BEFORE AND AFTER THE INDO-SOVIET TREATY

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PRAN CHOPRA

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PREFACE

In Panorama and Parts

Indian foreign policy has taken a turn which is reassuring in some respects, disturbing in others and in most unavoidable. It is a quick response to even quicker changes in the global environment, but only the speed is surprising. For all the secrecy and drama in July and August this year, the changes and the response had been slowly maturing for a few years at least.

Kissinger's flight to Peking and the flights which it triggered off between Moscow and New Delhi were themselves the product of a changing situation ; they did not create it. They only hastened and intensified what larger causes were slowly making inevitable. These causes are the constants in the midst of a number of transitory variables.

Looking back upon the past two years from the vantage point of the present, one can clearly see the movement of the constant and the variables, and the purpose of this book is to present the distinction and relationship between them, their separateness as well as interdependence, and the compulsions and options which flow from them for the Soviet Union and India.

Part I of the book traces the development of the constant in an unbroken panorama of the two years of change. It does not ignore the zigzags, but it sees them in relation to the main direction. Part II is an album of individual views, an anthology of articles written at the time when Indian foreign policy took the main bends in the road on its journey to the present. The constant is seen in them from the standpoint of the contemporary variable.

Inevitably, successive pictures overlap, and some parts of the passing scene appear in several of them. The more impor-

tant landmarks recur once again in the panoramic view, though in a different perspective. However, the repetition affords comparison and contrast between the contemporary scene and the retrospect. It also throws up in relief the consistency between the different variables.

The retrospect shows more clearly than any individual view the overlap between the end of one phase and the start of the next. For example the conference of the non-aligned countries at Lusaka in September occupies the whole of one picture as the culmination of a momentum gathered in an earlier phase. But the retrospect shows it in relation to a trend which had been gathering for more than a year prior to the Lusaka summit as India responded to the global changes which, alongwith local compulsions, were to lead to the Indo-Soviet Treaty almost exactly a year after the meeting at Lusaka

A converse example : From the middle of 1968 to the middle of 1969, the climate of Indo-Soviet relations was not only lukewarm but chilly compared with that preceding and following the signing of the Treaty. But the larger forces which led to the Treaty had appeared before 1969, on the banks of the Ussuri Only, their significance for India was not as clear contemporaneously as in retrospect.

These examples explain why Part II has been added here as a possibly worthwhile companion to a more slender Part I. The articles reproduced in it have been detached from their chronological order and arranged in a rough thematic sequence : first those which mark the close of a previous phase of non-alignment, next those which fall into the new global frame, though none of them is without regional or even local detail ; next those which, in successive sections, relate India to South-East Asia, China and Pakistan though they are not wholly lacking in the larger view. In the last section are three articles, the first two written before the Indo-Soviet Treaty, the third afterwards, which thematically belong to the opening section of Part II. But they have been placed at the end because they pull together the themes of all the other sections, and being the last to be written and yet with a more distant view, they complete the circle with Part I.

Acknowledgements and thanks are due to *The Tribune*, Chandigarh, *The Hindustan Standard*, Calcutta, *The Sandesh*, Ahmedabad, *The Assam Tribune*, Gauhati, *The Free Press Journal*, Bombay and a scattering of smaller newspapers in which most of the articles used in Part II first appeared from April, 1970 to the present as part of the author's syndicated column ; to *The Hindustan Times*, which published two of these articles, *The Treacherous Phase* and *A Contradiction Unveiled* ; to Impact Publications, owners of the now deceased fortnightly journal, *The Citizen*, in which the remaining articles appeared between March, 1969, and April, 1970 ; to *Interplay*, New York, which published the review of Neville Maxwell's *India's China War* ; and to All India Radio, which broadcast the commentary on the Treaty the day it was announced. Part of the section on non-alignment first appeared in the author's copyrighted paper *Non-alignment in the Seventies*, published at the time of the Lusaka Conference.

New Delhi, Oct. 15, 1971 Pran Chopra

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PART I

IN RETROSPECT

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IN RETROSPECT

a season of changes

For close upon 25 years, Indian foreign policy wore the comfortable, loose fitting, undefinable and highly flexible garment of non-alignment. It needed the creative mind of Nehru to invent such a garb, and his kind of courage for India to wear it when the fashion all over the world was the streamlined uniforms of military alliances of one kind or another. But for a country in circumstances such as India's were, it was a very suitable garb It served India well in all kinds of diplomatic climate because, like the simple, untailored homespun sheets which are the only dress of most Indians almost throughout the year, it could be put to many different uses equally well without being any the worse for it. Now Indian foreign policy has stepped into a dress which is more complex and heavier because it has to meet the more demanding requirements of India's defence. The change has given rise to a sense of discomfort, like the feeling of constraint of a bare-legged man when he first puts on a pair of trousers. But it makes the old policy more appropriate to the new circumstances.

This is not said to disparage non-alignment, which has not lost its relevance to India's foreseeable needs ; in a modified form it will continue to provide a sound basis for Indian foreign policy, as will be argued a little later. But undiluted non-alignment was better suited to the day when India did not face any imminent threat, could free-wheel through a world of opposing alliances which tended to cancel each other out, and could vary the style of wearing its obligations in many different ways without being considered inconstant. Since there was no threat of a direct attack there was no need for direct security assistance and no reason for incurring any matching obligation to render assistance when needed by others. Any such

obligations she had were as precise as morality and as binding as philosophy. Now the obligations have to be as direct as the threat, and as precise and enforceable as a treaty is. If a precedent for the change has to be found in India's own practice of non-alignment it should not be searched for in the halcyon and somewhat eurphoric days of the middle 1950s but in the decisions taken immediately following the Chinese attack.

The suddenness of the realisation that a change has occurred—the change itself has been a slower process—has magnified the sensation of change and the expectation of unforeseeable consequences It has made the constraints resulting from the change appear greater than they are and the earlier freedom from constraint appear greater than it was. There has also been the matching but opposite magnification : the benefits of the change are believed to be greater than they are. In truth, however, the main source of all our constraints and options continues to be what it has always been : our own capabilities Previous options were no bigger than our capabilities were ; future constraints will be no bigger than our capabilities allow them to be. The change is only with regard to the pace and manner of the growth of these capabilities and their use at any given time or place, and in that sense the change is of considerable importance.

But whatever the differences of opinion about the nature of the change, a change of some magnitude had become wholly unavoidable. Indian foreign policy could not have stood still in the face of the shifts, many of them directly impinging upon India, which were taking place in the world around it, bigger and faster shifts than any since India began to have a foreign policy of her own. It took ten years after the end of the war for the two opposing big powers to develop their alliances in full, especially in areas of the closest interest to India. It took another ten years for these alliances to dissolve into a new *detente*, and even then it was only a partial *detente* ; the risks of competitive rearmament began to be doused with co-existence, but it remained a highly competitive co-existence. However, in the past three years or less, two sets of major changes have taken place at two different levels, and all four of

them are of great consequence to India. The formerly monolithic communist power has irreparably broken into two rival centres of gigantic competition ; the attempt they made in the autumn and winter of 1969-70 to insulate the inter-state relations between them against the intense rivalry between their parties proved unavailing. In the second place, the United States has dramatically switched the direction of its own policies of *detente* from the Soviet Union to China. Thus around India a new kind of diplomatic duet has taken the place of an old duet, to paraphrase the running title of three articles which follow later.[1] At the lower level, the revolt in East Bengal has unleashed an entirely new kind of threat to India's security, while the United States has switched its policies in South-East Asia from a determination to maintain an embattled presence to willingness to consider almost total withdrawal.

It would be naive to expect that in the midst of all these changes, Indian foreign policy could remain unchanged. The surprise is more that the change is much smaller than in the surrounding environment, and in spite of the swings above and below the central axis the direction of Indian policy has changed but little. The underlying ideas, which remain valid for the future, are the same in essence as those which began to be developed several years ago ; not many countries can claim even that much continuity in the essential elements of their foreign policies.

responding variables

As the 1960s came to a close, non-alignment was still on a rising curve of relevance and was headed for the biggest and in many ways the most significant gathering of the non-aligned countries, which was held at Lusaka in September, 1970. It continued to be relevant[2] because the bitter if (now) non-militaristic competition between the two big powers was perpetuating in another form the very conditions which non-alignment was invented to cope with in the first place. A direct

1. See *New Duet For Old I-III* in Part II.

2. See the excerpt reproduced from the author's paper *Non-alignment In the Seventies* and the two further articles on this subject.

military conflict between them having been ruled out by the balance of terror in which they held each other, the big powers were turning to wars by proxy for pursuing their rival goals of hegemony. An added line of attack was available to them in the dependence of most countries of Asia and Africa upon aid from and trade with one or the other super power or its allies. West Asia and Vietnam were grim reminders of the danger of wars by proxy. Examples of the danger of subjugation through the use of economic influence could be picked up from many parts of the underdeveloped world, which happens to consist mostly of the non-aligned countries and mainly of the Afro-Asian countries among them

At Lusaka the non-aligned addressed themselves to both these problems and produced probably the most precise and comprehensive statement of the concept of non-alignment and its extension into the diplomacy of aid. But the effectiveness of the concept remained problematical. It was quite clear that, given time, it would grow. But in the meantime the economic imbalance between the developed and the underdeveloped was becoming accentuated, not softened. The military imbalance, already very great, was growing even faster, further adding to the strain on the individual as well as collective capabilities of the non-aligned countries relatively to the countries which were exerting a pressure upon them. They might have been better able to look after their interests if China had been a steady member of the group. But it had ceased to be steady both in its membership and in its behaviour. Long before the Lusaka conference, it had opted out of the Afro-Asian community and many of the non-aligned countries had begun to look upon its motives with as much suspicion as upon some of the actions of the two super powers. China weakened the third world by its conduct from about the early 1960s onwards, and it denied itself the contribution it could have made to "the liberation" of the smaller countries from the dominant influence of the big two which Chou En-lai proclaimed to be his country's objective in an interview with a Yugoslav paper published on August 28 this year. When the liberation might have been attainable with China's assistance, China was busily set on a different course ; later its

credentials ceased to be what they have been during the five-year period from the Bandung conference onwards. Therefore in spite of its further development at Lusaka, the adequacy of non-alignment as an answer to the challenges which were now developing remained less than total.

In the meantime, from about the latter half of the 1960s, India had been facing a problem peculiar to herself : the problem of the convergence, if not even collusion as some suspected, between the interests of the two big powers in southern Asia. This complicated the practice of the original form of non-alignment. A tool of foreign policy which had been devised to meet a situation of an apparently imminent hot war and later a prolonged cold war between the two big powers had to be adjusted to meet a situation of apparent coordination of policies between them, or more specifically to meet a situation in which India might come under a concerted Russian and American pressure to compromise her essential interests for the sake of a settlement with Pakistan. The most concrete evidence of this was a change in the tone of Soviet diplomacy towards India and Pakistan. Two examples of the change were the supply of Soviet arms to Pakistan despite strong Indian protests and the Soviet note to India in July, 1968, advising her to reach an agreement with Pakistan over the distribution of the waters of the eastern rivers on the same lines as the agreement reached almost ten years earlier under the auspices of the World Bank and the United States on the distribution of the waters of the western rivers.

