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INDIA AND THE SOVIET UNION

By DIETMAR ROTHERMUND

India and the Soviet Union

By Dietmar Rothermund

Abstract: Indo-Soviet relations have formed a complex pattern in recent years: changing trends in foreign policy, trade, and aid; the fate of the Communist party of India (CPI); the death of Nehru and the removal of Khrushchev; Kosygin's mediation at Tashkent and Soviet military aid to Pakistan; the Chinese bomb and nonproliferation—these are only a few of the elements in the pattern. The two triangles India–China–Soviet Union and India–Pakistan–Soviet Union are of crucial importance in the game of international diplomacy, in which the Soviet Union has scored several points while India was groping for a new orientation after the period of the old cold war had come to an end and nonalignment had lost much of its meaning. India's political system has shown a remarkable stability, and it has been actively supported by the Soviet Union, although Soviet analysts and Indian Communists find it difficult to justify this support in Marxist terms. The reality of world affairs has often overruled ideological considerations, but they must be taken into account, nevertheless, particularly in Indo-Soviet relations which go beyond the diplomatic sphere and extend to internal affairs, such as the development of the public sector of India's economy and joint production-planning for a diversification of exports and imports. There are compelling reasons for the further co-operation of the two countries in spite of occasional misgivings.

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TOWARD the end of the nineteenth century, Russia expanded rapidly in Central Asia and approached the outskirts of the British sphere of influence beyond the northern frontier of India. Persia, Afghanistan, Tibet, and Mongolia played a role in the diplomatic game in which the British and the Russian governments, as well as the viceroys in Calcutta, were the main participants. Russian ambitions could not be checked until after the war with Japan in 1905, when Russia had to accept the British demand for a demarcation of spheres of influence. The First World War and the Russian Revolution changed the situation and introduced a new element into the relations between the two neighbors. Soviet Russia claimed a new sphere of influence in the ideological realm. Bolshevism appeared as a bugbear in Indian politics. Actually, it did not make much of an impact on Indian nationalism, but it loomed large in the imagination of the colonial rulers.[1]

The Communist party of India (CPI), founded at Tashkent in October 1920 by a group of Indian political refugees led by M. N. Roy, made plans for an invasion of India, but nothing came of it.[2] M. N. Roy tried to influence Lenin's approach to the colonial question and asked him not to trust bourgeois national leaders like Gandhi and to back only a proletarian party. But Roy did not succeed, and Lenin continued to sympathize with all national movements directed against imperialism.[3] These broad revolutionary sympathies died with Lenin. Stalin showed little interest in these problems. It was only during the Second World War that Moscow showed a passing interest in India and then only to instruct Indian Communists to collaborate with the Soviet Union's British allies. In this way, communism in India emerged from the Second World War thoroughly discredited, and Indian nationalists were bound to look askance at the Soviet Union.[4] It so happened that Indian independence almost coincided with the Soviet announcement of the theory of the "two camps" in 1947. This did not augur well for Indo-Soviet relations, and it seemed that India and the Soviet Union were to remain uneasy neighbors even after the departure of the British.

CHANGING TRENDS IN FOREIGN POLICY

At the end of his rule, Stalin had to change his mind about the nonaligned nations. He did not have any more sympathy for them than in previous years, but he realized that they could be useful for scoring a few diplomatic points against his enemies. Nehru's letter to Stalin at the time of the Korean war highlighted this new development. Stalin's positive answer to Nehru contrasted with the American reply which was merely a defense of the American approach to the Korean problem.[5] India's second attempt at international mediation, at the end of the Indo-China war, was also resented by the West and appreciated by the Soviet Union. The establishment of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) further alienated India from the West, as it frustrated the neutralization of Indo-China which was advo-

[1] Zaffar Iman, "The Effects of the Russian Revolution on India, 1917–1920," in S. N. Mukherjee, ed., *The Movement for National Freedom in India,* St. Antony's Papers, no. 18 (London: Oxford University Press, 1966), pp. 74–97.

[2] Muzaffar Ahmad, *The Communist Party of India and Its Formation Abroad* (Calcutta: National Book Agency, 1962).

[3] David N. Druhe, *Soviet Russia and Indian Communism* (New York: Bookman Associates, 1959), p. 28 ff.

[4] Gene Overstreet and Marshall Windmiller, *Communism in India* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1959), p. 218 ff.

