 1960s and 1970s, names of President Tito and Yugoslavia acquired an important stature throughout the Third World. Politically, this further solidified Yugoslavia's position in the West, for now Yugoslavia was looked up as an important mediator in matters related to the underdeveloped countries. 87 Besides this, an examination of international representation of Eastern Europe distinct from that of the Soviet Union and their participation in international agencies associated with the United Nations reveals a growing membership profile since 1965, especially on the part of Yugoslavia and Romania. 88

The invasion of Hungary in 1956, for which the Yugoslavs initially criticised the Soviet Union, the Berlin Crisis in 1958 and 1961 and the developing Sino-Soviet split of the late 1950s were signals that such a position would be extremely difficult to maintain. 89 This was the context in which President Tito, Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, and the new president of Egypt, Nasser, convened the first conference of non-aligned nations in 1958. However, by 1965 the Yugoslav economic reform, which included considerable decentralization and an opening of vastly expanded trading relations with the West, made it more difficult for Yugoslavia to adopt parallel policies to those of the Soviet Union. Forced to condemn the intervention in Czechoslovakia, because this act implicitly condemned

88 ibid, pp. 155-156.
89 Woodall, n. 32 p. 402.
different roads to socialism, Yugoslavia adopted the view that in international affairs the Soviet Union is the principal military threat. ⁹⁰

But the overthrow of the Algerian Prime Minister Ben Bella in 1965, followed by similar developments in Indonesia, Ghana, Mali, and after 1970, the Sudan and Egypt, forced the Soviet Union into a position where it would have to support more radical successor governments if it was to retain influence. ⁹¹ In these circumstances, the Soviet Union assumed what can only be described as ‘flexible diplomacy’ supporting the new radical elements plus military assistance to local communist parties where they successfully came into power. ⁹²

On non-alignment, initially the Soviet Union did not accept that such a concept was a positive one. This view prevailed in the Stalin years. In his view, there could not be neutrality between forces of peace and forces of aggression. It was only with the extension of Cold War to Asia that the Soviet Union under the leadership of Khrushchev began to revise this approach. Non-aligned countries were, if not with the Soviet Union, not with the West. Non-alignment had to be assessed positively. The Twentieth Congress of the CPSU in 1956 introduced the necessary doctrinal changes. From then onwards non-alignment was viewed constructively. Hence when Yugoslavia became one of the founding members of NAM the Soviet Union was happy that at least it was not aligned with the West.

⁹⁰ ibid, p. 402.
⁹¹ ibid, p. 403.
⁹² Lazar Mojsov, Dimensions of Non-alignment; (Belgrade, 1989), p. 189.
Moreover, Khruschev's efforts to befriend Yugoslavia and bury the past acrimony had succeeded.

But the declared goal of Soviet foreign policy consisted in waging a persistent and resolute struggle against the aggressive policy of imperialism, for peace and prevention of a thermonuclear World War, for the affirmation of the principles of peaceful coexistence of states with different social systems. To put it briefly, the foreign policy consisted in strengthening in every way the world socialist commonwealth, supporting the liberation struggle of the peoples, preserving peace on earth.

Thus, up until 1966, the Soviet Union supported countries with influence in the non-aligned movement, but by 1974 changes in Third World and Bloc politics meant that it had reconsidered its position. The non-aligned movements itself underwent considerable change after its foundation in 1961. The Belgrade Declaration of that year set out the following principles: non-interference in the affairs of members, of the external imposition by force of social or political systems, peaceful coexistence among states with different social systems, a call for disarmament and a ban on nuclear tests, and a call for a changed basis for economic aid. Yet, during the ensuing period five further conferences were held and the total number of participants rose from 25 in 1961 to 92 in 1979. In those conferences, developmental issues began to figure more prominently.

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93 L. I Brezhnev, n. 36, p. 16
94 L. I Brezhnev, n. 3 p. 8.
95 ibid, p. 9.
Non-alignment continued however, to be one of the core aspects of Yugoslavia foreign policy. Yugoslavia along with India, Egypt and other Asian and African countries, remained to some extent non-aligned against the ex-imperial powers. Yet, there was certain amount of fear, legitimate or not, about ‘neo-imperialism’ to keep the growing number of non-aligned countries together. Occasions for common political initiatives by the non-aligned countries were, however, rare and their fate was not encouraging; for example the attempt in 1965 to bring pressure to bear on President Johnson over Vietnam (the initiative of the 17 countries) was a total failure. Moreover, as the number of non-aligned countries grew, the differences of interests between them also grew. Indonesia, for example, tried against Yugoslav wishes to organise in 1964 a special anti-colonial conference to replace Cairo Meeting on non-aligned Heads of State. The formation of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in 1963 diverted the diplomatic energies of many African countries away from the non-aligned framework. And it proved increasingly hard for the Yugoslavs to be sure of backing the right party in any particular country. In spring 1965, for example, just after a visit by President Tito to Algeria, Ben Bella, the Algerian Prime Minister, who had expressed the most cordial feelings for his guest, was overthrown and imprisoned. In these circumstances, political activities by the non-aligned countries declined significantly.