India tried three separate responses to this change but achieved very little with any of them. She explored avenues of rapproachement with China, sending up signals herself, for example the prolonged reluctance to say anything in support of the Russians in the Sino-Soviet border dispute,[1] and the disproportionate pleasure showered upon any signal received from China.[2] But apart from the unwisdom of such a course, the attempt remained unproductive Relations with China remained more or less frozen. Up to the signing of the Indo-

1. See *Neither Friends Nor Brothers* ? in Part II.
2. See *Cocktail Diplomacy In a Cul-de Sac*, and *Neo-revisionism I & II*.

Soviet Treaty, very little happened which would confirm the conjecture lately made by many that if only India had not signed the Treaty there would have been a breakthrough in relations with China. On the other hand, in the major crisis India faced as a result of the army repression in East Bengal, China sided with Pakistan against India and with the military regime in Islamabad against the freedom movement in Bangla Desh.[1] It also chose to look the other way when, in the spring of 1971, India proposed exchange of ambassadors and resumption of border talks without any prior condition. Therefore close relations with the Soviet Union quickly regained the priority they earlier had in Indian foreign policy, and India settled back to the position that while it would be good to do everything that was feasible to improve relations with China, relations with Russia need not be sacrificed for that.

India's second response was to explore the chances of improving relations with the USA. The outlook was hopeful at the time of Nixon's visit to India,[2] and the logic behind the effort was sound : if the *detente* between the big two had developed almost to a state of collusion, then surely it should be possible for India to improve relations with both of them simultaneously instead of having to choose between them, as hitherto. But in the first place the *detente* proved to be more fragile than was realised ; in the competitive co-existance, the emphasis turned out to be more on competition than co-existence In the second place the American commitment to Pakistan, and more especially Nixon's personal commitment to the military leadership in Pakistan, turned out to be almost unshakable. In fact it was soon after his visit to New Delhi that Nixon sent Indo-US relations plummeting down to an all-time low by announcing resumption of arms supplies to Pakistan as the famous one-time exception.

India's third response was to promote the idea of a regional personality in South-East Asia which would be anchored on India at one end and Japan at the other and aimed at preventing

1. See *Maoism As Played by Mao* in Part II.
2. See *Face to Face, Softly.*

any forcible change in the existing frontiers of the countries of this region ; the big powers were invited to back up the arrangement or to underwrite it. This was one of the themes of Mrs Gandhi's talks during tours through South-East Asia in 1968 and 1969 and a visit to Japan in the summer of 1969 Certain coincidences exposed the proposal to a misunderstanding. It came to be thought of as the cat's paw of Moscow because shortly after Mrs Gandhi mooted it for the first time, the Secretary-General of the Communist Party of the USSR, Leonid Brezhnev, also set afloat a rather similar idea [1] It also came to be thought of as aimed particularly against China because some South-East Asian countries were gripped with apprehension about what would happen to them after the withdrawal of British troops from Singapore, which was then impending, and the withdrawal of American troops from Vietnam which had begun to appear to be possible. But seen from India's point of view, this was more like a specialised local application of the general idea of non-alignment, which has been one of the constants in Indian foreign policy and cropped up repeatedly in contemporary comment during the two-year period under review.[2]

But this response also came to be stiffled very soon after its birth : although, for a time, United States extended a qualified welcome to it, American actions in South-East Asia created conditions about the middle of 1970 which tended to divide up this region between the United States and China and left no room for any third formation there.[3] As any country would in the face of an imminent threat to security, whether it is real or not, the countries of this region also tended to take up positions which cut across the non-aligned approach. In any case India's domestic circumstances were also such that no brave new initiative in foreign policy was possible ; the Government of India was and was seen by others to be too shaky for its moves to have any credibility.

1. See *The Bear in Quest of Warm Waters* in Part II.

2. See *Triangles Within Triangles, A Pattern for '70s'* and *The Call of the Region After Bangla Desh.*

3. See *Soviet Union's Problems in South-East Asia* and *India's Vanishing Options in South-East Asia.*

a shifting triangle

With the start of the '70s, two kinds of changes began to take place in this situation, slowly but simultaneously. The first was the announcement of the Guam doctrine by Nixon in February, 1970. The two parts of it which are relevant here are : first, ". . . we will maintain our interests in Asia and the commitments that flow from them . . . The United States will keep all its treaty commitments," and second, "a direct combat role for US general purpose forces arises primarily when insurgency has shaded into external aggression or when there is an overt conventional attack. In such cases we shall weigh our interests and our commitments, and we shall consider the efforts of our allies in determining our response." At the time when the doctrine was propounded the first part attracted greater attention because it was simple, clear and firm ; the second involved gradations, definitions, determination of factors on the ground and the intentions of others countries. Therefore it was noticed less conspicuously. But in retrospect it turns out to have been the more important.

Insofar as the United States, profiting from the Vietnam experience, was going to leave insurgencies alone, it was going to take the first step towards quitting its commitments in Asia. All the criteria mentioned in the second part of the doctrine for an American role are a matter of opinion, not of fact, and in deciding what the American role should be and whether there should be any it would naturally be American opinion that would count the most. To appreciate the encouragement this would mean to what were hitherto believed to be Chinese-inspired insurgencies one does not have to doubt the sincerity of the first part of the doctrine. The two parts are reconciled by the valid assumption, supported by subsequent events, that for its own benefit (any benefits for South East Asia being incidental in this context) the United States was going to downgrade those of its interests in the area which could only be defended by the use of conventional land forces (except insofar as they could be defended by strengthening local anti-communist forces) in favour of those of its commitments and interests, such (possibly) as the defence of Japan against an overt Chinese attack, which may justify the use of unconventional weapons. In other words, the United

States was extending to post-Vietnam Asia the philosophy it had already applied to other parts of the world, that American interests are better defended from the American fortress than from American forces and bases spread all over the world, and that to keep Russian power in check is a more primary American interest than to keep other countries from going communist. The history of the world might have been very different if this wisdom had dawned upon the United States fifteen years earlier, but that is a different story.

The second major change which surfaced with the 70s,—like the first, a sudden upsurge in a curve which was previously developing more slowly rather than the beginning of a new curve—was the failure of the brief Sino Soviet effort to de-escalate the border dispute between them. This began to reinforce a change which had already been gradually taking place in the ruling constellation of international diplomacy, the triangle between Washington, Mocow and Peking. With American experts speculating when, not whether, the Soviet Union would make a pre-emptive nuclear strike upon China, it was inevitable that Washington and Peking should draw closer together. Despite all the bilateral differences between them, and despite their separate obligations to third parties, such as the USA's to Japan, Thailand and Taiwan, Peking and Washington would now be drawn together by their mutual opposition to Moscow. The United States would not even hesitate to scuttle all its commitments in South-East Asia to win the major objective of tilting the global triangle against the Soviet Union. These commitments were incurred only as part of the game of containing the power of Russia ; containing China in South-East Asia was only a subsidiary and contributory aim which was important mainly because China was regarded as the seniormost carrier of Russian power. If China was now coming forward as the biggest bulwark against Russia, with a power which was second only to that of the two super powers themselves, then here was a possibility of fulfilling the highest aim of U.S. foreign policy throughout the post-war period, that of building up a decisive combination against the Soviet Union. Every conflicting consideration could be discarded for this.

It was a matter of the utmost importance for India to make

timely adjustments in her foreign policy in order to see that the whole of the global triangle did not tilt against her. that what she lost at one corner she made up at another. In the given geopolitics of this triangle[1] she would in any case have found a greater affinity with Moscow than with either Washington or Peking, but if finding the best response to this global change had been her only problem, she would probably not have signed the Indo-Soviet Treaty so suddenly ; some such relationship with Russia may still have been the best option for India to take but she could have taken it after more closely considering any likely alternative. At least two situations were possible until a few months ago in which it might also have been possible for her to shape this option in greater leisure and in circumstances of greater mutuality and more convincing reciprocity.

In the first place she could have tarried while Japan and the countries of South-East Asia readjusted themselves to the new duet. Those among them, which means most, which had felt offended at being ignored like Japan most conspicuously, or apprehensive about China's intentions after the "liberation" of Asia from America, would have been much more responsive than earlier towards the kind of regional personality, equidistant from the big powers (now including China among them) which has been a constant aim of Indian foreign policy. If such an association had developed, good relations with it would have been competitively desired by each corner of the triangle and the choices before it would have grown as those of the non-aligned grew as a result of Russian-American rivalry and of Europe as a result of the Sino-Russian. This would have been a new version of the local application of the principles of non-alignment which India had unsucessfully tried as one of her three responses only a couple of years earlier. India's position in the region would have cushioned her position in her relationship with the Soviet Union.

Similarly, India would not have been so suddenly confronted with such a crucial decision as signing her first ever treaty of

1. See the second of the three articles on the *New Duet* in Part II.

this nature if democratic politics had been allowed to take their course in Pakistan. With 72 per cent of the East Bengal vote behind him and a majority of the seats in the National Assembly, Sheikh Mujib would have come to power as a result of the elections held at the end of 1970 ; the West Pakistan military elite, which had developed a vested interest in keeping up tension with India because only then it could maintain its dictatorial regime and keep East Bengal in a state of colonial subjection, would have been replaced by a leadership which has always shown a genuine interest in good relations with India. Alternatively, if Sheikh Mujib's Awami League and its Mukti Fauj had wrested either substantial autonomy or independence for East Bengal, it would have become impossible for West Pakistan to continue to be the wilful thorn in India's side which it has always been. In either event the subcontinental balance would have been more in favour of India than at any time before and she could have tried to keep herself out of the vortex of the bigger changes taking place around her ; none of the three corners of the global triangle could have played upon Indo-Pakistan rivalries in the manner they could, and each in turn did, when Pakistan was a credible limitation upon India.

But simultaneous changes at the local and global levels, both far reaching and both pointing in the same direction, made it inevitable that India should take up her own position, and very quickly and clearly ; to have tarried and hesitated in these circumstances would have been to invite equally far reaching difficulties. It is worth repeating what was stated earlier, that a slowly developing mutuality of interests with Moscow would have been the likely outcome of the global changes in any case. But to increase its usefulness in the more immediate circumstances it was necessary to avoid mistakes which could have arisen as easily from over-estimating one's capabilities in the given situation as from underestimating them However transitory friendships and enmities may be in international relations, a distinction has to be made between them while they last ; it could be as harmful to mistake an enemy for a friend as to overestimate the durability of friendships.

an approaching war

The course which events ultimately took in Pakistan made a war with India almost inevitable unless India decided to become a pathetically helpless receptacle for all the millions of East Bengalis whom the West Pakistan army chose to drive out of their homes for its own brutal and colonialist reasons. Because of the intolerable pressure of the refugee influx, it is often assumed that India will have to do something drastic to ensure that political conditions are created in East Bengal which will enable the refugees to go back. The compulsions operating upon India are obvious and have been widely commented upon.[1] But it does not follow from this that there will be no Indo-Pakistan conflict if India does not start it. The converse is more likely : even if Awami League forces alone suffice as the catalyst which would enable East Bengal nationalism to drive out the West Pakistan army, conflict with India may be started by the West Pakistan army in sheer desperation or in a gambling bid.[2] Once begun the war will not remain bilateral. China will certainly make a bid to influence it in Pakistan's favour. Peking's whole game in southern Asia has rested for the past decade upon using Pakistan for keeping India off balance. It will not give up the game just when the whole purpose of this strategy—Chinese supremacy over the whole of southern and South-eastern Asia which is so complete that it makes China the equal of each of the other two big powers—is so temptingly near fulfilment as China sees it.