[5] Ross N. Berkes and Mohinder Bedi, *The Diplomacy of India* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1958) p. 108 f.

cated by India.[6] American aid to Pakistan was another factor which made India swing toward the Soviet Union in international affairs.

The year of 1955, which was pervaded by the spirit of Bandung and the spirit of Geneva, created a favorable climate for a positive demonstration of Indo-Soviet friendship. Khrushchev, with his excellent sense of timing and showmanship, scored a remarkable diplomatic victory in his triumphant tour of India at the end of this year of good will. By coming down heavily on the side of India against Pakistan, Khrushchev committed the Soviet Union to a political line which Soviet diplomats in later years may have considered to be a liability rather than an asset. But, in 1955, Soviet politicians did not yet think of mediating between India and Pakistan and did not see why they should not take advantage of their attitude to the Kashmir conflict by making it a strong plank of their propaganda platform.[7]

The year of good will was soon followed by a period of mutual disappointments. The Hungarian crisis affected the image of the Soviet Union. Nehru reacted with great hesitation and tended to give credence to the Soviet explanation of the events in Hungary. But he finally had to admit that all was not well in Hungary, and this rather painful process left its mark on Indo-Soviet relations.[8]

In the following year, India's sterling reserves dwindled, and it became apparent that the fulfillment of the second Five Year Plan would depend on Western financial aid. India was now less vocal and adopted a more cautious attitude. Nehru did not join the chorus of the shrill voices of the more radical politicians of the Third World who denounced colonialism and imperialism on every occasion. He knew that India was the most important of the nonaligned countries of the Third World and that it could not gain much by making radical noises. He was also increasingly aware of the Chinese threat. India was, therefore, facing a peculiar quandary when the Soviet Union embarked on a militant phase of foreign policy after the breakdown of the Paris Summit Conference of 1960. Khrushchev's political maneuvers were frequently at odds with Nehru's approach to world affairs in these crucial years.

At the United Nations in 1960, Nehru criticized the intransigence of the Western powers and demanded a resumption of talks between Khrushchev and Eisenhower, but he did not go along with Khrushchev's attack on the Secretary General of the United Nations, and rejected Soviet proposals for a "troika" Secretariat.[9] In 1961 Nehru's reaction to the Berlin wall was similar to his reaction to the Hungarian crisis. He did not like the wall, but tried to understand the Soviet attitude and made a few half-hearted statements about the German problem.[10] A few weeks later, at the Belgrade Conference of the Nonaligned Nations, he advocated moderation in every respect, but had to deplore the Soviet resumption of nuclear tests.[11] His action in Goa at the end of the year, which was widely criticized in the West, once more brought him closer to

[6] D. R. Sar Desai, "India's Relations with Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia" (Ph.D. Diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 1965).

[7] Arthur Stein, "India's Relations with the USSR," *Orbis* 1 (1964), pp. 357–373.

[8] Jawaharlal Nehru, *India's Foreign Policy* (New Delhi: Publications Division, 1961), p. 557 f.; cf. also Michael Brecher, *Nehru—A Political Biography* (London: Oxford University Press, 1959) p. 21 f.

[9] Nehru, *India's Foreign Policy*, p. 223, 227 f.; cf. also Krishna Menon's later account in *Times of India*, October 20, 1961.

[10] *Times of India*, August 19, 1961.

[11] G. H. Jansen. *Afro-Asia and Nonalignment* (London: Faber & Faber, 1966) p. 291 ff.

the Soviet Union. Another point of agreement was policy towards Laos, where the Soviet Union supported the neutralist forces by airlifting supplies, while India tried to bring the United States back to the conference table so as to guarantee a neutralization of Laos.[12]

A most critical point in Indo-Soviet relations came when Khrushchev's offensive came to a grinding halt in Cuba while the Chinese inflicted a humiliating blow on India by invading the country at several points along the Himalayan border. The Western powers were quick in providing moral support and military aid to India, but the Soviet Union was caught on the horns of a dilemma. After having been checkmated in Cuba, Khrushchev could not afford to make another mistake.[13] It was quite obvious that the Chinese, in attacking India, wanted to demonstrate that country's dependence on Western aid and, at the same time, force the Soviet Union to take a stand. If the Soviet Union supported India, it found itself in the company of the West, and if it did not support India, it would lose that country's friendship and India would be unable to maintain even a semblance of nonalignment. This Chinese challenge brought about a new alignment of international relations. The triangle India–China–Soviet Union emerged as a decisive element of world politics.

