K.P.S. MENON

THE INDO-SOVIET TREATY

Setting and Meaning

THE INDO-SOVIET TREATY

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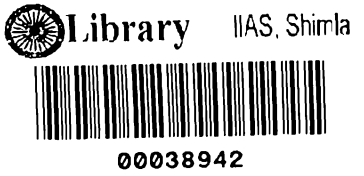

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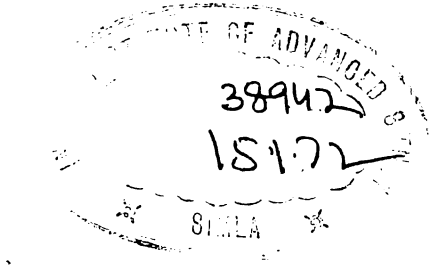

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PREFACE

This book contains a few of my articles on recent developments in India's international relations, culminating in the Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation.

The first article on "Indo-Soviet Relations in Retrospect" was written in February 1971, soon after the celebration of the 21st anniversary of the Republic of India. The next four articles were provoked by the recent traumatic occurrences in Bangla Desh, affecting and threatening to convulse, the entire subcontinent, and revealing the attitude of the Great Powers and, in particular, of the USA and the USSR. The sixth article was written on the conclusion of the Indo-Soviet Treaty in August 1971, and the seventh and the eighth deal with Indian reactions to the Treaty. The last article called "India and her Neighbours in 2,000 A.D." looks into the future.

The articles have been left almost exactly as they were written, except that a sentence here and there has been deleted to avoid overlapping or inserted for the sake of clarity.

My grateful acknowledgements are due to the *Amrita Bazar Patrika, The Contemporary Review,*

PREFACE

London, the *Deccan Herald,* the *Indian Express, The Mail,* the *National Herald, Patriot, Samyukta Karnatak,* Bangalore, *The Tribune,* Chandigarh and the *Assam Tribune,* Gauhati, in which my articles appeared. I am also grateful to my old friend, Mr. A.S. Raman, Managing Editor of Feature Unit, through whom some of these articles were placed.

K.P.S. MENON

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CHAPTER 1

INDO-SOVIET RELATIONS IN RETROSPECT

We recently celebrated the 21st anniversary of the establishment of the Indian Republic. To use a commercial term, this is primarily an occasion for stock-taking. Stock-taking in case of a company is one thing; in the case of a nation, quite another: it is far more complex. There are different points of view from which the stock-taking can be undertaken. In this chapter I shall review the situation primarily from the standpoint of India as a member of the world community and, in particular, of her relations with the Soviet Union.

Before 1947, India was not an independent member of the world community; she was but a unit of the British Empire or Commonwealth. True, India was a member of the League of Nations from the outset, but she was largely an ornamental member and the Indian delegation was led by such ornamental figures as the Aga Khan and the Maharaja of Bikaner. India had no diplomatic representatives abroad and no foreign policy of her own. Even her relations with States within the Indian periphery such as Nepal, Sikkim, and Bhutan were rigidly controlled from Whitehall.

In particular, India had no relations with the Soviet Union. It was the policy of the British Government to keep India at arms length from the USSR. Throughout the 19th century "the Russian bogey" was one of the cardinal factors in British foreign policy. It was assumed that Russia, which had subdued the decadent Khanates in Central Asia, would conquer Afghanistan and eventually India as well; and it was this imaginary

fear which prompted the British Government to wage three wars against Afghanistan so as to keep it within its sphere of influence.

Great Britain seems still to be haunted by "the Russian bogey". Only, the bogey has changed its location from Afghanistan to the Indian Ocean. Heath has detected a "Soviet presence" in the Indian Ocean and, in order to meet this menace, proposes to supply arms to the racist government of South Africa. At Singapore the vast majority of the representatives of Asian and African States refused to swallow Heath's explanation for his deal with South Africa.

It is strange that in India there are some people who are still obsessed by "the Russian bogey". And that, in spite of our experience of the great benefits which have accrued to India from Russian friendship in economic, political, and military spheres. During the last decade India had to meet two attacks, one from China and the other from Pakistan; and the moral support of the Soviet Government was invaluable on both occasions. Indeed, the support was more than moral; India also received material help, and it cannot be forgotten that it was the initiative and resourcefulness of the Soviet Prime Minister which brought about the Tashkent accord at the end of our war with Pakistan. In the U.N. too, whenever India's territorial integrity was in question, as in the case of Kashmir and Goa, the Soviet Government has extended its support to India. Indeed, but for the fear of Soviet veto, the Western powers would have tried to declare India an agressor

in Goa in 1964!

On the whole, the friendship of the Soviet Union for India has remained steady, like—to use a lovely metaphor from the *Geeta*—"a flame in a windless spot which does not flicker." India was far from windless during the last decade. Contrary winds have been blowing in India and into India, and yet the flame has been burning with a steady glow.

The third decade of Indian independence has begun well for India and the world. Perhaps, the most important event in the last year was the conclusion of a non-aggression treaty between the Soviet Union and West Germany. Under the treaty, West Germany has agreed to renounce force in the settlement of disputes and for all practical purposes to recognize the existing frontiers in Europe. The spirit in which Chancellor Brandt went to Moscow was different from the spirit of Dr. Adenauer. He arrived in Moscow, flaunting the resurrected strength of Germany and proclaiming that "East Germany is against the law of nature—the law of man and the law of God". Yet East Germany has now been recognized by Dr. Adenauer's successor as a fact.

Equally important is the agreement which has been signed between Poland and West Germany, under which the latter has recognized the Oder-Neisse line as the frontier between Germany and Poland. In doing so, Germany has given up its claim to some forty thousand square miles of territory which it used to regard stubbornly as German and which was included

in Poland after the War.

The USA has been viewing these agreements with much concern. Acheson, who used to be the Secretary of State in the early days of the cold war, has asked that "this mad race to Moscow must be stopped" and that "Brandt should be cooled off". (How this is going to be done remains to be seen.) Another American politician observed that "Brandt seems to be writing the peace treaty after the world war, leaving the Allies to cool their heels on the sidelines." And President Nixon has asserted, more emphatically than convincingly, that he is determined to hold the line of American troops in Europe. Despite such declarations, there is little doubt that these agreements denote, and were designed to promote, a diminution of American influence in Europe. They may even denote some progress towards Charles Gaulle's vision of a united Europe stretching from the Atlantic to the Urals. Only, this Europe will not arise under French or American auspices.

To the world at large, the importance of the agreements of West Germany with the USSR and Poland lies in the fact that they are a distinct contribution to world peace. Central Europe saw the outbreak of two worldwars; the prospects of a third breaking out there have receded.

Elesewhere, there are war clouds; and in South-East Asia there is war itself. In Indo-China, the USA is behaving, as Khrushchev put it in his homely way, like a man who has a dead frog in his throat and can

neither swallow it nor spit it out. In the meantime, American casualties are increasing; they have already crossed the Korean mark; "the credibility gap" between the government and the public is growing; and public opinion is greatly agitated. Little Vietnam, however, has demonstrated that the spirit of man, once roused, cannot be crushed even by the mightiest military machine on earth.

In the Middle East, Israel, aided and abetted by its Western patrons, has won a pyrrhic victory over its Arab neighbours and is still squatting on its ill-gotten gains. Even in the intoxication of victory, however, Israel must be wondering how long she can survive as a hated enclave in a hostile Arab world. In this region, again, Soviet presence was seriously resented by the Western Powers, who used to regard the Middle East as its own reserve, little realizing that the Soviet Union has now become a global power with global interests. In 1955, when Czechoslovakia sold a consignment of arms to Egypt, the USA tried to nip "the Soviet menace" in the bud by withdrawing its proferred aid for the Aswan Dam. There followed a chain of events such as the nationalization of the Suez Canal, the Anglo-French-Israeli attack on Egypt, and the fall of the British Prime Minister, the net result of which was the strengthening of Soviet influence in the Arab world.

John Foster Dulles made no bones of his attitude towards President Nasser. At a meeting of the American National Defence Council, which was held soon after the Soviet Union stepped into the breach

and agreed to build the Aswan Dam, Dulles said: "I hate Gamal Abdel Nasser. I do not believe that he can ever be our friend any day. We should not, therefore, allow him to get away safely with what he has taken. We should cut him to size and keep so until we get rid of him once for all."