American reasons for desiring a precipitate rapproachement with China are not Asian either in origin or aims ; they are nothing less than global.[3] But as Tokyo, Hanoi and New Delhi have understood them, and probably other capitals too, they have Asian consequences of very great importance. For China they have two clear meanings : that the United States will abdicate in Asia and in China's favour, and that the confrontation with the Soviet Union can be persued now not only in the frozen wastes of Siberia but in southern Asia too ; its success-

1. See Section five in Part II.
2. See *A Contradiction Unveiled.*
3. See the first of the three articles in the *New Duet* series.

ful conclusion could deliver unto China the fruits of what China now describes as the liberation of Asia from the United States and Russia (whatever that may mean for Tokyo, Hanoi, New Delhi and other Asian capitals). The only requirement still remaining to be met for such consummation is that no country should be left in Asia around which anyone can build a countervailing combination.

This brings Russian and Indian interests into a closer congruence than they have had before It is closer than on the day when the Soviet Union, for its own cold war reasons, supported India on Kashmir. At that time India was the passive recipient of this Russian response to the American use of Pakistan as a base against Soviet Power ; India could actively contribute but little to essential Russian interests except insofar as non-alignment blunted the American drive for military pacts and alliances. Today the position is very different. No one can predict the future development of Sino-Russian relations. But all authoritative pointers indicate a continuing conflict, probably leading to a major clash. Nixon's bid for a new relationship with China is in anticipation of some such development ; so is the current Russian anxiety, clearly signified by the new agreement on Berlin, to do everything quickly that would defuse the Soviet Union's western front. This gives an enormous strategic significance to China's southern marches ; developments there can closely intermesh with those on the Sino-Soviet frontier whether they are initiated by the Soviet Union or China, which in turn can react on the frontier between India and West Pakistan. This means that India and the Soviet Union may have to consider the Sino-Soviet, Sino-Indian and Indo-Pak frontiers to be closely inter-related, each part equally sensitive to developments on any one of them.

It is because of this background that the Treaty can be described, as it was by Swaran Singh in presenting it to the Lok Sabha on August 9, 1971, as "a deterrent to any powers that may have aggressive designs on our territorial integrity and sovereignty." Of course a treaty is valid only to the extent that the signatories observe the letter and spirit of the commitments they make in it. The commitments are weakened if

either party, whether for domestic consumption or the benefit of a third party, dilutes or downgrades them or pretends that they do not exist. They are weakened in the eyes of the other signatory party and by that much the treaty ceases to impress the third party also. That is why it is unfortunate that some of the Indian explanatory comment has tended to underplay the commitments accepted by India.

The Treaty prohibits India, as it prohibits the Soviet Union —and as the Russo-Finnish Treaty of 1948 and Russo-UAR Treaty of 1971 prohibit the signatory parties - from entering into or participating in "any military alliance directed against the other party." One can have honest differences about the meaning and scope of the words given in quotes. But to the extent one does so dishonestly one tempts the other signatory to do the same, and in the process one reduces the credibility of the Treaty in the eyes of other countries. The treaty also prohibits India and the Soviet Union from "providing any assistance" to any third party which "engages in armed conflict" with the other party. Here also similar quibbling is possible but also with similar consequences, and the scope for the quibbling and its consequences expands a great deal further with Article X of the treaty, which is far more comprehensive. It enjoins each party not to enter into "any obligation, secret or public, with one or more States, which is incompatible with this Treaty." As the scope for misinterpretation increases, so does the need for good faith on both sides. Otherwise either side can enter into an alliance of the prohibited variety and pretend that is not directed against the other party ; or provide "assistance" and deny it ; or enter into "incompatible" obligations and try to conceal them.

The Treaty has been signed in a context which thoroughly unifies the local and more immediately relevant aspects of the Bangla Desh problem with the long term and global aspects of the new configuration of international diplomacy. In this unified view the spirit the Treaty prohibits the Soviet Union from giving any assistance to Pakistan which militates against Indian interests. On the other hand it commits the Soviet Union to close and active interest in securing the return of the

Bangla Desh refugees to their homes because apart from committing the contracting parties to consultation and concerted action to meet aggression or the threat of aggression by a third party against either signatory, it also commits them to similar action for ensuring each other's peace. The Treaty does not prohibit India (or the Soviet Union) from trying to establish normal relations either with China or Pakistan. But it does seem to prevent them from taking these relations to such lengths as may amount to "providing assistance".

This raises some interesting questions though their practical relevance is, to say the least, remote. A country which allows unhindered passage across its territory to the troops of a belligerent power can be said to have provided assistance to the belligerent. In a Sino-Soviet conflict, one of the most important sectors of the war on land would be in the south-west of China, involving movement of Chinese troops between Sinkiang and Tibet. Some of the passage would be across Aksai Chin and possibly also across parts of Kashmir which are under the occupation of Pakistan. Since these territories are still claimed by India as Indian, would India be expected to resist their passage ? A slightly less irrelevant question is would India be considered to have "provided assistance" if, in the interests of a border settlement with China, it agreed to drop its claim on Aksai Chin, with which, of course, any right or duty India may have to resist the passage of Chinese troops across this plateau would vanish. This implication, if correct, would make the Indo-Soviet Treaty even more unpopular with that section of opinion in India, not insignificant, which favours "normalisation" of relations with China at the cost, if necessary, of Indian claims on Aksai Chin, which they believe to be flimsy. But this question, though not unimportant, is less disturbing than it appears at first sight. The answer to it is the counter question : in the given circumstances, which have been created by China more than by anyone else, are India's interests more compatible with the Soviet Union's or with China's ? India has to conduct her relations, as any country would, by treating some considerations as more primary than others.

the constant theme

The value of the Treaty to the Soviet Union can only be measured in terms which are either less tangible or set in a relatively distant horizon of time than the terms in which India will measure its value to her. The Soviet Union certainly achieved a diplomatic surprise with it at a time when it badly needed one because of the reverses suffered by it in West Asia and in the politics of Europe, and the contrast they made with Nixon's diplomatic coup in China. But diplomatic successes are only the means to an end ; the real test of Moscow's place in the world lies in the confrontation with China, which by its outcome will powerfully influence the international standing of the Soviet Union in comparison with that of the United States. In that test, anything India may do in terms of the Treaty, although of greater importance than the corresponding possibilities of the Soviet Union's treaty with the UAR, will be very small in comparison with what the protagonists will themselves be doing directly. Much will depend upon how this confrontation develops and where and how the flash points occur, as far as India's contribution goes.

For India on the other hand the concrete value of the Treaty is of much greater importance and will be put to the test in a much nearer future. It is obvious that Pakistan's audacity in dumping over eight million of its people upon India (eight million at the moment of writing, though the figure will be much higher by the time these lines appear in print) is sustained by India's fear that if she does anything in retaliation, China will intervene on the side of Pakistan. This is a problem of India's guts and credibility which has been discussed under these words in an article in Part II. So long as India is or appears to be hamstrung by the fear of a Sino-Pak combination, she will count for very little as a power factor in this area, notwithstanding the government's brilliant performance in domestic politics earlier this year. It is because of this background that the suspicion has grown, and it will continue to grow if the background does not convincingly change very soon, that India signed the Treaty only for the negative reason of fear of intimidation by China and Pakistan and not for the positive purpose of widening her options in respect of Bangla Desh.

This will do the credibility of the Treaty much greater harm, in India and outside, and much greater harm to India's own credibility, than has been done already by the joint communique issued by the Foreign Ministers of India and the Soviet Union soon after the Treaty. In the drafting of the communique the Russians insisted on the use of phrases which seriously deviated from the Indian position, but not the Russian, on the nature of the East Bengal problem. The Russians had their way, but only at the expense of the Treaty, which is a document of far greater importance to them than the communique. For a time this gave rise to the comment that India has become a Russian satellite as a result of the Treaty instead of becoming a more credible element in future developments in southern Asia.[1]

But if the Treaty visibly enables India to step up assistance to the Awami League forces, or to cope with the situation if Pakistan unleashes a desperate war—and she can do either of these things only if the Soviet Union lives up to the hopes India has reposed in the Treaty and convinces others that it means to do so—then India can expect to achieve and sustain the role which should belong to a country of this size, these resources and such strategic location. India's destiny is not simply to become the junior partner by far in a still newer duet. But she cannot resume the search for whatever else she should be until

1. Reports of Mrs. Gandhi's visit to Moscow, which have been coming in as we go to press, have lifted some of the gloom left in New Delhi by Mr. Gromyko. Mr. Kosygin's unilateral comments are discouraging still, but not the joint statement with Mrs. Gandhi, which brings the Soviet Union's views much closer to India's on the ultimate aim : a political settlement acceptable to the people of East Bengal and in keeping with their inalienable and lawful rights. This is what India has been demanding too, adding only that the acceptability must be tested not by any puppets of the military regime but by those who won the elections in East Bengal in 1970. As to the means, it has been recognised that India has the right to choose any that may be necessary if those preferred by the Soviet Union do not produce the desired results, including the safe return of the refugees to their homes. Recognition of the right, it is true, does not amount to approval, but is not wholly devoid of it either when written into a joint document of such status and importance. How effective is the recognition depends largely now on how firm India chooses to be—or can afford to be—in exercising the right when the need arises. The Treaty no longer stands in the way, if it ever did.

she crosses the hump of the problem created for her by West Pakistan, and the problem is much bigger than simply the financial burden of refugee relief or even the social and political burden of their continued presence. Therefore the primary yardstick which India must apply to the Treaty is how far it will enable her to cross this hump, and the Soviet Union should be the last country to overlook this fact.