The movement itself also went through three stages, until 1970 the main objective was to ease Cold War tension and maintain neutrality; from then
until the sixth conference in 1979, there were efforts to reconcile the growing discord within the movement by following the twin objective of upholding sovereign independence of states and promoting increased inter-Bloc cooperation; finally, after 1979 (and possibly with Soviet encouragement) Cuba became the leading force in the non-aligned movement. Thus, in this context, Yugoslavia shifted from being at the centre of the stage of non-alignment to being increasingly constrained by others.

**Mutual Balanced Force Reduction (MBFR)**

After 1968, the Warsaw Pact assumed a larger role in political and foreign policy coordination. Such coordination (which often did not include Romania) became more important with the onset of détente and specifically with the convening of two multilateral East-West forums, the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Mutual Balanced Force Reduction talks in Vienna. What is more important here is the fact that while the Soviet Union tried to explore the possibilities of taking the lead at Helsinki, it made a deliberate attempt to take the back seat at Vienna talks of Mutual Balanced Force Reduction (MBFR).

The obvious reason as Brezhnev reiterated that the Soviet Constitution defines "the defense of the socialist fatherland as one of our state's most important functions and as the affair of all the people". 96 Therefore, the

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Soviet state has stood and continues to stand for peace. But if a threat to it arises and if the situation requires, our armed forces will honorably discharge their duty to protect the Soviet people's peaceful labour and the gains of socialism. 97

The Soviets contended that the détente declined because the West tried to achieve "military superiority" over the Soviet Union and denied it 'equal and equitable security'. Hence, the soviet theorist universally condemned the Western concept of the 'balance of power' and instead proposed the concept of 'correlation of forces' which they regarded as one of the important factors shaping the international relations. 98 The concept 'correlation of forces' was a corollary to the Soviet worldview of the struggle between the two camps, the emergence of world socialist system and the impact it had on the international relations and the foreign policy of the individual states.

Brezhnev was said to have revealed the fact that the Soviet armed forces are the living embodiment of socialist internationalism. Their combat might reliably serves the interests of socialism and communism and the interests of socialist progress and peace. Today, the Soviet armed forces perform their duties in defense of revolutionary gains shoulder to shoulder with the armies of the Warsaw Treaty countries...... 99 Therefore, in view of the

97 ibid, p. 4
98 A. Sergiyev, "Leninist on the Correlation of Forces as a Factors of International Relations", International Affairs, no. 5, (1975), p. 100
continuing growth in the aggressive NATO Bloc's military preparations, Soviet people and the fighting men of the army and navy will do everything they can to strengthen the fraternal defense alliance and to maintain the combat readiness of the joint armed forces at the proper level. 100

It was against this backdrop at Vienna that the Soviet Union refused to accept the concept of balanced force reductions, and denied any degree of military superiority to the Warsaw Pact. On the contrary, they are said to have claimed that on a global basis NATO is superior. But what the Soviet government offered at Vienna was a fixed cut in manpower by the two alliances in stages over a period of two to three years. They also offered to disband/withdrawal to their homeland, but steadfastly refused to consider any form of international verification, which the West regarded as vital to an agreement. These Soviet proposals seemed, in fact, aimed at retaining local Soviet military superiority in Europe while at the same time reducing the strength of American and West German forces.

In the regional context so far as Yugoslav was concerned, the Soviet leadership insisted on the exclusion of Hungary from the list of the state to be considered in the MBFR. This was reflected at least in part upon the desire of the Soviet Union to maintain a significant Warsaw Pact military force along the northern border of Yugoslavia. 101 Certainly as the Soviet Union perceived, this armed presence would provide for the Soviet Union a base for invasion or less overt forms of interference in the affairs of the

100 ibid, p.5
101 Ra’anan, n. 57p. 25.
Yugoslav State. It was also realised that the large-scale presence of the Red Army in Hungary, moreover, cannot but enhance the credibility of factions in Yugoslavia advocating a pro-Moscow line. Not only this but also the Soviet presence on Hungarian territory would guarantee that Budapest would commit troops to an invasion of Yugoslavia; if Moscow decides to opt for such a policy. Apparently, despite the Hungarian invasion of 1956, Hungarian troops participated in 1968 Warsaw pact elimination of the "liberal" Dubec regime in Czechoslovakia. Thus, the Soviet stand at the Vienna talks clearly indicated the vested interest of the Soviet Union to keep the Yugoslavs under threat.

As time went on, the Soviet Union failed to materialise the gains of the MBFR talks and many other such conferences. The obvious reason was the weak leadership at Moscow and the well-organised collective leadership at Belgrade with wholehearted support from the West along with the Eurocommunists and the non-aligned third world.

What happened to the Soviet Union was that the Eastern European countries or the so-called socialist camp started loosing its ground when the hard core Stalinists failed to legitimise the leading role of the communist party. Moreover, the economic hardship leading to the withdrawal of Soviet troops from the Bloc countries automatically gave lead to the NATO forces stationed in the region.
Soviet-Yugoslav relations became friendly during the Brezhnev period. Despite ideological differences there were agreements on bilateral issues. However, the fear of plausible Soviet military intervention in Yugoslavia put caution in forging close relationship. The military intervention in Czechoslovakia and the Brezhnev doctrine of limited sovereignty created concern for the Yugoslavs to preserve their independence. But the ground prepared by the earlier Moscow and Belgrade Deceleration remained central to their relationship. As a result, Yugoslavia survived the possibility of a military intervention by the Soviet Union and hence the relationship was cordial and friendly.