The withdrawal of aid for the Aswan Dam was also meant as a warning to other countries which dared to follow an independent policy. According to the *Times* (London) of the 21 July 1956, a State Department spokesman told reporters that not only Egypt but "other countries" must be taught that they could not "extort concessions from the United States." There was talk of "slapping Nasser down for his neutralism." When President Nasser came to know about the Western withdrawal of the aid offer he observed: "If our forefathers could have built the Pyramids without bull-dozers and cranes, we could surely build the High Dam, if need be with our hands."

The Aswan Dam, which the USA refused to build, has now been completed with Soviet assistance and its completion was celebrated in Egypt in the presence of President Podgorny. This dam, the largest rock-fill dam in the world, is a symbol of the victory of revolutionary Egypt over imperialistic intrigues and a new landmark in the struggle of the Egyptian people for a fuller and richer life. In India, too, there is many a mighty Indo-Soviet project, designed to help India forward in her own struggle for a better life.

As pointed out earlier, India recently celebrated

her 21st anniversary as a republic. It is in the 21st year that a man comes of age. We hope that in the forthcoming election the Indian people will show that they have come of age by facilitating the formation of a Government which will firmly and steadily follow the principles of Jawaharlal Nehru, namely democracy, socialism, nonalignment, and a socialistic pattern of society. In the fulfilment of these principles, the friendship of the Soviet Union has been, and will continue to, play a vital part.

CHAPTER 2
A TALE OF TWO MASSACRES

In 1919 there was a great massacre in the Punjab, which was then under martial law. Gen. Dyer fired on an unarmed crowd in Jallianwala Bagh, killing four hundred people and wounding another twelve hundred. It raised a great sensation at that time.

In 1971, too, the Indian subcontinent was fated to be the scene of a great massacre. Compared to the killings of 1971, the killing of 1919 was but a flea-bite. One was a solitary case of massacre; the other a continuing genocide. In Bangla Desh the number of victims runs not into a few hundreds, as it did in the Punjab in 1919, not into thousands or tens of thousands, but into hundreds of thousands. Many towns and villages have been decimated, and some have been reduced to dust. The flower of the intelligentsia in the universities and elsewhere has been deliberately picked out and shot, lest Bangla Desh should have an intelligent political leadership in the foreseeable future. Women have been subjected to the grossest ill-treatment and even innocent children have not been spared. And, in fear and panic, more than eight million persons have abandoned their homes and fled to India.

In 1971, as in 1919, world opinion has been stirred to its depths. The free press has shown itself to be truly free in exposing and denouncing the atrocities, despite the efforts of some Governments to belittle, and even to suppress, them. As a specimen, here is a passage from an article in the *Spectator:*

We in this country like to think that among the

reasons why we fought the Germans in the last war was to rid the world of the evil of Hitler and his gang and their genocidal solution. It is easier to imagine Germany's gas chambers than Pakistan's choleric slaughter in the Bengal plain, but it remains the case, and it ought to be declared that the Pakistani crime now matches the Hitlerian in dimension and horror and threatens monstrously to exceed it.

In 1719, under the impact of public opinion, the British Government appointed a Royal Commission, presided over by Lord Hunter, to inquire into the atrocities committed in the Punjab; and as a result of its recommendations, Sir Michael O'Dwyer, Governor of the Punjab, Gen. Dyer, the martial law administrator, and other officers, civil and military, were punished or reprimanded in proportion to the extent of their complicity.

In the British Parliament there took place a memorable debate on the happenings in the Punjab, in the course of which Winston Churchill, who was a member of the Cabinet, made a memorable speech:

One tremendous fact stands out: I mean the slaughter of nearly 400 persons and the wounding of probably three or four times as many, at Jallianwala Bagh on the 13th April. That is an episode which appears to me to be without precedent or parallel in the modern history of British Empire. It is an event of an entirely different order from

> any of those tragical occurrences which take place when troops are brought into collision with the civil population. It is an extraordinary event, a monstrous event, an event which stands in singular and sinister isolation.

Refering to "the frightfulness", in which Gen. Dyer indulged, Churchill said: "What I mean by frighfulness is inflicting of great slaughter or massacre upon a particular crowd of people, with the intention of terrorising not merely the rest of the crowd but the whole district or the whole country." "Frightfulness," he went on, "is not a remedy known to the British pharmacopia."

In 1919, there was no United Nations or League of Nations to act as a guardian of human rights and take note of their violation. Yet the governments of the world, including the government which was responsible for the massacre of Jallianwala Bagh, were aghast at it. This is not the position today. The West Pakistan Government has not shown the slightest sign of remorse or regret: on the contrary it has been gloating over its action and claiming, as President Yahya Khan did on Pakistan's Independence Day, that Pakistan has emerged stronger out of the present crisis. Few foreign governments have protested against Pakistan's atrocities. The only government leader who made at least a remonstrance was Podgorny, President of the Soviet Union, soon after the massacres started. Even the U.N. seems tongue-tied; and U Thant has

been somewhat of a sphinx.

What is the reason for this strange and criminal apathy of world governments towards a situation in which the elementary principles of humanity, let alone democracy, are being thrown to the winds? Does it mean that during the half century which has elapsed since the massacre of Jallianwala Bagh, people have become totally heartless? Does it mean that since the First World War the world has become so used to violence—as, for instance, in Hitler's concentration camps, in Biafra, in Hiroshima and Nagasaki and in Korea and Vietnam—that it is no longer shocked even by such an orgy of violence as Bangla Desh is witnessing ? Does it mean that the prophet of old, Buddha, Confucius, Christ and Mohammed lived and died in vain; that, as the Japanese poet, Ryunosuke Akutagawa, has said:

Among bamboos and flowering dates,
Buddha's long been fast asleep.
And with the withered wayside fig,
Christ is also dead, it seems.

This conclusion would not be justified, for except in governmental circles, the world has shown that it still has a conscience. Public opinion throughout the world is greatly agitated and has received clear, noble and indignant expression in the great newspapers, even in the USA. It has at least prevented the continued flow of arms from all countries, other than China

and the USA.

China's conduct is, in view of its recent past, intelligible, though by no means excusable. China has undergone, and is still undergoing a revolution, the like of which has seldom been seen in the history of the world and for which, to some extent, the world is responsible. "A revolution," said Stalin, "is not a tea party." The Chinese Revolution has done atrocious things and produced strange complexes, especially because China was being treated as an outcast among nations.

The conduct of the Government of the USA is more difficult to understand, because that government calls itself a democracy and should at least be susceptible to, if not guided by, public opinion. How is it that the US government has, in defiance of its own public opinion, continued the supply of arms, knowing full well that they will be used for the genocide of Bengalis, and not, as the original supply of arms given by John Foster Dulles was intended, against China, with which Pakistan is now in league and which President Nixon is courting unabashed?

For some time past, there has been a credibility gap between the Government and the people in the USA. The gap is becoming a yawning chasm. For this discord between popular sentiment and governmental action, the explanation lies partly in the American Constitution. It was based on Montesquieu's well-meant, and ill-thought-out doctrine of "separation of powers". The result of putting the executive and the

legislature in two entirely separate compartments has been that the former has gained in power and the latter has been losing even its influence. Lord Bryce said that the members of the American Congress are "architects without science, critics without power and censors without responsibility."

It is the executive, i.e. the President, who has the final voice in most vital matters in the USA. If all the Presidents of the USA had been as wise and firm, as generous and far-sighted, as the founding fathers expected them to be, America would have been a happier country and the world a happier place to live in. But instead of a Washington, a Roosevelt, a Lincoln or even an Eisenhower, the USA has Richard Nixon.