Beyond that, and contrary to the proclamations of those who have responded to it in a state of euphoria, the value of the Treaty for India is only as a supplemental factor. The special relationship with the Soviet Union which is confirmed by the Treaty will probably induce certain countries to take India more seriously, but primarily they will do so only to the extent that India herself does so. She ought to aim to be, and has the means to become, a decision-making centre which is independent of the excessive influence of any major power, whether it be the United States, the Soviet Union or, most of all, China. This does not mean that enmity must be cultivated with any of them ; least of all with the Soviet Union. On the contrary, subject to the priorities recommended by India's own circumstances and policies, no opening should be neglected which might help to improve relations with the United States ; and if because of the Treaty or otherwise China now decides to respond better than in the past to Indian suggestions favouring normal relations, India should warmly step up her counter-response. But the roots of India's longterm role do not lie in a special relationship with any of the three corners of the big triangle but in a closely funcitonal relationship with a number of medium and smaller powers which also do not wish to be caught in the big power web, especially those on the Asian rim. This has been the bedrock of Indian foreign policy for the past quarter of a century, and there will be no substitute for it for at least another decade. The concept will continue to vary, as it has done in the past ; in a given situation the word non-alignment may not fit in with specific commitments. But this major contribution by Nehru to Indian foreign policy will continue to set the direction for it for the foreseeable future. Far from sucking India into the Soviet orbit, the Treaty if used well, may help India climb over a hurdle which is threatening to

make her irrelevant to any larger role. It will enable her to resume the quest which has been the most firm constant in Indian foreign policy formulations in the midst of many variables.

If the Bangla Desh problem is satisfactorily got over, India will be able to resume, and in more promising circumstances. the initiative Mrs. Gandhi took two years ago. At that time at least some of the countries of South-East Asia might have found it distasteful to be associated with an American ally like Japan when on the other side were the attractions of China's radicalism. But China has now made it clear that for the sake of its national interests as a state power it is willing to ditch popular and leftist movements, as in Ceylon and Pakistan, and to forge new links with the United States against a leading communist power, the Soviet Union. On the other hand it is a resolutely communist country like North Vietnam which is looking over its shoulders at China apprehensively as it prepares to welcome President Nixon. Besides, Japan can no longer be regarded as a special favourite of American power in the East ; China has become a competitor for that distinction. Thus idcological considerations have yielded place to those of national security, and in terms of security, especially economic, Japan has become an even more attractive associate than it was two years ago. So has India, being no longer caught up in the coils of domestic politics. The general principles of non-alignment have also recovered the overall relevance they had begun to lose with the *detente* between the Soviet Union and the U.S.A. Therefore beyond the specific aim of the Indo-Soviet Treaty, which is mutual cooperation in dealing the specific mutual problem of the relations of both countries with China and Pakistan, lie the well-known and tested aims of Indian foreign policy. They are as valid as they were before, and as much in India's world view as in her regional view ; they are also equally valid whether the new Nixon diplomacy prospers or not.

PART II

IN SEQUENCE

Non-alignment In A Changing Context

The three articles which follow, the first being the opening section of a paper by the present author entitled *Non-alignment In the Seventies*, were published on the eve of the Lusaka summit conference of the non-aligned countries, which was held in September, 1970. That was a time when the concept of non-alignment was being questioned on the assumption that the cold war between the big two powers, long regarded as the main justification for non-alignment, had given place to a *detente* between them. These articles question the assumption, point to the dangers of a new kind of tussle between the big two powers, and discuss the new challenges which face the non-aligned countries despite and beyond the partial *detente*.

PART II

IN SEQUENCE

origin and course

Any retrospect on non-alignment will show that this unique diplomatic phenomenon of the past two decades has great power of adaptability. It is constant in its essential beliefs but is able critically to readjust its course as the compass of international diplomacy changes. Sometimes the compass and course appear to be so out of step that non-alignment seems to lose its purpose or target. This happened ten years ago, when non-alignment and Afro-Asianism began to diverge. It is happening today because the cold war between the two big powers, the *raison d'etre* of non-alignment for more than ten years, is descending more and more into a thaw. But the appearance deceives. It was deceptive ten year ago. It is so today. Non-alignement has neither lost its purpose nor course ; it is only going through a critical readjustment once more.

The first impulse for what came to be better known later as non-alignment was the struggle of the colonial people for freedom, and by as much as colonialism was a deep-seated and comprehensive phenomenon, anti-colonialism became a strong and pervasive force, colouring the thoughts and actions of many countries for many years after colonialism itself had ended. The struggles by and against the colonial powers were the principal drama of international affairs for a hundred years, with many plots and sub-plots In the early acts the actors were only those who had been successful colonialists and those who wanted to be ; the action was only the struggle between the haves and have-nots of the maritime powers of western Europe The people of the colonies remained mostly off-stage. The story of the later acts on the other hand was the revolt of the colonies in Asia and Africa. Between the two phases there was half a

century, in some countries more, of such a stable rule by the colonial powers that it was diffcult for anyone to imagine that the rebellion against it would be so sweeping. But though history may tarry, it does not stop ; those who become impatient with a temporary drift would do well to recall the misgivings of the rebels fifty years to a hundred years ago.

The lull started to break in the early 20s of this century. Exactly half way through the period between the end of World War I and the start of World War II, events were firmly set on a new and more exciting course. When the Indian National Congress proclaimed in 1929 that its goal was nothing less than complete independence, anti-colonialism took an irreversible step. It grew by stages to be much more than a force within the frontiers of one country ; it took hold of two continents, and soon became a major factor in global diplomacy.

This phenomenon itself would have been significant enough, a strong enough force in shaping the history of the 20th century. What made it still more significant and stronger was the emergence of a parallel and complementary force—non-alignment. The two streams had distinctive but simultaneous origins and for many years they flowed side by side, sometime close together, sometimes a little farther apart, but reinforcing each other all the time, until they began to merge a few years ago. In the mind of one of the shared fountainheads of anti-colonialism and non-alignment, Jawaharlal Nehru, they had always been one. "The future of the colonies ?" he asked in March, 1946, and replied, "The obvious answer is that there is no future for them as colonies. The whole system known as colonialism must go." In September the same year, as Member for External Affairs in the last government formed before India won freedom, he said, "In the sphere of foreign affairs India will follow an independent policy, keeping away from the power blocs of groups aligned one against another." Fifteen years later, at the Belgrade summit in 1961, he said, "It is the cold war which has resulted and is resulting in old imperialism and colonialism hanging on wherever these exist because to them it is advantageous."

To him, therefore, ending imperialism and easing the tensions of the cold war were only extensions of the same task of ensur-

ing the freedom of peoples still under subjugation, and safeguarding the freedom of peoples who had successfully overthrown their colonial rulers. But better than some of his contemporaries he was able to see which extension was more appropriate in which circumstance. Afro-Asianism, with its emphasis more exclusively upon opposing the old colonial powers, gave a strong and appropriate thrust to the '50s, and he was among its most ardent leaders. But towards the end of that decade, a new challenge arose in a different context and the response of the new force of the non-aligned became much more appropriate : he was then one of those who led it.

Events during the '50s placed distinguishing emphasis upon non-alignment and the anti-imperialism of some of the more vocal of the Afro-Asian countries. Sometimes non-alignment came more to the fore, sometimes the more zealous Afro-Asianism. They were a joint force behind the Arab-Asian group at the United Nations during the late '40s and early '50s, which was the initiator of many significant diplomatic moves. But when colonialism became the handmaid of the Western powers in their cold war with the Soviet Union, the emphasis came to fall rather more exclusively upon the anti-colonial aspect of the Afro-Asian countries, and in 1955 they held the Afro-Asian conference at Bandung, the most famous simultaneous protest against neo-colonialism and the threat to peace which were together created by the cold war. This was a tremendous display of the spirit of Asia and Africa, and for the first time the world became fully aware of the Afro-Asian force. It was largely in response to the demand made at Bandung that in the years immediately following, Cambodia, Ceylon, Japan, Jordan, Libya and Nepal were admitted to the United Nations, followed in later years by many more Asian and African countries, adding greatly to the power and prestige of the Arab-Asian group at the United Nations which in the meantime had come to be known as the Afro-Asian group.

But as the cold war developed and became a major threat to the peace of the world in the second half of the decade of the '50s, it became increasingly clear that Afro-Asianism needed to be given a new and more constructive dimension if it was to play the part destined for it as non-alignment. Some of the

Afro-Asian countries were sometimes inclined to forget that the neo-colonialism of the cold war was not the return of the old imperialism but a new tool in a new global war and that a new technique was needed for opposing it. Some of them were carried away by the fact that the western sponsors of the new phenomenon of multi-national military alliances were mostly the former colonial powers and, therefore, doubly suspect in the eyes of Afro-Asian countries Perhaps condemnation of the West also came more readily to many Afro-Asian tongues because, while Moscow's transgressions in eastern Europe were now ten years old and tending to be forgotten, Washington's in West and South-East Asia were fresh and were the dominant fact of life in the '50s. Both these factors were magnified in the minds of certain Afro-Asian countries because of the presence in their midst of such an influential communist country as China which was represented at Bandung by such a persuasive diplomat as Chou En-lai. The protagonist on the other hand was John Foster Dulles, whom no one could accuse of tactfulness ; he offered provocation to Afro-Asian sentiment by describing non-alignment as 'short-sighted" and "immoral".

The more impetuous Afro-Asians were therefore sometimes inclined to forget that if they wanted to save themselves and the world from the ravages of the cold war, they must not themselves become a party to that very war itself. But the more mature among them, recognising the danger, carried out the first great critical readjustment of the movement and came to develop a stricter non-alignment from the late '50s onwards. Guided by the trio of senior statesmen, Nehru, Nasser and Tito, they worked steadily towards what became the three main objectives of non-alignment in the '60s : to contain both the blocs, to oppose the big power build-up towards a war, and to seek to democratise international politics and diplomacy through the United Nations. The objectives were given more formal shape at the Belgrade summit conference in 1961, the first to be held by the non-aligned countries. But they had been expressed more informally many times before 1961 by the representatives of the Afro-Asian countries at the UN Headquarters whose number had grown to 25 by the time the Belgrade summit was held.

In 1961, the threat of a big power conflict, aggravated by a clash of interests in Germany, was at its peak ; so was the divergence of emphasis between the philosophy of non-alignment and the earlier biases of some Afro-Asian leaders. Therefore the two themes which the leading trio of non-alignment concentrated on most were the avoidance of war by the big two and the avoidance of needless denunciation of either. Nehru warned the conference against outdated slogans and urged it to realise that "the era of classical colonialism is over." Nasser was forthrightly impartial in criticising Russia for resuming nuclear tests. Clearer than both, President Tito said, "It would be erroneous if we were to attack certain countries as such for purely propaganda motives instead of voicing our resolute disagreement with the methods applied by some great powers towards other countries." To some of the more ebullient Afro-Asian representatives who were present at Belgrade, this probably sounded like appeasement of imperialism and loss of the purpose and elan of non-alignment. But developments during the '60s justified this approach ; it began to pay dividends in terms of all three of the immediate targets of non-alignment.