THE TRIANGLE INDIA–CHINA–SOVIET UNION

Khrushchev hesitated at first to respond to the Chinese challenge. In a very evasive reply to a letter written by Nehru, he merely indicated his surprise at the Chinese attack and requested India not to declare war on China.[14] The Soviet press even endorsed the Chinese offer of a cease-fire which implied conditions that were completely unacceptable to India.[15] Two months later Khrushchev finally replied to continuous Chinese criticism and said that the border conflict would only help the imperialists and the reactionary forces in India.[16] This was as far as he would go at that time. A more concrete test of his intentions was posed by the contract under which the Soviet Union was to supply MIG fighters to India. This contract was signed before the Chinese attack, but the delivery of the planes was to take place at a later date. In India and in the West, there was some doubt about whether these MIG's would be delivered, but the first ones did, indeed, arrive in India in February 1963.[17] In fact, the MIG contract was followed by a series of other agreements on the supply of Soviet military equipment to India. During his last year in office, Khrushchev no longer hesitated to back India against China.[18] Inasmuch as the Sino-Soviet conflict was going from bad to worse anyhow, Khrushchev did not need to withhold support from India.

Indo-Soviet friendship seemed to be more firmly established than ever when, suddenly, in 1964, Nehru died and Khrushchev was removed from office. The relations between India and the Soviet Union were so closely connected with these two men that, for a time, it seemed to be doubtful whether Indo-Soviet friendship would survive their exit from the political stage. Leaders in both countries viewed the change of

[12] Sar Desai, "India's Relations with Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia."

[13] Stein, "India's Relations with the USSR," p. 363.

[14] Stein, "India's Relations with the USSR," p. 366.

[15] *Pravda,* October 25, 1962.

[16] Stein, "India's Relations with the USSR," p. 366–367.

[17] For press reports on the MIG agreement, see *New York Times,* May 17, 1962, and June 14 and 16, 1962; *Times of India,* May 19 and 21, 1962, and June 14, 1962; *Hindustan Times,* June 6, 1962, and February 16, 1963.

[18] *The Statesman,* August 17, 1963, and December 5, 1963.

guard with suspicion and were afraid that the successors would not continue the policy of friendship. Nehru's death was less disruptive because it was a natural event and his successor was one of his closest political friends.[19] But Khrushchev's removal was bound to create more suspicion because it was assumed that it was a result of the Sino-Soviet conflict, and that, therefore, his successors could be expected to steer a different political course. Kosygin, however, hastened to send a telegram to Nehru's successor Shastri, in which he assured him that the Soviet Union would honor all agreements with India, including those concerning the delivery of military equipment.[20] Similar statements were repeated frequently in those days. But this seemed to indicate a feeling of uncertainty, rather than an implicit trust in the continuation of good relations between the two countries. Within a few months, the old relationship was re-established, and Shastri's visit to Moscow in May 1965 marked a new climax of good will. The Soviet leaders supported Shastri's stand against Pakistan, but they did not respond to his complaints about the explosion of a Chinese atomic bomb, whereas he, in turn, did not oblige them by taking a stand against the American bombardment of North Vietnam, as the Soviet leaders urged him to do.[21]

The new Soviet leadership may have been more cautious in their statements on China, but India could be sure that Sino-Soviet rivalry was as keen as ever. This was shown by the intrigues in which the Soviet Union indulged in order to thwart the Chinese attempt at dominating the second Bandung Conference, to be held in Algiers in 1965.[22] India had no interest in this conference and was as eager as the Soviet Union was to prevent China from using this platform for its anti-Soviet and anti-Indian campaign. From the very beginning, India, therefore, sponsored Soviet participation in the conference, and thereby precipitated a conflict which led, finally, to the demise of this last symbol of Afro-Asian solidarity.[23]