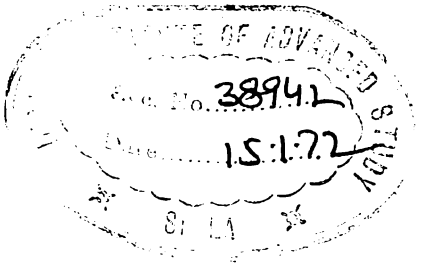
Few Presidents have been able to resist the pressure from vested interests, who stand to profit by the sale of arms. The one exception in recent times was John Kennedy, and he was brutally assassinated. So was his brother, Robert Kennedy, who might have been President and who, as Schlesinger has said, was noted for "the intensification of his identification with the people." "I hope," said Jacqueline Kennedy when her brother-in-law was engaged in the Presidential election campaign, "Bobby does not become President." "Why not ?" asked a friend, "Because," she said prophetically, "they'll do to him what they did to Jack." President Nixon stands in no such danger.

Pakistan, too, is in the grip of vested interests. Backed by the army, of which only 5 per cent consists

of Bengalis, twenty-two multi-millionaire families, almost all from West Pakistan, are, according to an official study, in control of two-thirds of the nation's industry and four-fifths of its banking and insurance assets.

The twenty-two families stand to lose a great deal if East Pakistan becomes autonomous. The armament manufacturers in the USA, too, stand to lose much if there is a lessening of tensions between India and Pakistan, and there is a cessation of the steady flow of arms to this region, in which Pakistan alone has been the recipient of arms worth one thousand million dollars. It is the domination of these vested interests which makes the Govenment of so generous and warm-hearted a people as the Americans, deaf to the cry of justice and mercy in Bangla Desh and insensitive to the principles of freedom and democracy, out of which the USA has sprung and for which Bangla Desh is fighting.

CHAPTER 3
HONESTY IN DIPLOMACY



The friends and admirers of the USA have been bewildered, and its critics confirmed in their views, by the American conduct over Vietnam. In particular, they have been shocked at the duplicity of the State Department and the effrontery with which it could say one thing and do another. While assurances were being given, even to India's Foreign Minister, that all military supplies to Pakistan had been stopped and that none was in the pipeline, ships were leaving American ports carrying military equipment for Pakistan.

This raises the question whether there can be any such virtue as honesty in international affairs.

Harold Nicolson, in his admirable little book, *Diplomacy,* has defined the qualities of an ideal diplomat. In the forefront he has placed honesty. This is contrary to the vulgar idea that a diplomat is "a good man who is sent to lie abroad for the sake of his country."

Many have heard this saying, but not many know what happened to the man who said it. A British diplomat of the 17th century, the Duke of Buckingham, wrote this in a visitor's book in a hotel in Cologne in Germany. This came to the notice of King James I, who lacked a sense of humour and was known as "the wisest fool in Christendom." The King took umbrage at this remark and ordered the Duke of Buckingham to tender his resignation.

A diplomat cannot be honest unless his government is honest. If his Foreign Minister or the Head of his

State or the Head of his Government indulges in untruth he will necessarily have to toe the line or give his job.

It must be admitted that in foreign affairs there are degrees of truthfulness. One cannot always rise to the ideal of absolute Truth on which Mahatma Gandhi insisted; nor can one always live up to the principle of President Lincoln who said: "It makes all the difference whether you put truth in the first place or in the first place but one."

We know only too well how the witnesses, who swear in the courts by the Bible, the Geeta or the Koran that they will speak "the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth," do not always do so. It is difficult for government and their diplomatic representatives to speak the whole truth, unless they are sure that they hold all the trumps. But they must make an effort, in their own interests, to speak the truth and nothing but the truth.

Untruthfulness can take Protean forms. There is, for instance, the art of *suppressio veri, suggestio falsi.* The Viceroy of India once indulged in it with initial success. When the First World War broke out, Mahatma Gandhi was inclined to take, at its face value, the British assertion that it was a war for democracy and freedom. He was, however, distressed to hear reports that England and Russia had signed a secret treaty dividing Turkey between them. In great agony of mind, Mahatma Gandhi went to Lord Chelmsford and asked him whether the reports were true. "You

know, Mr. Gandhi," said Lord Chelmsford, "such reports emanate from enemy sources." That was a clear case of *suppressio veri suggestio falsi.* Lord Chelmsford did not say an actual untruth; indeed he was speaking the truth when he said that such reports emanated from enemy sources. But he knew that the reports were correct and suggested that they were false, and this misled Mahatma Gandhi. On the strength of Lord Chelmsford's assurance, Mahatma Gandhi continued to advocate India's participation in the war, but when, eventually, the Bolshevik Government published the secret treaties among the Allies, Gandhiji found that Lord Chelmsford had told him an untruth and this shattered his faith in the word of the British Government.

When a man is driven to a corner he would try to wriggle out of it somehow or other, even by saying untruths. For instance, when the Great Britain, France, and Israel attacked Egypt in 1956 and the British and American press and public opinion rose nobly and magnificently against it, as it has now done against Pakistan's gruesome conduct in Bangla Desh, Anthony Eden, the British Prime Minister, indulged in various prevarications. Eden began by asserting that the object of British intervention was to protect British lives and property in Egypt. Then he pleaded that his object was to safeguard the security of shipping in the Suez Canal. When it became all too clear that the Government's conduct had, instead of protecting shipping, brought it to a standstill, the Government

claimed that the expedition to Egypt was a "police action" to keep the Egyptians and the Israelis apart. When the United Nations questioned the French and British right to appoint themselves as the world's policemen, the British Government said that the whole object was to goad the U.N. to action in the Middle East. Gaitskell retorted that every burglar could plead with equal justice that his object in committing burglary was to keep the police in training!

Another occasion when another government indulged in similar and even more ludicrous prevarications was when the U-2 incident took place. An American spy plane, which was on its way from Peshawar to Norway across the USSR, was shot down over the Urals on the 1st May 1960. I remember having had a talk with Khrushchev at a party soon after, and Charles Bohlen, the American Ambassador, asking me, "Did Khrushchev say anything about the pilot?" The State Department put out a story that the plane in question was a meteorological plane which had been sent from Turkey with the object of observing conditions at high altitudes, that the last message from the plane was that the oxygen supply was failing, that the pilot might have become dizzy for want of oxygen and that the plane might have strayed across the Turkish border into Soviety territory. The State Department did not know that the pilot had parachuted to the ground and was caught alive and that he had made a clean breast of what happened. At a public meeting held on the 7th May, Khrushchev tore the

American concoction to shreds by reading out the statement of the pilot. Some days later the State Department went to the other extreme. Instead of finding excuses for the incident, they defiantly said that such flights would continue as long as the Soviet Union was a "closed society" and that this particular flight had been authorized by President Eisenhower himself. An irate Khrushchev then went to the Summit Conference in Paris, refused to shake hands with President Eisenhower and broke up the Conference in anger and indignation. Thus an opportunity for lessening international tensions was lost.

These are examples of governmental prevarications, but they are nothing compared to the duplicity of the US government during the Bangla Desh crisis. The *New York Times,* while bravely publishing the secret Pentagon records relating to the genesis of the war in Vietnam, commented that "these records reveal a dismaying degree of miscalculation, bureaucratic arrogance and deception." This is a true description of the US government's conduct over Bangla Desh also. But, as in the previous cases quoted in this chapter, dishonesty cannot bring any lasting credit or benefit to the government concerned and is bound, in the long run, to recoil on its own head.

CHAPTER 4

BANGLA DESH AND THE USA

The conduct of the US Government over Bangla Desh is hard to understand, because it is clearly at variance with its professed dedication to the ideals of democracy and freedom. Yet an attempt must be made to analyze it into its basic component elements.

75 million people who, for nearly a quarter of a century, had been subjected to political domination, economic exploitation, and racial humiliation (and, now, racial decimation) at the hands of West Pakistan are now being massacred in tens of thousands and driven out of their homes in millions, simply because they had the temerity to demand autonomy and to vote overwhelmingly, in the first free elections held in Pakistan, for a party and a leader in whom they hoped to find their salvation.

Words like murder and massacre, let alone genocide, do not seem to exist in the American vocabulary. Not a word of sympathy for the people of Bangla Desh has escaped President Nixon's lips. The most that the State Department spokesman could do was to express President's Nixon's "concern for the lives which had been disrupted." He might as well have said that the President was feeling concern for the men who had ceased to breathe. No wonder that the American correspondent of the *Indian Express,* which can by no means be accused of anti-Americanism, said that he did not know whether the men who put out such statements were "soulless bureaucrats or blithering idiots."