This is not to suggest that there was rivalry, much less a clash, between the non-aligned and the Afro-Asians at, before or after the Belgrade summit. The membership of the two groups was largely common ; some of the principal non-aligned countries, including India, were among the sponsors of the Afro-Asian summit at Bandung ; in later years India was among the countries which laboured hard to get the Soviet Union and Malaysia admitted to the Afro-Asian group. But the Afro-Asians and the non-aligned differed in their diagnosis of the international situation and applied different remedies to it. Only, non-alignment proved the better physician. It saw how the international context had changed between 1955 and 1961, from political and military aggrandisement by one power to the imminence of a clash between the two which would ruin the world. Therefore it quickly re-adjusted the outlook which had been generated by the Bandung summit without in any way weakening its resolve to destory imperialism wherever it survives as yet and to reinforce the independence, not only in

the juridical but in every sense of the word, of the countries which had recently won their freedom.

The samse readiness to change when the situation changes has been shown by non-alignment since the Belgrade summit. Even when it was still deeply concerned over the danger of the cold war suddently becoming hot it began to think also of the economic problems of the underdeveloped. Immediately after the Belgrade summit Tito, Nasser and Nehru held a far-sighted inner conclave in Cairo and devoted almost the whole of their time to the need for and methods of economic cooperation. As the danger of war between the Big Powers receded, non-alignment turned its attention more and more to the residual dangers of clashes at other levels and to the economic aspects of international relations while its opposition to the older forms of imperialism remained undiminished.

In 1964, the Cairo summit of the non-aligned countries produced the most comprehensive statement ever made till then about the urgent need for economic cooperation among the member countries and between them and the industrially advanced countries of Europe and America ; this is the theme of one full chapter out of the 11 chapters of the Cairo Declaration. Another full chapter reiterates the deep concern of the non-aligned with the countries which are still subjected to colonialism but three more chapters discuss at some length certain principles for the settlement of disputes which can be as usefully adopted by the non-aligned countries in their relations with each other as they may be employed for resolving disputes between the two Big Power and their blocs.

In the shift and range of its concerns, the Cairo Declaration presents a very instructive contrast with the Belgrade Declaration of three years earlier. This again bears witness to the willingness and ability of the non-aligned countries to step out of a groove. The evidence is carried a stage further by the contrast between the Cairo Declaration and the joint communique issued by the Foreign Ministers of the non-aligned countries after their meeting in Dar-es-Salaam in April, 1970.

With this record of adaptability to commend it, what non-alignment should be asked to prove is not, as it is being asked

by some—including some of its own members—whether it has any usefulness left after helping to avert a direct clash between the Big Two Powers, but how quickly it will begin to face the challenges of the '70s and how well it will face them. With some of them it is familiar already ; they reflect only a continuation of the cold war by other means. But with some, as with the challenges inherent in the tasks of economic cooperation, its actual acquaintance is at best superficial so far ; with others, such as those of the technological gap between the developed and the developing countries it is wholly unfamiliar as yet. Non-alignment justified itself during the decade of the '50s by firmly rolling back classical colonialism still further, and during the decade of the '60s by checking the neo-colonialism of the cold war, by intervening between the Big Two, and by helping to defuse their mutual hatred and tension. But the challenge of the '70s may be very different, and if non-alignment is not to begin to lose credibility it must give evidence very soon that it will face up to the new tasks as ably as it did to the old. This will be the test of its need and relevance in the future, not the rise and fall of the temperature of Super Power relations.

new challenges

The last meeting of the non-aligned countries during the decade of the '60s took place in Belgrade in July, 1969. There the leader of the Indian delegation recalled the grave danger which confronted the peace of the world at the start of the decade, when the Belgrade summit meeting was held. "The situation was so grave", he said, "that the Belgrade conference thought it necessary to appeal to the President of the USA and the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR 'to make direct approaches to each other and avert the conflict' which then seemed imminent. The conflict was fortunately averted and my delegation believes that the role of the non-aligned nations was indeed a factor that contributed to the maintenance of peace."

This is the accolade which the decade of the '60s conferred upon non-alignment. There is still greater praise for it in the contrast between what Nehru said at Belgrade in 1961 and what

President Julius Nyerere was able to say at Dar-es-Salaam in 1970. "Ever since the last war there have been many ups and downs, many crises, many dangerous situations", said Jawaharlal Nehru. "We have got over them somehow or other, but the present situation is by far the most dangerous that has arisen in the last fifteen years or so since the last war ended." But in 1970 Nyerere said to the Preparatory Meeting of the Foreign Ministers of non-aligned countries, "Inside the power blocs there is obviously a restless movement of peoples struggling to express their own desire for peace and freedom—and indeed for a little bit of non-alignment !.....Our non-alignment exists. It has already had, and it still has, a tremendous importance in the world. It has been a factor in the restlessness of people in satellite States ; it has been a factor in smudging the edges of the cold war ; it has been a factor in reducing the imminence of violent confrontation between the great powers, and it has prevented the division of the whole world into two—or even three—powerful and bitterly hostile groups."

This record of achievement should have enabled the non-aligned to enter the '70s with much greater confidence in their chosen philosophy of international relations. But many of them have begun to doubt its relevance to the new decade. They wonder what role there can be for the non-aligned countries when *detente* has started between the big powers. The question is plausible but it misrepresents both the *detente* and non-alignment ; it overlooks the distinguishing characteristics of the non-aligned countries, the permanent needs from which they stem and the durable role which follows from them.

Because of the relief it affords to an anxiety shared by everyone, the *detente* is liable to be overestimated by some. Its durability, in the first place, is not assured as yet. There have been spells of peaceableness before, which were followed by the sudden heightening of tensions again. Between 1953 and 1955, there was the Korean Armistice, the Geneva Accords, the Austrian Treaty and the visit of the German Chancellor to Moscow. But in 1956 came the Hungarian revolt and its suppression and the Anglo-French invasion of the Suez. A direct and all-out war between the Super Powers, such as is

believed unlikely now because of the *detente* and the balance of terror, did not occur even then and perhaps was unlikely. Yet the peace of the world was severely shaken. And it can be again, because the *detente* has not ended, nor can it end, the rivalry between the interests of the big powers.

But even if the big powers were on the most unaggressive terms, and not only with each other but with every other country, the tasks of non-alignment would not come to an end. Only in a very narrow and shortsighted view, too rigidly circumscribed by some recent events, is the relevance of non-alignment to be measured only in terms of the fluctuations in the politics of the cold war. Its role on the other hand antedates the formation of the power blocs and is autonomous of their fate. Nehru for instance prescribed non-alignment for India long before the cold war broke out and the blocs were formed ; his arguments were valid for other countries too which became independent in the wake of the struggle for freedom waged in Asia and Africa before and after World War II. In proportion as they were valid, they won acceptance and the area of non-alignment started to expand before the CENTO and SEATO pacts came into being. In fact the true parentage of non-alignment goes back to the Asian Relations Conference held in New Delhi in 1947, seven years before SEATO was formed and eight years before CENTO.

At every subsequent meeting, and especially at the summit meetings held in Belgrade and Cairo, the non-aligned countries accepted certain responsibilities. Most of them remain unfulfilled as yet. The Belgrade summit for example found it "essential that the non-aligned countries should participate in solving outstanding international issues concerning peace and security in the world, as none of them can remain unaffected by or indifferent to these issues." This obligation, as further spelt out in Belgrade, goes much beyond the role these countries played during the decades of the '60s, in reducing the tensions of the cold war ; the obligation is not extinguished by the decline of the cold war.

The Belgrade Declaration went on to identify 27 specific tasks for the non-aligned countries. Most of them are still

with us almost ten years later. So are the five which India defined at the Cairo summit. The Cairo Declaration itself goes a great deal further. With a clarity and detail which are lacking in the earlier documents of the non-aligned, it sets out the obligations of non-alignment in eleven chapters. Most of the countries which attended the summit—twice as many as had met in Belgrade—accepted all the obligations, and all of them accepted most. But they have not been met so far ; until they are, it cannot be said that non-alignment has no further tasks and therefore no relevance left. They are unfulfilled and unfamiliar responsibilities ; between them they constitute the challenge of the '70s.

The principal challenge will be that of low combustion warfare and of a lower form of neo-colonialism. "Aware that ideological differences are necessarily a part of the growth of human society," said the Belgrade Declaration, "the participating countries consider that peoples and governments shall refrain from any use of ideologies for the purpose of waging cold war, exercising pressure, or imposing their will." But these are the very purposes which will come to the fore as the spectre of a big power conflict recedes. Aware that the other side will only make a graduated response, not a nuclear strike, which is inhibited by the fear of devastating retaliation, each will be tempted to try probing exercises in controlled warfare which are easily called off before the threat of retaliation rises above the maximum acceptable threshold.

With this apprehension clearly in their minds, at the summit meeting in Cairo the non-aligned countries gave repeated warnings against the danger that the next problem may be the danger of limited and local wars and pressures and coercion which stop short of war but nevertheless undermine the freedom of smaller countries. They welcomed the "confidence displayed by peoples still under foreign domination, and by those whose rights and sovereignty are being violated by imperialism and neo-colonialism, in the highly positive role which the non-aligned countries are called upon to play in the settlement of international problems and disputes." But the challenges to this role which they enumerated show how far they have to go as yet before they can claim that the role has been effectively played.

In Chapter I they noted that imperialism still constitutes "a basic source of international tension and conflict", that "military and other assistance" is being given to "certain countries to enable them to perpetuate by force colonialist and neo-colonialist situations", that "colonialist attempts to maintain unequal relationships, particularly in the economic field, are continuing." In Chapter II the Declaration regretted that "the right of peoples to self-determination....is still violated or its exercise denied in many regions of the world." In Chapter III that "the inhuman racial policies of South Africa" still "constitute a threat to international peace and security." In Chapter V that the USA is seeking "to impose changes in the political, economic and social system" chosen by the people of Cuba and that "foreign interference in the internal affairs of the countries of Indo-China continues." All these challenges can be enumerated again today and with equal truth six years after the Cairo Declaration. A list of what has been done to meet them would be relatively brief.

The non-aligned as a group, as well as many of the non-aligned countries individually, continue to be riddled with precisely the kind of severe weaknesses which invite foreign interference and give openings and opportunities to imperialist ambition. Racial, religious, cultural and territorial frictions exist between and within several of the non-aligned countries. In some cases they have broken out into smouldering warfare, which offers hospitality to military intervention by the big powers, directly or by proxy, by which they try to establish or extend their areas of dominance Since the Belgrade summit there have been several examples of such local warfare being fanned into a blaze by interventionist ambitions. The fault may be history's. From Vietnam to Congo, independence came to many of the countries of Asia and Africa in a manner and with a background which breeds internal dissension and friction with neighbours. But the price is being paid by these countries, not by history, and the bill will continue to mount until ways are found of extinguishing these threats to freedom and sovereignty or at least their manipulation by the big powers. The Cairo Declaration expounded certain principles. But they have yet to be converted into practice.

a slippery summit

The non-aligned countries can justly congratulate themselves when they assemble in Lusaka for their third summit conference. Their number is larger now than ever before. At the Belgrade summit in 1961 there were only 25 full members round the table. At Cairo, in 1964 the number rose to 47. Now it stands at 60 and includes delegations from four continents. More Latin American countries have joined them now which gives them the same advantage of diversity as the Arab-Asians acquired at the United Nations when they became Afro-Asians.