The Sino-Soviet conflict, the end of Afro-Asian solidarity, and the disappearance of nonalignment, as it was understood in an earlier time, created a serious problem of political orientation for everybody concerned. The confusion seemed to become compounded when Pakistan, hitherto a faithful ally of the West, formed an alliance with China and attacked India in 1965, relying on the superior power of American tanks and military equipment. India managed to withstand the attack, and after a series of pitched battles and an abortive Chinese ultimatum which was not followed up by a Chinese intervention, Indian troops were standing on Pakistan's soil.[24] The restoration of the status quo required a skillful mediator. The Soviet Union took the risk of offering its services for this thankless task, in order to prevent the Chinese from using this impasse to their advantage. When Ayub Khan and Shastri met on Soviet soil in January 1966, they consented to make the Soviet Union the arbiter of the fate of South Asia. It is to Kosygin's credit that the Soviet Union was able to play this role successfully, because if either Ayub Khan or Shastri had left the historic conference at Tashkent prematurely, it would have

[19] President Radhakrishnan visited the Soviet Union in September 1964 and stressed the continuity of Indo-Soviet relations. See the reports in *Hindustan Times*, September 12 and 13, 1964; *Times of India*, September 20, 1964.

[20] *Hindustan Times*, October 22, 1964.

[21] *The Statesman*, May 14 and 15, 1965.

[22] *The Statesman*, May 23 and 29, 1965.

[23] Jansen, *Afro-Asia and Nonalignment*, p. 378 ff.

[24] For an analysis of this period, see K. Rangaswami, "Foreign Policy," *Hindu Weekly Review*, March 7, 1966.

been a great setback to the diplomatic efforts of the Soviet Union. As it happened, one of the two South Asian leaders left the conference dead and the other, defeated, whereas Kosygin remained the real victor. With Kosygin as a witness, Ayub Khan had to forswear the use of violence as a means to settle Pakistan's dispute with India, in order to obtain Shastri's promise that Indian troops would leave Pakistan's soil. Ayub Khan threatened to leave the conference if Shastri did not agree to a quick withdrawal of his troops, and Kosygin used Indo-Soviet friendship to obtain this concession from Shastri. Shastri agreed in order to have Kosygin as a witness of Ayub Khan's pledge to keep the peace.[25] Under the stress of these negotiations, Shastri succumbed to a heart attack a few hours after signing the Tashkent agreement. Kosygin was left with a diplomatic victory for the moment and a difficult task ahead.

Indo-Soviet relations were put in jeopardy once more by the crisis of succession in India.[26] Shastri's successor Indira Gandhi could not immediately establish her credentials with the Soviet Union. There was a suspicion in the Soviet Union that Nehru's daughter was but a shadow of her father being used by certain elements in Indian politics which did not want to show their hand before they were sure of seizing power.[27] It was only when she successfully reemerged after the elections of 1967 that she was taken seriously by the Soviet leadership.[28] The Arab-Israeli war of June 1967 initiated a new period of Indo-Soviet co-operation in world politics. In its rivalry with China over the support of militant forces in the Third World, the Soviet Union was bound to give a solid backing to Arab nationalism. The Israeli victory was extremely embarrassing to the Soviet Union, but as the Soviet leaders did not want to precipitate a major conflict by a direct intervention, they could only make sympathetic noises, and in this effort, India was extremely helpful.[29] India, on the other hand, knew that both the Soviet Union and the United States were interested in avoiding a conflict and that it was, therefore, no problem to take a stand for the Arabs which would also help to outdo Pakistan in cultivating the friendship of Islamic nations. Pakistan, however, became the most important touchstone of Indo-Soviet relations. The spirit of Tashkent implied that India had to look to the Soviet Union for a guarantee of Pakistan's peaceful behavior, whereas the Soviet Union had to try its best to strengthen its ties with Pakistan in order to influence that country's policies.[30] In this way a new triangle was established which proved to be more intriguing and complex than the India–China–Soviet Union triangle.

TRADE AND AID

Indo-Soviet relations had been reinforced by a rapid expansion of trade and aid. The first bilateral trade agreement was signed in 1953; it was renewed in 1958 and supplemented by an agreement on payment in Indian rupees, which would help India to save foreign exchange in its dealings with the Soviet Union. Bilateral agreements of this kind have often been viewed with some skepticism by economists who hold that such agreements are incompatible with a free world-market. There was fear

[25] K. Rangaswami, "Could Mr. Shastri Have Done Better?," *Hindu Weekly Review*, January 24, 1966.

[26] Michael Brecher, *Succession in India* (London: Oxford University Press, 1966), p. 190 ff.

[27] *Pravda*, August 15, 1966.