At his first press conference after the butchery

in Bangla Desh started, President Yahya Khan said he had received "a friendly and warm-hearted letter" from President Nixon. The contents of the letter have not been divulged, but no one suspected that it was so friendly and warm-hearted as to assure West Pakistan that American military and economic aid would continue or embolden President Yahya Khan or ask even for B-57 bombers, as he did on 9 June 1971. On the contrary, our Foreign Minister, Sardar Swaran Singh, on his visit to the USA, was assured that no new supplies had been promised to Pakistan and nothing was in the pipeline. Hardly had Sardar Swaran Singh returned to India, reassured by the attitudes of the United States Government, when the *New York Times* reported that a freighter was preparing to sail from New York on the 21 June, carrying a cargo of United States military equipment for Pakistan and another ship had left on the 8 May with military items. The State Department spokesman tried to explain that these military items were issued under old licenses before the outbreak of the trouble in East Bengal and had a validity of twelve months, but he forgot that there was no question of old licences and new licences when an embargo was placed by the US government on the supply of arms to India after the Indo-Pakistan war of 1965. No wonder that our Ambassador to the USA observed that it was very difficult to accept anything said by the spokesmen of the US government.

Then came the visit of Kissinger to India. What

exactly transpired during his visit is not known but he attributed the present state of affairs to "bureaucratic bungling". Almost simultaneously Senator Chruch revealed that the State Department and even the Pentagon had made a joint recommendation that all arms supplies to Pakistan must stop and that President Nixon overruled it and ordered the arms supplies to be continued. Thus, the continuing arms supply was not after all the result of "bureaucratic bungling" but the President's deliberate decision.

The American constitution invests the President with the last word in questions of war and peace. In an article in *Foreign Affairs* in 1960, Dean Rusk described a President's position thus:

> The President must prepare himself for those solemn moments when, after all the advice from every quarter is in, he must ascend his lonely pinnacle and decide what he must do. There are solemn moments when the whole world holds its breath and our fate is in his hands. Then every fragment of his experience, all that he has read and learnt, his understanding of his own nation and of the world about him, his faith, conscience and courage are brought to bear.

Such a solemn moment arose in 1962, when President Kennedy firmly insisted on the removal of Soviet missiles from Cuba and Prime Minister Khrushchev wisely decided to comply. A somewhat similar mo-

ment arose in this subcontinent in 1971; and history will say that at that time the President of the USA let down his nation and the world.

Incidentally, this is a warning to some of our own people who, disillusioned by the workings of our democracy, have expressed a preference for the Presidential system of government on the model of the American constitution. That system envisages that the President will be a man of "faith, conscience and courage" who has "an understanding of his own nation and the world around him." The United States has occasionally produced a great President who fully answers to this description but also many who do not.

The American people and the world have expressed themselves, through the Press and in other ways, their concern for the aspirations of the people Bangla Desh who have suffered as few people have suffered since the days of Attila the Hun, Tamerlane and Genghiz Khan. I recently received a letter from an American friend of mine in Los Angeles, in the course of which he has written :

> We've been shocked and saddened by the brutality of West Pakistan military autocracy's action in the East Wing, and the tragedy of millions of helpless victims driven out of their hearths and homes into India. Our own government's policy—or lack of it—in this situation bewilders us and many others here. At first our Press was, if not actively pro-Yahya Khan, at least unclear in its reporting from

the Indian side. Fortunately, for the cause of truth, several Senators demanded a halt to Pakistan aid and an enquiry into East Pakistan conditions, and the Press begins to present a fuller picture of the conditions created by the Yahya Khan repression. It seems to us that the whole course taken by the Yahya Khan government is suicidal; and we pray that it will not force India in the direction that, clearly, Peking would welcome.

I have no doubt that this letter represents the attitude of the great majority of the people of America. Why, then, have President Nixon and his advisers chosen to ride rough-shod over enlightened public opinion in the world and in their own country ?

The real answer lies, to use Eisenhower's words, in "the domination of the military-industrial complex in the U.S.A." It is this complex alone which stands to benefit by war and turmoil in different parts of the world. At the end of the Korean war, an American General, Fleetwood, exclaimed that: "We must have a Korea, here or elsewhere." The Generals and the arms-manufacturers have had a Korea in Indo-China, and now that they are being forced out of Indo-China they would not be averse to having one in Bangla Desh, though a Korea in the Indian subcontinent is likely to have cataclysmic consequences even to themselves. This is a factor which we in India cannot but reckon with in shaping our foreign policy.

CHAPTER 5
DOLLAR DIPLOMACY

I have often come across the expression, "dollar diplomacy," but in my aversion to cliches I have never used it.

A cliche is a term which is so often used, over-used and abused that it grates on your ears. Sometimes, however, something happens and it springs into life in all its pristine significance. Such is the term, dollar diplomacy or dollar imperialism, in the context of the US government's conduct in the Bangla Desh crisis.

The first occasion when I came across the existence of such a thing as dollar imperialism was when, as a student, I read Anatole France's vast parody on civilization, *Penguin Island*. There, the Foreign Minister of a medium state visits the capital of a large country called Gigantopolis. Gigantopolis has just had a war, and the visiting Foreign Minister asks the President of Gigantopolis how much the war cost.

"It was a nice little war," says the President, "which cost ten million dollars."

"And what about the men?" asks the Foreign Minister.

"The men," says the President, "are included in the dollars."

The President of Gigantopolis, however, omitted to mention one relevant point. While the war cost the tax payer 10 million dollars, it must have fetched huge profits to the makers of armaments.

Forty-five years later, when I met Stalin, only a fortnight before he died, he expatiated on this aspect of American policy. "Your country," he said, "wants

peace; my country wants peace; the people in America, too, want peace. But there are some interests which do not want peace, because war is profitable to them. They are out to make profits even out of blood."

At the moment when Stalin was speaking, the interests to which he referred were indeed making profits out of the blood which was being shed in Korea. Not merely out of Korean blood, but out of American blood, for the three-year-war in Korea caused 1,40,000 American casualities. John Foster Dulles, however, comforted his countrymen by pointing out that if the American casualties had been heavy, the Korean casualities had been even heavier. One out of every three Koreans, he observed with grim satisfaction, was dead.

In the Korean, as well as in the Vietnamese war, the element of dollar diplomacy was not conscious, for the war was fought on the high ground of capitalism vs communism. An atheistic materialistic group, said John Foster Dulles, was on the war-path in order to dominate the world; and it was the mission of America to save Christian civilization from communism. Communism was a global menace. As Dean Rusk observed, even the People's Republic of China was but "a Slavic Munchuko: it does not satisfy the first condition of recognition, it is not Chinese." Being a global menace, communism has to be fought on a global scale. Hence the cork in the bottle theory. Let the cork be removed from Vietnam, and communism would overflow into the whole of

South-East Asia.

Thus began, and continued, the war in Vietnam. The USA would have preferred to "Let Asians fight Asians": Americans would provide the tools, and Asians could slaughter one another. The experience in Vietnam, however, showed that this was not a feasible proposition.

In Vietnam and in Korea the materialistic reasons for intervention were concealed by the ideological claptrap. In Bangla Desh, the ideological element is completely absent. If the USA had been faithful to the ideology from which it sprang, it would have lined itself on the side of the people of Bangla Desh, who have been fighting for freedom, democracy and emancipation from the tyranny and exploitation which they had been enduring ever since Pakistan was born. And as if to confirm that there is no ideological, let alone idealistic, element in American policy, the President's adviser took his clandestine flight from Islamabad to Peking during his visit to the Indian subcontinent to discuss the problem of Bangla Desh and secured an invitation for President Nixon to visit China. Now, at last, dollar diplomacy stands totally unmasked. As long as there is tension between India and Pakistan American arms will continue to pour into this subcontinent; and now China, too, with its enormous population, will, it is hoped, become a rich market for American goods.