More than their numbers, their achievement in international politics in the '60s should please the non-aligned as they view the world from the Lusaka summit ; the picture is better for them than it appeared either from Cairo or Belgrade. Since the end of World War II there has never been a time when a major clash between the Super Powers has appeared less likely, and since easing the tensions of the cold war was the one objective towards which the non-aligned countries worked ever since their inception, they can legitimately claim some credit for this very significant change for the better in the political climate of the world.

But from this very cause for satisfaction comes the greatest challenge to the philosophy of international relations which the non-aligned countries have upheld so steadfastly all these years. Has their effort not outlived the purpose which they served so well, it is beginning to be asked. The whole *raison d'etre* of their banding together for the past ten years at least was their conviction that it was up to them to dispel the danger of a big power clash which would be ruinous not only for the combatants but also for the world as a whole. If the danger has now passed, it is argued by some, should they not disband themselves ? Therefore in the very moment of their achievement lies the danger that they might come to regard themselves and be regarded by the world as irrelevant to the decade of the '70s.

In theory the usefulness of non-aligned is far from over yet—in fact it could be much greater than it has ever been. All the non-aligned countries are also under-developed as well, and as

such the '70s hold out a prospect for them which can only be described as grim. During the years of the cold war they could at least take advantage of the competitive wooing of the uncommitted world by the two main leaders of the world's economy. Now that the competition is over, there are no suitors left. The aligned may still be able to coax gifts and rewards from the leaders of the alliances for services rendered in the past with faithfulness. But not the non-aligned. They will have to fend for themselves in a world which is becoming increasingly indifferent to their needs.

The record of the aid-giving countries during the second half of the '60s is most discouraging as it is. In spite of the provisions of the Final Act of UNCTAD I, an organisation brought into being largely in response to the Cairo Declaration of the non-aligned countries, "no new commodity agreement of primary products of interest to the developing countries has been concluded", as the Charter of Algiers adopted by the group of 77 of UNCTAD points out ; the developed countries have further heightened their protective barriers against agricultural items of which the developing countries are more efficient producers ; the average prices for the primary products exported by the developing countries have decreased by 7% since 1958 while those of the primary products exported by the developed have increased by 10% ; the market for some of the natural products of the developing countries has shrunk because of the invention of and competition offered by their synthetics substitutes ; and even the developed socialist countries have not, in spite of professions, made any progress towards transferability of the credit balances held with them by the developing countries.

As a result, the share of the developing countries in the total export trade of the world shrank from 31% in 1950 to 27% in 1953, 21% in 1960, 19.3% in 1966 and only 18% in 1968. The Charter of Algiers points out that "the purchasing power of exports from developing countries has steadily declined....(and) the loss in purchasing power amounted annually to approximately 2½ billion dollars." This figure represents "nearly half of the flow of external public financial resources to developing countries,"

While development resources resulting from trade have thus declined, those from aid have also come down. In absolute terms, they began to level off from about 1968 onwards. As a proportion of the gross national product of the developed countries they came down from 0·87% in 1961 to 0·62% in 1966 and are now only a little more than half the target of one per cent of gross national product which was unanimously accepted by the developed countries.

The developing countries have increasingly protested against this, but so far without avail. All the joint declarations of the non-aligned countries have drawn attention to it, and since the Cairo Declaration with increasing detail and cogency. Yet the Foreign Ministers of the non-aligned countries, when they met at Dar-es-Salaam in April, 1970, were obliged to express "profound disappointment" with the fact that "progress towards the formulation of a strategy for the second Development Decade has commanded universal international support only at the level of generalities." In a special joint communique they described "the continuance of outdated and iniquitous pattern of economic relationships with the more economically advanced countries" as "the real threat" to the independence of the non-aligned countries. "In this situation", they said "developing countries are at the mercy of forces often beyond their control." There is no sign at all at present that the situation will soon improve for the better for the non-aligned countries.

The non-aligned countries thus find that they have to rely upon themselves more, not less, in the '70s than they did in the '60s. "It is only through fostering the economic solidarity of developing countries...that material safeguards can be devised against their vulnerability to outside pressures." But the experience of developing countries so far suggests that this is easier said than done. The countries of South-East Asia, for example, have tried, in turn, through ECAFE, ASA, and ASEAN to step up help to each other by increasing the trade between and among them. But they have been frustrated by two handicaps which operate simultaneously. First, their economies are not sufficiently diverse to compliment each other ; most are surplus in primary products and deficient in manufacturing capacity

Second, the prejudices of new nationhood have so far permitted them only to take the negative step of reducing trade barriers against each other and not the positive one of integrated planning and development of the region, especially in respect of investment policies.

The non-aligned countries, as a whole, are somewhat less vulnerable to the first handicap than those of South-East Asia. The climatic spread from north-west Africa to the eastern limits of monsoon Asia is such that it has given greater economic diversity to the non-aligned group as a whole. They could, therefore, find complimentary agricultural and mineral resources more easily. But the second handicap has so far operated as implacably for the non-aligned as for the South-East Asian region.

Here too, there are increasing signs of sad experience teaching the unavoidable lessons. The joint communique issued by the Foreign Ministers at Dar-es-Salaam, which will be the most influential document on economic affairs before the Lusaka summit, welcomes projects "aimed at working out sub-regional, regional and inter-regional arrangements." It went a step further and urged "mutual agreement on the location of large-scale multi-national and multi-regional industries." But actual experience does not yet suggest that these lessons will be acted upon much. Even the three leading non-aligned countries, India, Yugoslavia and the UAR, the cordiality between whom is rather higher than in the non-aligned group as a whole, do not yet have a great deal to show for specific plans of economic coordination which have been exchanged between them for some time.

The challenge of the times, in essence, is that each country should agree to sacrifice some of its notions of absolute sovereignty so that the whole may not have to be surrendered to quarters which are in any case inimical. It is only insofar as the non-aligned countries give evidence at Lusaka of their willingness to make this sacrifice that they will be able to prove the continued usefulness of what has been a unique diplomatic and political phenomenon, namely, the association between a

larger group of countries than has come together in any international organisation outside the formal structure of the United Nations, its agencies and associations affiliated with it.

wars by proxy

Next only to the problems of economic cooperation, India plans to concentrate most on British arms for South Africa at the non-aligned summit conference to be held at Lusaka. All the soundings taken by her so far suggest that she will get a good response. Two main streams of the non-aligned sentiment will converge upon it. The more obvious and the better established is the feeling of revulsion and fear which the white racist regime in South Africa evokes, especially among the non-aligned countries of Africa. The less obvious yet, but potentially far reaching, is the growing suspicion that more is at stake than the black and white balance in the southern part of the continent.

The realisation is spreading among the non-aligned countries that the world has not been made an easy place for them, by the current *detente* between the big two powers : the receding tide of the cold war has only uncovered more problems which litter the shores of international diplomacy. Insofar as a major purpose of non-alignment was to keep the big powers from flying at each other's throat, there will be a feeling achievement at Lusaka ; in this sense the circumstances are far happier than even at the time of the Cairo summit in 1964, let alone the Belgrade summit of 1961. But no one believes, nor has anyone any reason to do so, that the *detente* means the end of all big power rivalries.

The danger of a direct clash may have ended, but not pursuit of rival interests. At the moment the pursuit is unobtrusive and almost pacific. But this may be only because the big powers too have not yet adjusted their sights to the limits of ambition in the nuclear age. Like the non-aligned countries, they too have lived with a single thought for more than ten years : the possibility of a head-on collision. Like them, they too have to take their bearings afresh in a world in which that

possibility has been deterred out of existence. But the dynamics of power will drive them one day to a renewed pursuit of ambition by more active means than diplomatic jostling. War by proxy, it is feared, is one of the means they will choose, especially in areas where their interests overlap. Southern Asia is one of them, and in both the littorals, to the east and west of Indian shores. This is the large danger that is seen in the reinforcement of South African power.

In low-key diplomacy, India has been probing the problem with other non-aligned countries. The chain of preparatory meetings for the Lusaka summit has offered suitable occasions for just over a year. The approach has been to suggest simultaneous action at two different levels. First, the non-aligned countries should try even harder than they have to ensure the dismantling of the rival military alliances. They should aim their efforts not only at the super powers themselves as they have done so far but also, and even more, at the junior partners on each side. The task may be just a little bit easier now because of the new military strategies which are available to both sides : they make the super powers less dependent and therefore less keen on their military pacts, and their partners a little more willing to leave the pact because they are less ardently wanted.

The second level of the action suggested by India is that the non-aligned countries should assume a responsibility they have avoided so far. They should understand and accommodate the genuine fears of those countries which took shelter in alliances because they sincerely thought they were under a threat. The non-aligned should hold out a credible assurance of collective material and moral support for any non-aligned country if its independence and integrity are threatened by force.

To add to the credibility of such an assurance, India has also sounded the big powers themselves to see if they will backstop it : an assurance under-written by big powers will carry greater conviction. On the face of it this effort contradicts the apprehension that the big powers will want to use the smaller as their pawns, when they resume their confrontation

and carry on the cold war by other means. But the belief here is that if the non-aligned agree to formulate a clear assurance, the big powers will find it difficult to avoid endorsing it, and once they endorse it they will find it that much more difficult to disregard it later.

The response India has had so far is very mixed. The U.S. gave its consent to begin with, subject only to the condition that the Soviet Union must give a matching consent. The Soviet Union proved willing to give more than consent : it floated its own version of collective security which is similar to India's but carries a different stamp. Thereafter the U.S. became distinctly more lukewarm—whether because it feared complications in Vietnam, or because it could no longer regard the scheme as truly non-aligned is not known, or at any rate is not stated in New Delhi. Of the leading non-aligned countries which have been asked for their views, most have given their consent in theory but fewer are willing as yet to make a firm commitment.

But the real hurdle will come after the success of the present efforts, assuming that they succeed. It may be easier to formulate a general assurance than to decide in particular cases as to which kind of threat from which source and to which kind of frontiers will set the assurance into motion.

The difficulties encountered in formulating the Cairo Declaration are most instructive. As many as seven of the non-aligned countries there — Afghanistan, Somalia, Morocco, Syria, Cambodia, Saudi Arabia and Jordan — recorded in the Declaration their "reservations" about chapters prescribing the "inviolability of established frontiers" and "respect for the frontiers existing when the States gained their independence." Nigeria and Tunisia had similar reservations about "national reconciliation in the Congo" and Malawi to certain references to Portuguese colonialism. India was not without her own reservations though they related to the comparatively simple problem of defining which kind of territory can have the right of self-determination.