[28] *Hindu Weekly Review*, April 24, 1967.

[29] *The Statesman*, June 6, 1967; *Times of India*, June 7, 1967; *The Patriot*, June 23, 1967.

[30] G. W. Choudhury, *Pakistan's Relations with India, 1947–1966* (London: Pall Mall Press, 1968), p. 298 ff.

that India would have to buy Soviet machinery at high prices and sell raw produce which could have been sold more profitably elsewhere. However, according to an Indian study of this problem, these fears were unfounded. Soviet machinery was supplied at prices which did not differ much from world-market prices, and Indian exports to the Soviet Union constituted an addition to the Indian export market, and not a pre-emption of goods which would otherwise have gone to hard-currency countries.[31]

Of course, the "colonial" pattern of an exchange of finished goods against raw produce prevailed even in Indo-Soviet trade relations, and the dependence of the debtor on the creditor remained, in spite of soft-currency-payment agreements.[32] The payment agreements did not extend to a repayment of Soviet credits. The Soviet Union could always demand a payment of this debt in hard currency, and to this extent, India's export to the Soviet Union was a command performance. Soviet aid in terms of credit amounted to almost the total value of Soviet exports to India.[33] The soft-currency-payment agreement was, therefore, only a useful element of window-dressing. Both partners were aware of this fact and tried their best to step up Indian exports to the Soviet Union, so as to narrow the gap in the balance of trade.

A look at trade statistics shows this very clearly. The period of the first trade agreement ended in 1958 in an enormous discrepancy in the balance of trade, because the Soviet aid program after 1955 had led to a great increase of the supply of machinery to India. This first period of massive Soviet aid ended in 1958, and by 1960 Soviet exports to India had dropped back to the 1956 level, whereas Indian exports to the Soviet Union had slowly increased, so that in 1960, India actually had a favorable balance of trade with the Soviet Union. However, because of the soft-currency-payment agreement of 1958, such a balance of trade was not in the interest of India, and Indian exports to the Soviet Union ceased to expand while Soviet exports to India increased again very rapidly until 1963. In that year, a new trade agreement was due, and the alarming disequilibrium in the balance of trade, as well as the rapidly increasing indebtedness of India to the Soviet Union, made it necessary to increase Indian exports sharply. This was the aim of the new trade agreement of 1963, after which Indian exports to the Soviet Union, indeed, doubled within two years. Tea, jute, and tobacco were the main items of this export trade.[34]

In recent years, both countries have tried to find ways and means for a greater diversification of Indian exports to the Soviet Union, so that India may produce more finished consumer goods for the Soviet Union.[35] But in the context of the Soviet and the Indian economies, this would mean joint planning for certain production targets. It remains to be seen how this would work out.

Soviet aid to India has been almost exclusively concentrated on major proj-

[31] Indian Institute of Foreign Trade, *India's Trade with East Europe* (New Delhi: Ministry of Commerce 1966).

[32] H. Venkatasubbiah, "Rigid Pattern of Indo-Soviet Trade," *Hindu Weekly Review,* January 8, 1968.

[33] Leo Tansky, *U.S. and U.S.S.R. Aid to Developing Countries: A Comparative Study of India, Turkey, and the U.A.R.* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1967), p. 101 ff.

[34] Indian Institute of Foreign Trade, *India's Trade with East Europe;* D. Hejmadi, "Volume of Indo-USSR Trade Rises," *Journal of Industry and Trade* (May 1966).

[35] K. Rangaswami, "Kosygin's Attitude to India's Problems," *Hindu Weekly Review,* February 12, 1968; H. Venkatasubbiah, "A Fourth Plan with Less Foreign Aid," *ibid.*