It has been clear for some time past that the USA cannot remain in Vietnam much longer; and the indus-

trialists, armament manufacturers and war-mongers in America must find another field for their profits and their adventures. And what better field can there be than the subcontinent of India? It is not in their interests, or in the interests of the economy of the USA, as long as it is geared to the production of armanents, that this region should become a zone of peace.

Dr. Pauling, the distinguished American nuclear scientist who won the Nobel Prize for science as well as the Nobel Prize for peace, has, in his lectures on "Science and Peace", commented on the practice of the advanced countries to sell quantities of arms to governments which can ill-afford to buy and to maintain them and which are not in a position to ensure two square meals to their people. "Last year," he said, "I was shocked to read that Mr. Henry Kuss Jr., Assistant Secretary of Defence in the United States, had received the United States Department of Defence Meritorious Civilian Service Medal for his imaginative leadership in the military export sales programme." He was given this medal because he had succeeded in selling to the developing countries of the world 1,500 million dollars worth of sophisticated weapons, jet bombers, tanks, machine guns, and other equipment in one year. In his speech of acceptance he said that, "with the proper amount of energy, imagination, and vigour, we should by 1971 be selling 15,000 million dollars worth of sophisticated military equipment to the developing countries."

"It is immoral," says Dr. Pauling, "for the rich and highly developed nations of the world to give and sell these arms to other nations." Immoral, yes, but profitable. And that is the essence of dollar diplomacy which, stripped of all pretences, has free play in the USA under President Nixon.

CHAPTER 6

THE TREATY : WHAT IT IS AND WHAT IT IS NOT

The dramatic conclusion of the "Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation" raises a number of interesting questions. Is it what it purports to be, or is it something more and something else? Is it a military pact or a defence treaty? Is it merely a move on the political chess-board or is it the outcome of vast historical forces?

Viewed from the contemporary angle, the Treaty may seem to be just an adroit rejoinder to President Nixon's personal diplomacy. It is he who has been backing the military regime in West Pakistan and, as the *New York Times* has put it, "subsidising, and seeming to condone, crimes against humanity, unequalled since Hitler's time." It is he who, overruling the recommendation even of the State Department and the Pentagon, ordered that the arms supply to Pakistan should continue, knowing that that was being, and would continue to be, used for genocide in Bangla Desh. It is he who, in disregard of the decision of the House of Representatives, has declared his intention to continue economic assistance to West Pakistan in full measure. It is because of his tacit encouragement that West Pakistan has been holding out the threat of "a total war" with India. It is he who, in the midst of the Bangla Desh crisis, declared his intention to pay a visit to the erstwhile abhorred Mao Tse-tung, thus creating in Indian minds the fear of a Sino-Pakistan-American axis. And it is he who has had the temerity to warn India that, in the event of a war between India on the one hand and Pakistan and China

on the other, India should not expect any help from the USA. Is it any wonder that, in these circumstances, India should have turned to an old and tried friend, the Soviet Union, for a re-affirmation of its friendship in practical terms, appropriate to the present situation?

There is another person who deserves to be remembered in this connection. If Nixon's was the last straw on the camel's back, the man who started heaping it was John Foster Dulles. It was he who introduced the cold war into India. It was he who inveigled Pakistan into his pet military-political pacts, such as the Baghdad Pact, CENTO and SEATO. It was he who, contradicting his own chief, President Eisenhower, denounced India's policy of nonalignment as "short-sighted and immoral". It was he who liberally provided Pakistan with arms and gave a false assurance to India that they would not be used against her, but only against the common communist enemies of the USA and Pakistan. And his successors watched nonchalantly when Pakistan started flirting with China and established relations resulting in what Jawaharlal Nehru called "an alliance of animus" against India. And with the proposed visit of President Nixon to China, it looked as if "the alliance" was going to be strengthened by the adhesion of the USA.

The long-suffering people of India had been watching these manoeuvres with concern and disgust, but they still cherished the hope that the enlightened public opinion of the USA—and public opinion in the USA *is* enlightened, as shown by its attitude towards "the

dirty war" in Vietnam and the genocide in Bangla Desh —would prevail and hold its rulers in check. But unfortunately the vested interests and, in particular, the makers of arms and armaments have been having their way. It is they, and they alone, who stand to benefit by the continuance of international tension and the occurrence of a war here and there. The cold war, too, is profitable to them, for it gives them a pretext for supply arms to the underdeveloped countries and making huge profits. To them it is of no concern if these arms are used, as the Government of Pakistan has been doing, not against its opponents in the cold war but for carrying on its vendetta against its neighbour and, even more, for continuing to rule Bangla Desh as a colony, so that the notorious Twenty-two Families of West Pakistan, and the military junta behind it, may continue to live on the fat of the land, even though famine is threatening the eastern half of Pakistan. It is this phenomenon which is known as "dollar imperialism"; and our treaty with the Soviet Union signifies our revulsion against it and our determination to save ourselves and, if possible, other like-minded nations, similarly placed, from its operations.

The Indo-Soviet Treaty must, however, be regarded not merely as a belated reaction to the policies of other countries, but as a consumption of our own policy towards the Soviet Union. As long ago as 1927, on the conclusion of Jawaharlal Nehru's visit to Moscow to attend the 10th anniversary of the October Revolution, he said: "India is an Asian country. So is the

Soviet Union sprawling over Asia and Europe. Between two such neighbours there can be amity or enmity; indifference is out of the question." Ever since Nehru became Prime Minister, it was his deliberate policy to develop our relations with the USSR in all fields of human endeavour; and his successors have faithfully adhered to his policy. The present Treaty is thus the latest fruit of the plant of Indo-Soviet friendship which, for twenty years, was being nurtured amidst formidable obstacles by the Government of India and by that section of the Indian National Congress, which has now become Congress (N), by all radical and even liberal parties, and by such representative organizations as the Indo-Soviet Cultural Society.

In 1927 Nehru observed that the Great Britain, which was at that time the most powerful State in the world, was trying to encircle and enfeeble the Soviet Union by means of various pacts and alliances, having failed to throttle it at its infancy. At that time Nehru's voice was a cry in the wilderness; he had no official position, and he had no power to assist Russia, but the very recognition of the fact that the Soviet Union was more sinned against than sinning, amounted to our moral support of a much maligned country. Now, recognizing that another power is trying to encircle India and to enfeeble her, the Soviet Union is paying India the compliment which she paid to the Soviet Union in the early days of its existence. Fortunately, the Soviet Union is in a position to do more: by this Treaty the Soviet Union has agreed to back its recogni-

tion of India's predicament with the might which it has since acquired as a world power.

When Sardar Swaran Singh said that the treaty did not mean a reversal of our policy of nonalignment, he was saying no more than the truth. The policy of nonalignment was evolved at a time when the world was getting divided into two powerful military-political blocs, each headed by a super Power, with the dangerous possibility that they might collide and land the world again into a war. That situation no longer holds. The blocs have disintegrated due to the lordly policy of Gen. de Gaulle, the intense nationalism of China rising above proletarian internationalism, and the rank opportunism of Pakistan which has been hunting with the Western hounds and running with an Eastern hare, to the contemptuous satisfaction of both the hare and the hounds. Nonalignment, therefore, is no longer useful as a solvent, or emollient, of the cold war.

Basically, however, nonalignment means the will and the determination of a nation to ask, whenever it is confronted with a major international problem, the question not who is right, but what is right. If the Treaty had been a military pact, India would not have been able to ask this question. Such a Pact would have made it obligatory on the part of one signatory State to align itself automatically on the side of the other, in the case of war or a threat of war, and India could have been said to have gone back on the policy of nonalignment. But what the Indo-Soviet Treaty

does provide is that in the event of an attack, or threat of attack on either party, they will enter into consultations, and take the necessary measures to remove the threat and to ensure the security of their countries. And this is an invaluable safeguard.

Unlike the USA, the USSR has, from the outset, appreciated and even underwritten our policy of nonalignment. In the Treaty, it is again stated that "The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics respects India's policy of nonalignment and reaffirms that this policy constitutes an important factor in the maintenance of universal peace and international security and in the lessening of tensions in the world."