The non-aligned may yet be able to act as a group in containing the threats of the aligned ; if not at Lusaka then at later summits they may also be able to hold out the assurance which India advocates for countries which agree to leave the web of alignments and come over to the liberated flock. But this will not be enough for preventing big power rivalries from seeping into the disputes of the small and rocking the peace. Mutual clashes between the non-aligned will be an alternative cat's paw for them even if the pacts disappear or there are no clashes between those who are aligned and those who are not. Therefore non-alignment will not be proof against the severe shocks of international conflicts as it wishes to be, until it extends the process of dismantling tensions from the aligned countries to the non-aligned as well. Of its willingness to do so there is no sign as yet.

New Directions And Consequences

For all the drama in Kissinger's visit to Peking in July, 1971, the triangular relationship between China, the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. had begun to change its direction at least as far back as early 1969. The consequences for India were also beginning to emerge, both as regards her relations with these three countries and her place in global and regional diplomacy. This is the theme of the four articles in this section. The first two are about relations with the Soviet Union, the third about relations with the United States and the fourth about their global and regional meaning for India.

The articles were published between April, 1969 and April, 1971. Individual dates have now been inserted in the text of the articles, but the chronology has been drastically telescoped to suit the sequence of themes.

neither friends nor brothers ?

The Russians would need to be very unperceptive not to have noticed our long silence on the Sino-Soviet dispute. (This was published on April 12, 1969). And they would need to be exceptionally generous not to take adverse notice of it. The consequences of causing them quite needless disappointment have not been given the weight they deserve in the rather clever calculations which went on in South Block until last Sunday.

Up to a point the Russians have themselves to blame and Indian foreign policy makers do not hesitate in saying so. They recall that for 15 days after China's massive attack on India in 1962, Russian pronouncements favoured China, not India. Still more pertinently they recall the more recent Indian grievance that Russia has ignored our protests against the supply of arms to Pakistan.

Why should India, they ask, be eager to make public protestations of support for Russia, especially when she has not even been invited to do so ? In private and bilateral discussions, with Marshal Grechko, for instance, when he was in New Delhi and later in talks with the Russian Ambassador, India has made it known that her sympathies are with Russia. That, it is thought, is sufficient for a while. More should follow only if Russia asks for it or—better still—gives some evidence of greater willingness to heed India's protests a little bit more. India should not rush in where most countries have feared to tread, including the East European allies of Russia.

Particular point is made here in this connection of a statement attributed, in the Pakistan press, to Marshal Grechko. During his visit to that country last month, he is reported to have said that Russia was giving arms to Pakistan to make it strong against its enemies. Since no one now imagines that Pakistan regards China as her enemy, India has been naturally unhappy about this statement. The Russians deny it in private but have not yet responded to India's request for a public denial.

Indian hesitations make sense on the surface. But do they in fact ? How do we compare Russia's dilemma in 1962 with the clear choice before us in 1969 ? Although the Sino-Soviet rift was beginning to be visible even then, the Russians had not given up the alliance as lost. Hence the difficulty they faced in choosing between Indian "friends" and the Chinese whom they still preferred to call "brothers". How come that despite the grievous injury done to us by China we do not give Russia the benefit of either description ?

Russia was still on the defensive at that time against the vituperative allegation by China that it was ganging up with "imperialists" against Peking. Through no fault of ours, and purely because the necessity was imposed upon us by China, we too had sought and accepted US arms aid in a manner and in quantities which made some of the charge of being allies of imperialism rub off on us. This made it still more embarrassing for Russia to side too openly with India at that precise time. What prevents us being on the side of Moscow today without mental reservations ?

The analogy of the East Europeans is not very sound either, no more than that of the present US attitude would be. Both have certain calculations to make about China—the former in the context of international communism's politics, the latter in the context of the opening the Sino-Soviet fighting might offer for improving Sino-American relations. Is either of them of any relevance to India today ? There is no reason why we should not hope that one day our relations with China will also improve. But are we hoping to do so at the expense of our relations with Russia ?

Indian diplomacy should not miss any opportunity—and be it said to its credit that lately it has not—of sending signals to China that we are not averse to improving relations with it ; we cannot remain perpetually frozen in a state of enmity with it or permanently hoisted on the procedural dispute which has stood in the way of negotiations for the past five years. But should we drown the certainties of Russia's friendship in the waters of this imaginary thaw ? This would be profligacy in anticipation of good fortune ; or worse—in excess of any possible good fortune.

Much more justifiable is India's annoyance over the supply of Russian arms to Pakistan. It would be so even without the unnecessary pinprick of the reported statement by Marshal Grechko. But it is important not to relapse into the error we used to make once, of seeing each country's relations with us through the prism of its relations with Pakistan. The Sino-Soviet clash has its own logic and imperatives. We should read its meaning in the light of our own experience of China and in the light of China's purposes and ambitions.

No one connected with shaping Indian foreign policy seems to have any illusion that China is only fighting for the future of Damansky. Much larger objectives than bits of territory are involved, as they were in 1962 also. Embarrassing Russia is one, whether in respect of the Red Summit on which Russia has set its heart or in its relations with the East Europeans (which makes further nonsense of any comparison between our hesitations and the East Europeans'). Squashing any possible voicing of pro-Russian sympathies at China's own ninth party Congress is another. Yet another may well be to create the nationalist fervour China needs to persuade further millions to migrate to the relatively empty borderlands from the congested but familiar central and southern China ; ' to hold back the Russians" would be a good slogan for filling up the fertile but unhealthy and uninviting empty spaces along the Ussuri.

These motives are more germane to India's experience of China than any pleading by Peking about "unequal treaties" (as though it was by equal treaties that Chairman Mao's imperial predecessors acquired these territories in the first place !) or any doubts we may have about the rights and wrongs of the rival claims on Damansky, doubts which are not very different from those which annoyed us so when others expressed them about, say, Longju.

So forcefully germane are China's ambitions that it is strange we should have gone on waiting for an invitation from Russia before expressing our opinions about them or in support of Russia. In fact uninvited support, especially if promptly expressed, would have been more gracious—as well as better investment in the context of our difficulties with our

neighbours, for meeting which we will continue to need Russia's help for many years to come—than one which everyone can see as tardy and the knowing as a bargain.

The desire to drive a bargain would have been justifiable in many other circumstances. It would also have been in keeping with the new and maturer style of India diplomacy. Many a time in an earlier past we have believed our bargaining capacity to be lower and our options to be fewer than in fact they are ; we have therefore adopted even lower postures than we needed to. Or at the other extreme we have been imprudently eager to rush in with comment where waiting would have been better. Thereby we have encouraged our friends to take us for granted and the less friendly to write us off. Our national interest has not been served by these tactics.

Nor is it served, however, if in the far reaching and burgeoning dispute between China and Russia—between one who betrayed us and since has been implacably hostile, and another who has stood by us in varying situations—we seem niggardly and churlish in expressions of support. To show on this occasion that we too can drive a bargain is to take the right step but on the wrong road.

Other opportunities are available—Swaran Singh used one excellently well in Parliament last November in answering questions on Russian arms for Pakistan—to assure the Kremlin that we have not become its camp followers, or to send signals to Peking or Washington that we are not unresponsive to change.

In spite of all that, however, we have allowed one occasion after another to pass without speaking up. Related questions have been raised in Parliament and at Congress party meetings but they have elicited only the minimum explanation of the Government's position. Even reiteration of respect for historical frontiers and opposition to attempts to change them by force, both basic ingredients of India's own policies, have not fallen from the Government's lips in public. At the moment of writing the only hope that it will awaits the Government's reply to the debate on the External Affairs Ministry's demands. If it does fall then, it had better be accompanied by

some evidence that the waiting has brought us something which promptness would not have.

soviet stakes in india

The attitude Russia has taken to the uprising in East Bengal brings to an end a phase of Soviet diplomacy which was very irksome for India and a great irritant in Indo-Soviet relations. This was the phase when the Soviet Union was trying to win leverage in Pakistan, if necessary at the expense of India's susceptibilities and interests. Now the Soviet Union has put an end to that It may, as a result, win leverage in Bangla Desh but that would be far from unwelcome to India. (This was published on April 30, 1971. On April 2, President Podgorny had written his famous letter to President Yahya Khan, strongly disapproving of the happenings in East Bengal.)

The first phase of the Soviet Union's relations with the subcontinent was shaped by the cold war. Because of its intense hostility towards the United States, the Soviet Union was also hostile towards America's ally. Pakistan, and cordial towards India in the same measure as the United States was not. Indo-Soviet cordiality during this phase was less a sign of genuine mutual regard than a side effect of the compulsions of the cold war. The relationship gained in warmth from Moscow's appreciation of India's socio-economic outlook during the Nehru era, but essentially it was an insurance policy taken out jointly by the Soviet Union and India against the joint hostility of the United States and Pakistan towards them. There was a quite unambiguous Soviet preference for India as against Pakistan and an almost equally unambiguous Indian preference for the Soviet Union as against the United States. But the Soviet Union and India were not responding to each other so much as to a stimulus provided by a third party to both of them.

This phase began to fade out in the early sixties, when Soviet and American interests in the Indian sub-continent began to converge instead of conflicting. Responding to a stimulus now provided by China, the United States and the Soviet Union equally began to work for stability on the sub-continent; instability, they felt, would work to China's advantage. Hence the discouragement they began to offer to rivalry between India

and Pakistan over Kashmir or anything else. The United States began to lose interest in encouraging Pakistan to use the Kashmir issue against India, and the Soviet Union began to discourage the hitherto strong Indian belief that, secure in the support of the Soviet Union, India could entirely ignore Pakistan's interest in the Kashmir problem. In consequence of this change, the United States also gave up trying to impose any solution of its own making upon India and Pakistan. Its pressure, if any, was exerted only towards a bilateral solution.

The stability which was hoped for did not follow, however, because China stepped into the shoes of the U.S.A. and, as much in order to embarrass the Soviet Union as to put a curb on India, it began to woo Pakistan and to encourage it against India. With the visible disintegration of the Soekarno regime in Indonesia, India was emerging as the country of the closest interest to the Soviet Union in the whole area from the Suez to Tokyo Bay, with the exception of North Vietnam; Soviet political and economic investment in India was growing to a size greater than anywhere else in this region. Therefore from China's point of view it made eminent good sense to keep India off-balance, and Pakistan was more than willing to provide the means for doing so.

It was the Soviet response which did not make good sense, whether from India's point of view or the Soviet Union's own. Throughout the second half of the 'sixties, that is not only from the Tashkent conference onwards but from a little while before that, the Soviet Union began to invest in Pakistan as well. It not only continued to discourage India from taking Soviet support on Kashmir for granted ; it also began to cultivate the new military group in Pakistan which was emerging under the leadership of General Yahya Khan and it stepped up the rate of investment when General Yahya Khan became the President of Pakistan. The Soviet Union might have done so in order to checkmate the emerging political power of Bhutto, a strong champion of China, but it exposed itself to three simultaneous disadvantages.