ects in the public sector. Steel-production, heavy engineering, energy, and the oil industry are fields which are of crucial importance to India's economic development. In selecting these projects, the Soviet Union could draw upon the work of India's planners, and by insisting on turn-key jobs, the Soviet engineers were sure to keep the establishment of the respective plants firmly under their control until they could be handed over to the Indian government.[36] There was some criticism that, in this way, India's technocrats could not learn how to bear the responsibility for such important jobs,[37] but, in general, Soviet propaganda was able to make the most out of these spectacular feats of technical aid to India. In relation to the total amount of aid given, the Soviets made a greater impact on public opinion in India than did the Western countries.[38] Advantageous circumstances, such as the rejection of aid for the Bokaro steel plant by the United States and the subsequent sanctioning of this aid by the Soviet Union, contributed to a better image of the Soviet Union.[39] However, although most Soviet aid projects were spectacular, rather than of crucial importance, the aid to the oil industry really meant a major breakthrough. For various reasons, the Western oil companies had not been able to develop India's considerable oil resources, and it was left to Soviet technicians to find oil at several places in India and to help with the establishment of oil refineries in the public sector. Indian Oil, a public sector company, was founded in order to distribute these newly developed resources. Before the new Indian refineries could begin their work, this company marketed Russian oil. The Western oil companies were thus faced with a new competitor, and India could hope to be able to depend more and more on its own resources for this strategically important supply.[40]

[36] Romesh Thapar, "Testing the Indo-Soviet Link," *Economic Weekly*, May 22, 1965.

[37] *Economic Weekly*, May 9, 1964; December 5, 1964; May 22, 1965.

[38] Tansky, *U.S. and U.S.S.R. Aid to Developing Countries*, p. 101 ff.

[39] V. Bolshakov, "Bokaro-vtoroi Bhilai," *Mezhdunarodnaia Zhizn* 9 (1964) p. 124 f.

SOVIET VIEWS ON INDIA

The Soviet Union maintains a huge propaganda network in India: the magazine *Soviet Land*, with editions in many regional languages, dwarfs even the major indigenous publications in India.[41] Soviet views of India that are published in that medium are, of course, positive and benign. But in Soviet journals published for home consumption, the reader may find more critical views on India. Even after many years of aid to the Indian government, Soviet analysts are not too sure of what all this means. Soviet experts on India have had to change their minds several times as political and ideological trends shifted from one extreme to another.[42] They have, therefore, become very cautious in their assessment of Indian problems. They have also continued to be puzzled by the intricacies of the class analysis of Indian society which is a must for all Marxist scholars. When India was still under colonial rule, they used to make much of the inevitable contradictions between the interests of indigenous Indian capitalists and the foreign imperialists.[43] In the "two camp" period, the analysis was simplified: Indian independence was spurious and the Indian

[40] Y. Yershov, *India: Independence and Oil* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publications, 1965); see also *Eastern Economist*, February 19, 1965.

[41] Peter Sager, *Moskaus Hand in Indien* (Bern: Schweizer Ost-Institut, 1966), p. 41 ff.

[42] See the remarks of A. Dyakov in the preface to his book *India vo vremia i posle vtoroi mirovoi voiny* (Moscow, 1952).

[43] A. Dyakov, *Nacionalnii vopros i angliiskii imperializm v Indii* (Moscow, 1952).

bourgeoisie had entered into an alliance with foreign imperialists.[44]

When the Soviet Union decided to befriend India and to give aid to its public sector, the class analysis changed once more: only the big Indian monopoly capitalists were in league with the imperialists, while broad strata of the national bourgeoisie were potentially progressive and deserved to be supported.[45] However, this fine distinction was more problematic than the cruder categories of earlier times. If the state in India was an instrument of bourgeois rule, what role, according to the Marxist textbook, did state capitalism play in such a state, and did it actually strengthen or weaken the position of the big bourgeoisie? These were uncomfortable questions which nobody wanted to raise or to answer, as they were directly related to the justification of Soviet aid to India. A reference to the historical role of the world socialist system, the progressive potentialities of the national forces in India, and the importance of the working class as a vanguard of socialist reconstruction were usually deemed sufficient for all practical purposes.[46] Whenever a writer went more deeply into the problems of state capitalism in India, or when he tried to test the validity of the concept of the noncapitalist path in the Indian situation, he was asking for trouble.[47] It was much safer to stick to "concrete historical analysis," which discovered in India three main strata of the society: the working class supporting the Communist party; the broad national forces represented by the Congress party; and the big bourgeoisie which sponsored reactionary parties like Swatantra and Jan Sangh. Until the elections of 1967, this analysis seemed to fit the facts reasonably well. But the emergence after this election of very strange coalition governments and united fronts confounded all Soviet analysts.[48]