On the whole, the Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Co-operation is a logical consummation of the foreign policy of Jawaharlal Nehru. At the same time, in entering into this Treaty, the Soviet Union has shown that it is the true heir of Vladimir Ilyich Lenin. "Our eastern policy," said Lenin in his instructions to the first Soviet ambassadors to Iran and to Afghanistan, "remains diametrically opposed to that of the imperialist countries. In our policy we strive to promote the independent economic and political development of the eastern peoples and shall do everything in our power to support them in this. Our role and our mission is to be neutral and disinterested friends and allies of the peoples struggling for a completely independent economic and political development." It is in this spirit that the Soviet Government has been valiantly standing by India through thick and thin,

and it is in this spirit that the Indo-Soviet Treaty has been signed.

CHAPTER 7
REACTIONS TO THE TREATY

I have never known a measure which was greeted with such widespread enthusiasm by my countrymen as the Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation. The immediate reaction was one of instantaneous relief. It was as if one had been walking alone through a dark forest infested with snakes and robbers and suddenly emerged into a sunlit glade. There might still be some thorny paths ahead, but there would be a trusted companion by one's side.

The Treaty was remarkable for the speed with which it was concluded. It was equally remarkable for the secrecy with which it was negotiated. True, Gromyko came to India openly and was openly greeted at the Palam Airport, unlike Kissinger who feigned illness at Rawalpindi, pretended to go to Nathiagali and actually flew to Peking. No one, however, suspected that within a few hours of Gromyko's arrival the world would be presented with the *fait accompli* of an Indo-Soviet Treaty. When the news was published it was instinctively recognized in India as just the thing that was required; and reason coincided with instinct.

Once, at the height of the controversy between Congress(N) and Congress(O), Mrs Indira Gandhi observed that the trouble with our people was that they were inclined to look at every problem from a political, instead of a national point of view. Now, for once, the public, led by Parliament, have viewed a subject, the Indo-Soviet Friendship Treaty, solely from a national point of view and almost unanimously approved of it. A lone Swatantra voice of dissent in Parliament was

drowned amidst the chorus of applause and against the weighty and unstinted support given to the Treaty by the venerable leader of the Swatantra party itself, Rajagopalachari.

Now, some people have again begun to revert to their old habit of looking at questions from a political or party angle, and not from a national angle. The anti-Soviet lobby is again at work, laboriously looking for snares and hidden meanings in the Treaty. Commentators have started writing critical articles, and seminars are proposed to be held to instruct the public regarding the so-called pros and cons of the Treaty. And if there are no cons, why imagination can supply them! It is true that such criticisms have no effect on the people at large who have implicit faith in the Treaty, and in the friendship of which it is a reflection. Nevertheless, the criticisms are worth examining, because some influential papers are only too ready to publish them.

These criticisms have taken various forms. It is alleged that the danger which the Treaty sought to guard against was exaggerated, if not non-existent. It is asserted that Pakistan would not have dared to attack India by itself, that the USA would not have encouraged it and that China would not have intervened. All this might be true. But all this might also be not true, and a responsible government cannot take chances. There is no knowing what a desperate man in a desperate situation may not do. Yahya Khan's position is indeed desperate, despite the continuing injec-

tions of American aid, military and economic. He knows that politically and psychologically Bangla Desh has slipped out of his hands once and for all, and that its physical separation is only a matter of time. As an army man cum politician he knows that one can do anything with bayonets except sit on them. He also knows that world opinion is against him. In this predicament, he may feel that his only hope lies in diverting attention from the internal problem in Pakistan and to transform the Pakistan-Bangla Desh confrontation into an Indo-Pakistan conflict. Some bellicose and avaricious sections in America may not be averse to a war on the Indian subcontinent, now that the war in Vietnam is coming to an end, involving a drastic reduction in the profits of armament-makers; and they may even goad Pakistan on. And, in the event of a war, who can say categorically what China will or will not do? The Indo-Soviet Treaty was primarily designed to meet Pakistan's oft-repeated threat of war—and a "total war" at that. The men who ignore this factor are like the Crab in Alice in Wonderland:

> *When the seas are all dry he's gay as a lark*
> *And speaks in contemptous tones of the shark,*
> *But when the tide rises and the seas are about,*
> *His voice has a timid and tremulous note.*

Another argument urged against the Indo-Soviet Treaty is that India has been getting on happily with the USSR, and that the USSR would in any event have

come to India's rescue and that therefore the Treaty was unnecessary. This, however, is a double-edged argument. If India could count on Soviet support in any case, what harm was there in formalizing that support, thus reassuring the agitated public, and at the same time cautioning those who are ill-disposed towards India?

The critics of the Treaty admit that the US Government, and President Nixon in particular, have been insensitive to Indian opinion, but they say that India herself was insensitive to US susceptibilities, particularly in the time of John Foster Dulles. But what hope was there of placating the high and mighty Dulles otherwise than by kow-towing to him ? His motto was: "He that is not with me is against me", and to him neutralism was "short-sighted and immoral".

It was Dulles who enlisted Pakistan in his global crusade against communism and began the supply of arms to Pakistan, worth 1,000 million dollars—arms which were of little use against Russia and China on the mountain passes, but which could be, and actually were, used against India on the plains of India. He thus compelled India and Pakistan to enter into an arms race and to direct vast sums of money from nation-building activities to defence. But for this policy, the lot of the common man both in India and Pakistan today would have been infinitely happier, as indeed it should have been, after more than two decades of independence.

The critics of the Treaty also complain that India

has been unnecessarily hurting America by condemning some of its policies such as its adventure in Vietnam. But India would have been untrue to herself if she had not extended at least her sympathy to the brave Asian people who have been defending their freedom against the most mighty military power on earth, which has not hesitated to resort to the use of the naplam bomb, the massacre of innocent civilians, the destruction of food crops and irrigation canals and the defoliation of the countryside.

Our critics, who deplore that the relations with the USA have been generally chequered, admit that there was a bright patch between 1960 and 1964 when Indo-US relations were cordial, but they do not trouble to ask themselves why. The reason is that at that time America had a strong and far-sighted President who seemed determined to move away from the pactomania policy of Dulles and who had the courage to keep the war-mongers and armament manufacturers at arms' length.

It is also alleged by some critics that the conclusion of the Indo-Russian treaty would make it more difficult for us to normalize our relations with China. But Russia herself has been trying to normalize her relations with China. For instance, Russia has sent her Ambassador to China, which we have not yet done. Moreover, China, after the fury of the Cultural Revolution has spent itself, is in a more reasonable mood and has shown some desire to improve her relations with her neighbours.

The Treaty contains a specific acknowledgement, on the part of the Soviet Union, of the continuing validity and usefulness of our policy of nonalignment. Yet, some critics would have it that the Treaty has given a formal burial to that policy. To say so is to betray a complete misunderstanding of the term, nonalignment. That policy was evolved at a time when the cold war was at its height and the world was split into two politico-military blocs, and India was determined not to belong to either bloc and thus to aggravate international tensions. But nonalignment never meant that India would not be free to have a bilateral alliance if she considered it necessary for her security. The alliance with the USSR is far from a military pact and does not in any way infringe on our freedom of action.

An ingenious argument used against the Treaty is that it will alienate the sympathies of our friends in America and elsewhere, who have been trying to see our point of view over Bangla Desh. While we appreciate the attitude of our friends, it must be admitted that they have not been able to make much of a dent in the policy of the US Government. Far from misunderstanding our conduct in entering into a Treaty with the Soviet Union, our friends in the USA, like Chester Bowles, do realize that it was the policy of their own government, which they have been frankly criticizing, which precipitated the Treaty. Bowles has recalled how, soon after the Chinese invasion of India, a Mission, headed by Chavan, then Defence Minister, went to Washington for buying military equipment,

how Bowles strongly recommended that our needs should be met, how the US Government refused to meet them for fear that it might offend their ally, Pakistan, and how the Mission then went on to Moscow and returned with all that it had asked for—and more.

To quote Bowles, most of the mistakes that the US Government has made in Asia since World War II are due to the fact that, unlike the USSR, the USA has "downgraded and largely ignored political, economic and social factors in favour of military considerations."