CPI: REFLECTIONS OF THE COMMUNIST DILEMMA

The confusion which prevails among the Soviet analysts is even worse among Indian Communists. They went through the same motions of a changing class analysis and fought bitter battles within the ranks of their party on the strategies and tactics which this analysis would demand. Soviet guidance was not very helpful to the party at an earlier time, and after 1955, Indo-Soviet friendship made it obligatory for the CPI to follow the line of the Indian government, which was so obviously in the good books of the Soviet leaders.[49]

Frustration and the strain of the Chinese attack on India finally led to a split of the party in 1964. The majority of the Communist establishment, such as members of Parliament and trade-union leaders, remained in the old party, which pledged its loyalty to Moscow. The more radical elements in the Communist strongholds of West Bengal, Andhra, and Kerala formed a new party, CPI—Marxist, which was supposed to

[44] E. Zhukov, "Obostrenie krisiza kolonialnoi sistemi," *Bolshevik*, December 15, 1947.

[45] R. Ul'ianovskii, "Ob osobenostiah razvitiia i charaktere gosudarstvennogo kapitalizma v nezavisimoi Indii," *Problemy Vostokovedeniia*, 3 (1960), pp. 23–41.

[46] B. E. Semenov, "Ekonomicheskoe sotrudnichestvo Sovetskogo Soiuza i drugih socialicheskih stran s Indie," *Narodi Azii i Afriki* 1 (1964), pp. 53–60; and L. Eiranov, "Sovetskii soiuz-Indii," *Mezhdunarodnaia Zhizn* 9 (1961), pp. 104–105.

[47] Cf. V. Kondrat'ev's review of A. I. Levkovskii, *Osobenostii razvitiia kapitalizma v Indii* (Moscow, 1963), in *Narodi Azii i Afriki* 1 (1964), pp. 184–189.

[48] See, e.g., N. Savel'ev, "Nastuplenie monopolii v Indii," *Mezhdunarodnaia Zhizn* 4 (1967), pp. 47–55; and O. Maev, "Rol' monopolii v politicheskoi zhizni," *Mezhdunarodnaia Zhizn* 1 (1967), pp. 127–128.

[49] Overstreet and Windmiller, *Communism in India*, p. 318 ff.

be pro-Peking, but was actually only interested in a more independent brand of communism, which was soon termed revisionist by the Chinese.[50] The new party was soon confronted with the odd alliance between Pakistan and China, and hastened to congratulate the Soviet Union on the Tashkent achievement even more emphatically than the old CPI.[51] In 1966 both Communist parties tried to be on good terms with Moscow while striking a more aggressive attitude in India, as the Soviet leaders adopted a frosty attitude towards the Indira Gandhi government. The success of the CPI—Marxist party in the 1967 elections practically turned it into a new Communist establishment, which had to fight against the radical elements within its own ranks. The recent founding of a third Communist party, which wants to go on the revolutionary warpath, highlights the Communist dilemma.[52]

RECENT PROBLEMS: NONPROLIFERATION, SOVIET AID TO PAKISTAN, AND THE CZECH CRISIS

In recent times, Indo-Soviet relations have been beset by three major problems: Soviet insistence on India's signing of the Nonproliferation Treaty, Soviet military aid to Pakistan as a means to establish an equilibrium between Pakistan and India in accordance with the Soviet role after Tashkent, and the Czech crisis, in which Indira Gandhi had to repeat her father's Hungarian performance before a much more critical audience. The Chinese atomic-bomb test of 1964 has converted India from an enthusiastic supporter of international treaties against further proliferation of nuclear weapons into a conscientious objector to this procedure. In 1963 India signed the Moscow nuclear-test-ban treaty, but when the United States and the Soviet Union campaigned for signatures of their nonproliferation pact, India abstained.[53] In the new international division of diplomatic labor, it had obviously fallen to the Soviet Union's lot to tackle India, whereas the United States was prompting West Germany to sign on the dotted line. As long as West Germany does not sign, the Soviet Union may not be too eager to perform its part, and, therefore, India may gain some respite from further diplomatic pressure.[54] But this does not solve the long-run problem, and, sooner or later, India will have to give a definite answer to the Soviet Union. Whether this answer will severely strain Indo-Soviet relations has yet to be seen.