One can only hope that the US Government has learnt, or will learn, a lesson from the costly and humiliating defeat which the US policy has suffered in Vietnam and also from the circumstances which have impelled India to take the unprecedented step of entering into a Treaty with a Great Power. The friends of the USA, among whom I too would like to count myself, would do well to rub this in, instead of finding excuses for the policy of the US Government or finding fault with the Treaty which India has signed with a State, whose attitude and conduct towards India have been refreshingly different.

CHAPTER 8
A NOT UNEQUAL TREATY

A Not Unequal Treaty

I recently read a trenchant article called "An Unequal Treaty" by Ashoka Mehta in the *Hindustan Times*, dated 22 August 1971. I must confess that I was astonished at the title, let alone the contents, of the article.

"Unequal Treaty" has a special meaning in the political vocabulary. The most notorious examples of unequal treaties are those signed by the Great Britain with China in the nineteenth century. These treaties were extorted at the point of the sword from the decadent Manchu Empire through what has come to be known as "the gunboat diplomacy" of the Great Britain. Other western powers including one eastern power, Japan, followed suit, demanding, and obtaining, various territorial concessions and extra-territorial rights. Under the latter, a Chinese could be tried in his own country, not by Chinese courts under Chinese law, but by foreign courts under foreign law and procedure. So vast was western domination over China at the beginning of this century that Dr. Sun Yat-Sen, the architect of the Revolution of 1911, exclaimed that "China is not a colony, but a hyper-colony, a colony of all nations."

It was not until the Second World War that these extra-territorial rights were abandoned and the unequal treaties abrogated. It may be mentioned, in passing, that the USSR was the first state to have given up these concessions: it did so, under Lenin's initiative, soon after the Revolution of 1917.

It needs no argument to show that the recent Indo-

Soviet Treaty was signed under totally different circumstances and stands on a totally different footing. If by unequal treaty is meant a treaty between two states, unequal in power, all treaties must be pronounced unequal in some degree or other, for there are no two states which are absolutely equally matched. It is the spirit in which a treaty is signed which matters and not the equation of power.

Ashoka Mehta, quoting from *le Monde* of Paris, *Al Ahram* of Cairo and the *Japan Times* of Tokyo but tactfully refraining from quoting American newspapers, has asked a number of questions regarding the Indo-Soviet Treaty. Posed by such a veteran political leader, they deserve serious notice.

Referring to Sardar Swaran Singh's mention in Parliament that the Treaty had been under consideration for two years, Ashoka Mehta asks what the purpose of the treaty was. Was it to counter an imminent threat to the security of India, posed by the rapprochement between the USA and China, or was it for some other reason? Surely not for the former reason, says Ashoka Mehta, for the Government of India could not have anticipated the Sino-American rapprochement two years ago. That is true, but the conduct of the government of the USA in South and South-East Asia and its attitude towards India have been causing concern for some time. There has been a potential threat to the security of India ever since John Foster Dulles drew Pakistan into such politico-military alliances as CENTO and SEATO and supplied it with formidable

weapons which are of no use against China and the USSR in the northern mountain passes but which could be, and were, used against India in the plains of India. The threat increased when the USA complacently watched Pakistan entering into what Jawaharlal Nehru called "an alliance of animus" against India. And under President Nixon the threat assumed a blatant form, naked and unashamed, and this precipitated the conclusion of a precautionary treaty which had been in the offing for some time.

Another, and a very pertinent, question is how far the Treaty would affect the resistance in Bangla Desh. "Are we," asks Mehta, "reconciling ourselves 'to kill a mocking bird', Bangla Desh?" The patriots of Bangla Desh themselves, who have unreservedly welcomed the Treaty, have no such fears, and there is no reason why we should be more Bangladesi than the Bangladesis themselves. Anyhow, recent reports from Bangla Desh show that the resistance there has only stiffened after the signing of the Treaty; and the stronger the resistance the greater the chances of a political solution enabling the return of the refugees.

Mehta feels that there is something fishy in our very advocacy of a political solution. He gives a strange twist to the clause which affirms "the firm conviction that there can be no military solution." He thinks that it is meant to discourage India from intervention in Bangla Desh and not to discourage Pakistan from continuing its attempt to impose a military solution. But, in all the recent communiques which India has

signed with foreign governments, a political solution, acceptable to the people of Bangla Desh, is laid down as the essential desideratum; and the Government of India have said again and again that such a solution can only mean an agreement with the duly elected leader of Bangla Desh, Sheikh Mujibur Rehman.

Mehta asks why our diplomacy has sought the support of the USSR, but has not cared to seek the support of the Great Britain, the Federal Republic of Germany, and Japan. In fact, the Government of India did seek the support of these countries and many others through diplomatic channels and the despatch of special emissaries, but the response from them has been lukewarm. The Soviet response has been more positive, because the Soviet Government realizes the geopolitical importance of India, especially in the face of China's unrelenting antipathy to the USSR.

A more important criticism is that the Soviet affirmation of its recognition of the continuing validity of our policy of non-violence is of no value, because the Russo-Finnish Treaty of 1948 did contain a similar clause, and yet, says Mehta, Finland has lost its freedom of action. In this connection it is necessary to cast a look back at the history of Russo-Finnish relations. In the time of the Tsars, Finland was a part of the Russian Empire, but soon after the Revolution the Soviet Government released Finland from its yoke. The result, however, was that Finland passed into the hands of a fascist, or semi-fascist government, which was openly inimical to Russia and posed a threat to

her during the Second World War. If the present government of Finland conducts its foreign policy on the basis of its national interest, which requires the friendship of its great neighbour, its attitude cannot be called one of subservience. As an example of Finland's subservience, Mehta has pointed out that "certain politicians, generally Social Democrats" have been unable to come to power in Finland. To a prominent Social Democrat like Mehta this is doubtless an unmitigated misfortune, but the Soviet Government is not responsible if the majority of the people of Finland think otherwise.

Mehta compares the Indo-Soviet Treaty with the Treaty between the UAR and the USSR and observes that, unlike India, the UAR had no alternative but to enter into a treaty with the USSR because (*a*) its territory is occupied by Israel; (*b*) it was twice defeated by Israel; and (*c*) it has received massive aid from the Soviet Union, amounting to 2,000 million dollars. As for (*a*) is not a part of India's own territory occupied by a foreign power? As for (*b*) must we wait to be defeated to take the necessary steps to ensure our security? Mehta rightly asserts that India can adequately defend itself against Pakistan, but is she in a position to do so against a combination of forces, Chinese and Pakistani, supported by American arms? And as for (*c*), does not the very fact that India is under no such heavy economic obligation to the USSR as the UAR show that the Treaty was an arrangement into which we have entered out of our own free will?

Mehta has noticed that while the Indian side has expressed its gratitude for the Soviet understanding of the Bangla Desh problem, the Soviet side has not expressed gratitude for the understanding shown by India over Vietnam. But, after all, the Bangla Desh crisis is far more fateful to India than the Vietnam problem is to the Soviet Union. Mehta reproaches India for having "coordinated its policy with the Soviet Union" in respect of Indo-China and the Middle East. This is no new development. If there is a close similarity of views between India and the Soviet Union over certain problems, it does not mean that one country has gone out of its way to coordinate its policy with that of the other, still less subordinated it to the other's policy.

Finally, Mehta asks what influence India will have in South-East Asia "where American intrusion is getting blunted". As if America was the guardian of India's influence in South-East Asia! The implication seems to be that once America goes China will get in and reduce Vietnam to a dependency. Those who hold this view overlook the strength of Vietnamese nationalism and the historical relations between China and Vietnam.

In this connection I recall a conversation between Jawaharlal Nehru and Pham Van Dong, Prime Minister of North Vietnam, during the latter's visit to India.

Pham Van Dong: "How many Chinese have you in India?"

Jawaharlal Nehru: "About 15,000, and they are largely confined to some pockets in Calcutta."

Pham Van Dong: "How lucky! We have many more in Vietnam."

This involuntary explanation showed the attitude of Vietnam towards China, although both belonged to the "monolithic communist camp" which, at that time, was a reality.

Mehta's final query is what perspective the treaty holds out for us in a region in which China, Japan, the USA and the USSR are contending for power. India has never had any intention of joining this race for power. Her hope is that the contenders themselves and, in particular, the chief contender, the USA, will realize, after their experiences in Vietnam, how futile, humiliating and disastrous, even to themselves, is this race. India's consistent attitude has been that once the foreign incubus is removed Vietnam will work out her own salvation. A nation which could stand up successfully to the military power on earth will not allow itself to be dominated by any other power. The "Vasco da gama era" is gone, never to return.

CHAPTER 9

INDIA AND HER NEIGHBOURS IN 2000 A.D.

Next year India will be celebrating the silver jubilee of her independence. What will be the state of India and, in particular, her relations with her neighbours in the decade after her golden jubilee, say in 2000 A.D.?

There are some astrologers, or pseudo-astrologers, who are better at mentioning the things of the past than of the future. By saying a thing or two about what has happened in your life and which he has somehow come to know, the astrologer wins your confidence and puts you in a mood to listen to his story regarding your future.

I hope I shall not be suspected of playing a similar trick if, before I envisage what India is going to be like 29 years hence, I recall what India was 20 years ago.

Exactly 29 years ago, India was engaged in a struggle which proved to be her last struggle for freedom. The Congress passed the Quit India resolution with the cry of *"Karenge ya marenge"* (We shall do or die). The British government took up the challenge and arrested Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, and all the members of the Congress Working Committee, central and provincial, throughout India. When the people rose against repression, Churchill assured the British Parliament that there were more white troops in India then than in any previous period of history. "I have not been called upon," he said, "to be His Majesty's First Minister to preside over the liquidation of the British Empire." Who would have forecast then that within five years India would become independent and that the liquidation of the British Empire through-

out Asia and Africa would begin with a vengeance?

Why go back to 1942? Let us go back to the beginning of this year. Who could then have forecast the plight of India today? Until the beginning of this year, there had been a nagging fear that India was destined to suffer from a series of unstable governments with all their attendant evils. As a result of the General Elections which returned a government with a massive majority, this fear has been removed. In Pakistan, too, there were elections resulting in an overwhelming majority for Mujibur Rahman in East Bengal and a bare majority for him in Pakistan as a whole. His attitude towards India was conspicuously friendly and there was a hope that the chapter of bitterness and wars between India and Pakistan might come to an end. At the same time another difficult neighbour, China, was beginning to smile after the excesses of "the Cultural Revolution" and there was a hope of better relations with China. Who would have thought then that within a few months the animosity of Pakistan towards India would flare out afresh, that what Jawaharlal Nehru called "The alliance of animus" between China and Pakistan would be revived, that a grisly tragedy, for which there are few parallels in history, would be enacted in Bangla Desh and that the "civilized" world would look on advising "both sides," India and Pakistan, with beautiful impartiality, to exercise restraint?

If things can change so suddenly in the course of a few months or even weeks how can anyone forecast with any degree of certainty what the state of affairs

will be thirty years hence?

Another difficulty in making a forecast is that we are all apt to indulge in wishful thinking, to see things as we wish them to be and not as they are. In envisaging the position of India vis-a-vis her neighbours in 2000 A.D. we are apt to be guided unconsciously by what we think it ought to be rather than what we think it is likely to be.

Subject to these reservations let us ask, will our relations with China and Pakistan continue to be unfriendly even in 2000 A.D.? The answer is yes, if one subscribes completely to the theories of Kautilya. Kautilya, the Indian Machiavelli, defined an enemy in the international sense of the word as that country which is on the frontier of one's country, and a friend as that country which is on the frontier of the country which is on your frontier. Under this definition the Soviet Union and Afghanistan will continue to be India's friends.

India and the USSR have taken an important step in cementing their friendship. They have concluded a Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation for a period of 20 years. I have no doubt that at the end of 20 years this Treaty will be renewed for another 20 years and that in 2000 A.D. the friendship between India and the USSR will shine as brightly as ever.

What about China and Pakistan? I refuse to believe that Kautilya's dictum is the last word on the subject of neighbourly relations. After all, the USA and Canada have a 4000-mile frontier which is almost unguarded

and is truly a frontier of peace. So was the frontier between India and China for three thousand years. Between these two states there had never been a war or even a border scramble. On the contrary during the centuries immediately preceding and following the advent of the Christian era, there had been a close cultural connection, with hardy Buddhist pilgrims, Chinese as well as Indian, trekking to and fro, across the most formidable mountain trail in the world. In the case of no two countries is the hackneyed diplomatic phrase, "our immemorial friendship," more true than in the case of India and China.

It must be admitted, however, that this friendship was largely platonic. Except for the last two decades, there was little physical contact. Bounded by the mighty Himalayas to the south, the illimitable sea to the east and vast deserts to the north and west, China lived in a world of her own and evolved a civilization which, she imagined, was superior to any other. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, however, China fell behind. The western world, scientific, aggressive and expansionist, broke in on China, exploited her and humiliated her so thoroughly that Dr. Sun Yat-sen, the architect of the Revolution of 1911, declared that "China is not a colony, but a hyper-colony, a colony of all nations."

What we are witnessing today is the revengeful revolt of China against the treatment to which she had been subjected in the last two centuries. India has a clean record in this respect, and after India achieved independence the two countries seemed to get closer

together in an almost fraternal friendship which expressed itself in the slogan, "*Hindi Chini bhai bhai*!" Before long, China, outlawed by the United Nations and treated with contempt and hatred by the USA and other countries, began to behave like a bull in a China shop and to belabour, or try to belabour all and sundry including her great benefactor, the Soviet Union, and her age-long friend, India. And if any provocation was needed there was the unsettled frontier between China and the USSR and between China and India.

While discussing this problem with me, Khrushchev once uttered some words of wisdom. Of all problems, he said, the most difficult to settle is a frontier problem. The trouble is that frontier problems are apt to be viewed not from the point of view of national interest but national prestige. But what greater prestige, asked Khrushchev, can a nation have than a good friend and a tranquil frontier? In saying so, Khrushchev seemed to underrate China's inveterate irredentism, but later he himself, and his successors, were to realize that this is not a negligible factor.

Now the fury of China's "Cultural Revolution" has spent itself, and despite her continued support to Pakistan there have been some signs that China too would like to have a good friend and a tranquil frontier in the south. One hopes that by 2000 A.D., with skilful diplomacy—firm, patient, and sincere—we shall have a good friend in China and a tranquil frontier to our north.

Pakistan stands on a different footing. An offshoot of the British policy of divide and rule, Pakistan was obstensibly based on religion, but in reality on anti-Indianism. "How primitive it is," said Stalin to me in my interview with him only a fortnight before he died, "for a state to be based on religion!" The events in Bangla Desh have shown that such a state is not only primitive but unstable. Not all the efforts of the great powers can put the humpty-dumpty of Pakistan together again. The best that can be hoped for is a loose federation or confederation in which Bangla Desh, based on the Six Points of the Awami League, will have its rightful place as an autonomous unit.

There is every reason to hope that the government of such a federation will be friendly to India, a country with which the people of Pakistan have a thousand links, social, cultural, and economic. Whether, after all the blood which has flowed in Bangla Desh, that state will be prepared to accept any status short of independence remains to be seen. If not, Pakistan might think it best to enter into a confederation of all the states in the Indian subcontinent and this might be one way of reconciling the centrifugal and centripetal tendencies in India itself. In this way the Indian Ocean region can become a zone of peace and a source of strength. This might be welcome even to the Great Powers who might get inextricably involved if this subcontinent remains in a state of perpetual turmoil. They are, or should be, aware that a local war can lead to a global war, and a conventional war to a nuclear war,

and that would mean the destruction of civilization. Thus, man's sheer instinct for survival, let alone his desire for progress, may lead to the establishment of friendlier relations, not only between India and her neighbours but between all the peoples of the world by 2000 A.D.

Is this wishful thinking? Perhaps. But the alternative is too horrible to contemplate in this nuclear age.

"There lies before us," said Bertrand Russell in the course of a famous broadcast, "if we choose, continual progress in happiness, knowledge and wisdom. Shall we, instead, choose death, because we cannot forget our quarrels? I appeal as a human being to human beings; remember your humanity, and forget the rest. If you can do so, the way lies open to a new paradise; if you cannot, nothing lies before you but universal death."