Indo-Soviet friendship has been greatly strained by the Soviet Union's decision to supply arms to Pakistan. This decision is a logical outcome of the Tashkent policy, but, of course, India cannot look at it this way, and must think of it as an unfriendly act. The Soviet Union had tried, even before Tashkent, to establish better relations with Pakistan, so as to wean that country away from its alliance with the West and to prevent its falling into the hands of China. In this attempt, the Soviet Union was severely handicapped by its one-sided commitment to India. There had been occasional diplomatic overtures on both sides, but it was only when Ayub Khan visited Moscow, in April 1965, that a new period of better relations between the Soviet Union and

[50] Indira Rothermund, *Die Spaltung der Kommunistischen Partei Indiens* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1968).

[51] Resolutions of the Central Committee of the CPI—Marxist, Tenali, June 12–19, 1966.

[52] Rothermund, *Die Spaltung der Kommunistischen Partei Indiens*, p. 90.

[53] *Times of India*, November 16, 1966; *The Statesman*, April 25, 1967; *Times of India*, May 6, 1967; *Indian and Foreign Review*, December 1, 1966.

[54] Easwar Sagar, "Bid to Veto Indian Atomic Defence," *Hindu Weekly Review*, November 7, 1966.

Pakistan seemed to begin.[55] The improvement in the relations between the Soviet Union and Pakistan thus preceded the Tashkent Conference, and Soviet mediation was possible only because of this *rapprochement*. The idea of Soviet arms-aid emerged soon after the conference, and the Pakistani air force hoped for Soviet missiles.[56] But these plans did not materialize until the summer of 1968, when the Soviet Union complied with Pakistan's request, after long consultations. Pakistan thus managed to get help from the United States, China, and the Soviet Union—a unique feat of diplomacy indeed. India reacted strongly, and there were reminiscences of India's reaction to the first announcement of American military aid to Pakistan in 1954.[57] But there was also a realistic awareness of India's dependence on the supply of Soviet arms, and the Indian government played down the whole problem. Official spokesmen tended to emphasize that the Soviet attitude towards India had remained unchanged. The Soviet government adopted a similar line.[58] Pakistan's recent preoccupation with its internal problems has made a sober appraisal of Soviet policy more acceptable in India, and editorial comments on Kosygin's talks with Yahya Khan show that the Soviet leader's cautious and noncommittal approach is fully understood.[59]

The Czech crisis posed a much more difficult problem although India was not directly concerned with it. There was a great deal of sympathy in India for the Czechs. Many people urged the government to express this sympathy in unequivocal terms. They were dissatisfied with Indira Gandhi's statement that India deplored, but did not want to condemn, the Soviet action. In fact, India managed to earn the gratitude of both the Czech and the Soviet government by adopting this diplomatic line, but the critics felt that the Indian government evaded the issue and participated in the conspiracy of silence at the United Nations.[60] These critics were now much more vocal in India than in Nehru's time, and the government's policy was decidedly unpopular. The Soviet image was badly damaged by the Czech crisis, and no propaganda effort would help to restore it for some time to come. However, this course of events may have introduced a wholesome dose of realism into Indo-Soviet relations. The double shock of Soviet arms-aid to Pakistan and the Czech crisis in mid-1968 demonstrated that the Soviet Union was not a benign big brother, after all, but a world power, with numerous liabilities and obligations, trying to defend its own interests. Indo-Soviet friendship has to be seen in the context of the national interest of the two countries, and as long as there are compelling reasons for their co-operation, this friendship will last, in spite of occasional misgivings and ideological qualms.

[55] G. W. Choudhury, *Pakistan's Relations with India, 1947–1966*, p. 277 f.

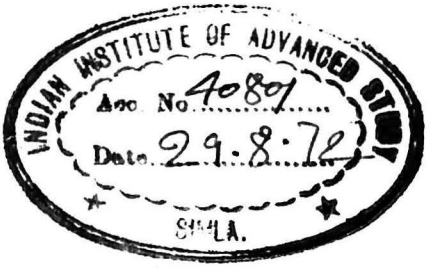
[56] See the reference to Air Marshall Nur Khan's visit to Moscow in 1966, *Times of India*, July 17, 1968.

[57] For a survey of Indian press opinion on Soviet arms-aid to Pakistan, see *Indian and Foreign Review*, August 1, 1968, pp. 19–22.

[58] See Report on Defense Minister Swaran Singh's visit to Moscow, *Times of India*, November 1, 1968.

[59] *Overseas Hindustan Times*, June 14, 1969.

[60] *Times of India*, September 28, 1968.



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