It proved to the countries of Asia and Africa that closer relations with China would give them an important bargaining

advantage in their relations with the Soviet Union ; this was a compliment to China's power which did little good to the Soviet image. Second, it sparked off a competitive wooing of Pakistan which could have cost the Soviet Union dearly because the United States was again stepping into the bidding on the other side, this time along with China. Third, it could have imperilled the returns on the Soviet Union's enormous investments in India without compensating advantages in Pakistan. The Soviet Union made the mistake during this phase of taking India for granted, probably without realising how rapidly disenchantment with the Soviet Union was spreading through India as a consequence. At the same time Pakistan gave no indication whatever that its fervour for China was cooling off ; it did not flinch in its loyalty to China even when China began to send up signals that it was willing to lower the temperature of its hostility towards India. But since big powers do not change their ways very quickly—witness America in Vietnam—the Soviet Union would have probably continued its policy for some years longer if the events in Bangla Desh had not intervened.

The Soviet Union will support Bagla Desh if the movement does not lose credibility. Its first preference would be that democratic civilian rule should be set up in Pakistan, replacing military dictatorship, and that it should respect and accommodate the aspirations of the people of its eastern wing. There is very little doubt that behind the scenes the Soviet Union is continuing to press Islamabad to try to win back the people of East Bengal if it can instead of only trying to terrorise them into submission. It is also pressing India—and with added success because of the boldly sympathetic stand it has taken towards the Bangla Desh movement—not to take any irreversible step while these efforts continue. But if these efforts fail and the movement proves that there is a viability in it and it can prevail with some outside help, then the Soviet Union will not restrain India from helping Bangla Desh to resist the terror of the army. India has impressed upon the Soviet Union that she regards the future of the Bangla Desh movement as a matter of the deepest consequence to her. But India has also a stake in carrying the Soviet Union with her if she can. Hence the

willingness to wait for some time while the Soviet Union sees what its diplomacy can do.

At first sight it may seem strange that the Soviet Union should even think of turning its back upon President Yahya Khan despite the policy it had followed almost throughout the sixties and the investments it has made in President Yahya Khan himself. But its reasons for doing so become clearer upon a closer look. Until the beginning of March, it appeared that President Yahya Khan was sincerely trying to make a reasonable compromise with East Bengal and to set up a civilian democratic regime which, being acceptable to the people, would be more or less stable. If that had happened, the Soviet Union would not have had to choose between East and West Pakistan. It could also have continued the policy of counterpoise by which, more or less jointly with the United States, it has been trying to establish the kind of stability both of them want in southern Asia, balancing off the Indian mass with the countervailing weight provided by Pakistan and the smaller countries around the subcontinent such as Nepal and Ceylon. The main custodian of this policy is the Soviet Union now, because the United States is leaving the external management of this area increasingly to Moscow. But Washington more than concurs in it, and from time to time joins in.

But when President Yahya Khan so brutally alienated East Bengal, the Soviet Union was forced to choose between India and Pakistan, and at a lower level between the two wings of Pakistan as well, and the significance of its first note to Islamabad is that it clearly spells out the choice which has been made by Moscow—India at one level, Bangla Desh at the other. The reasons for these choices are not far to seek. After the strong demonstration of political stability which India has just given, even a well-knit Pakistan would have been a poor counterpoise for India, but a divided Pakistan could not even hope to be one. The Soviet Union was thus forced to the conclusion—with a meaning for the United States, China and the smaller countries south of the Himalayas, which is a separate theme by itself—that hopes of stability in southern Asia have to be clearly anchored on India now, and the choice must be made unambi-

guously. Southern Asia can have only one centre of gravity henceforth, not one centre balanced off by another cluster of centres. This time the choice has not been made in response to an external stimulus but in recognition of an intrinsic worth demonstrated by India.

As between the two wings, Moscow had to choose East Bengal for three very clear reasons. Westwards from India, Soviet influence has a firm base in the Arab Republics which it lacks in the whole area to the east of India because even North Vietnam is in an ambivalent position. Therefore West Pakistan is expendable for it, East Bengal is not. Secondly, it was important for the Soviet Union to anticipate China in the race for influence in an area which is not only the western abutment of South-East Asia but in China's hands can be a much more important lever against India than Tibet can ever be. Thirdly, by becoming the first and so far the only major power to reprimand President Yahya Khan, the Soviet Union greatly improved its standing in India (even Mr. Rajagopalachari has been forced to give it some praise) whereas exactly the reverse would have happened if it had fumbled in the way the United States has done, or had supported Islamabad as Peking has done.

This choice, once as clearly made as it was in the first Soviet note, cannot be unmade by the second no matter what it says. The Soviet Union has stepped up its stakes in this country and is not going to jeopardise them by withdrawing disapproval of what President Yahya Khan has done. If it dilutes the disapproval, it will only do so in the hope that he may yet be made to give East Bengal an honourable place in an undivided Pakistan. But in that case too Pakistan will not be available as a counterpoise against India, with East Bengal taking a rightful place in it. The theory of stability in southern Asia by inflating a counterpoise to India has been drowned in the Padma.

face to face, softly

Nixon's visit to New Delhi—in the first week of August, 1969, a few days before the publication of this article—has given more than partial satisfaction to host and guest, and both in terms of bilateral relations and in the larger regional setting.

At no time have the leaders of the two countries met with fewer problems outstanding between them. The spectre of pacts did not worry them, nor the noises of non-alignment. Neither found it necessary to educate the other about the dangers of blind attitudes to communist countries or communism ; each side has learnt much since the days China was brother to New Delhi and the presiding deity in Washington was Dulles. Controversies over foreign aid or the rival claims of the public and private sectors stood discreetly in the background, and even those two perennial irritants were quiet—the future of Kashmir and India's relations with Pakistan. The talks were, therefore, relaxed and cordial, among officials as well as at the political summit ; the atmosphere aided mutual understanding if not agreements.

At no time have the leaders of the two countries met when their foreign policies were less rigid and more willing to profit from a better understanding of the realities of life. India has grown a little less than ardent for Russia, America a little less bitter about China. In fact the USA is seeking opportunities for improving relations with China and advising all its friends to do so too. Both sense uneasiness in South-East Asian countries. Neither thinks it wise to shore up the area either with paper declarations only or only with military hardware and brasshats. Neither side regards communist interest in the area as necessarily anathema but each desires greater recognition of dangers, local or imported, and safeguards against them, again local or imported.

The setting being propitious, some discussion took place on ideas Mrs. Gandhi has been talking about since the beginning of this summer about international assurances for the security of the area. New Delhi has expected for several weeks now that in appropriate circumstances, Washington would respond. To quote from *The Citizen* of June 14, when Mrs. Gandhi spoke of "international guarantees for the frontiers of the smaller countries" during her tour of South-East Asia, "the response from the latter was one of interest and expectation. The U.S.A. indicated that its own response would be similar if the Russians do not take a hostile view." Now that

it is known that the Russians do not, American encouragement is not expected to be negligible provided the move for guarantees has local roots in the areas.

The subject was discussed in greater detail by officials than by Nixon and Mrs. Gandhi but it was made plain at both levels, and by both sides, that what was and should be meant was not anything like alliances but undertakings, preferably joint, that the frontiers and the integrity of the countries of the region would be respected. There was no specific discussion about what should be done, especially if it had to be done jointly, in the event of any country—particularly China or North Vietnam, with its enormous power of trans-frontier infiltration—decided not to respect this obligation. But the hope was entertained that clear commitment by all the major members of the UN, and by India as one of the largest countries of the area, would be a sufficient reassurance to some and warning to others.

triangles within triangles

Opinion in New Delhi, especially in the two ministries most directly concerned—External Affairs and Defence—is settling back to the acceptance of a few basic realities. First, that China is simply not interested in anything which can be properly described as a peaceful settlement with India. The desire for one is very strong in New Delhi, and rightly. Having successfully taken the measure of Pakistan in 1965, India would be freed of any major external threat if she could settle the dispute with China. This would liberate her from the present irksome dependence, sometimes on the Soviet Union and sometimes on the U.S.A.

Because of the desire, which is almost a yearning, Indian opinion rolls down the slopes of speculation like a pebble the moment China makes the slightest little gesture towards this country. The heart of Indian diplomacy flutters whenever a Chinese envoy is present at an airfield reception or sits through a banquet for India's President and Prime Minister in some third capital as in Kabul last week (that is a week before the publication of this article on June 4, 1969). But it is beginning to be realised that these gestures mean little. As a senior

member of the Cabinet put it last week: "We are now converted to what visitors who have been to Peking have been telling us for sometime, that China is convinced it does not need friends, it needs enemies." Some major shift in the balance of world power may change the view in Peking but prayers from New Dehli will not.

Second, that notwithstanding the good impression left behind by Air Marshal Nur Khan when he came to condole the death of Dr. Zakir Husain, no breakthrough in relations with Pakistan is to be expected in the near future. Several factors militate against this hope.

Third, that the days of the Khrushchev style friendship between India and the Soviet Union have not only ended but perhaps will never return. Not only has the exuberance of the former Soviet Premier been replaced by the more coldly calculated diplomacy of Mr. Kosygin ; the world which prompted the Soviet Union to show ardour in befriending India has also disappeared.

A change in Moscow's attitude is recognised and admitted at both ends of the South Block in New Delhi, in the External Affairs Ministry at the western end and in the Defence Ministry at the eastern. But it is in the latter that the full flavour of the admission comes through. The Defence Minister has been conspicuously vocal since November in pronouncing recognition of the new mood in Moscow ; for the last couple of months he has been even more so. Neither end questions Russia's motives or the basic ingredients of its friendship for India. Similarity of Russia's and India's interests are admitted in respect of China as well as stability on the sub-continent, and it is recognized that even if Russia's calculations are wrong in supplying arms to Pakistan, its intentions are not. Therefore, the present level of Indo-Soviet friendship is considered to be durable. But the level is sadly admitted to be lower than it was.

Along with this fact another is also admitted, that in shaping its policy of supplying arms to Pakistan, Russia will be guided by its own interests as it sees them, not by Indian sensibilities. The best that India can hope for by way of

compensation is probable and proportionate increase in the supply of arms to this country if it does not in the meantime work itself into a thoroughly bad temper and does not induce Russia to think of it as only a nuisance.

In so far as certitudes, even if unpleasant, are better guides than artificial hopes, India should be in a better position to see her policy priorities more clearly. But nearly all her bilateral relations which matter are subordinate to the great big triangle of international diplomacy today, and the meaning of this triangle is proving impossible to fathom. No one can predict how the balance of power will lie a few years hence between Washington, Moscow and Peking, and yet no diplomatic calculation can be completed without knowing the value of this enormous and mystifying variable. This triangle impinges upon almost any turn India may seek to take in relations which are directly of interest to her. Relations with each of these three countries must be calculated and modified in terms of those with the other two.

The axis of relations with Rawalpindi is only the base of three different triangles, with Peking, Moscow and Washington making the apex in turn. As if to remind us of this, the U.S. Secretary of State and the Soviet Prime Minister have been criss-crossing through the subcontinent in rapid succession and the Chinese Foreign Minister is expected in Pakistan soon. Mrs. Gandhi has just been visting Afghanistan, where Moscow on the one hand and Rawalpindi on the other could not have been far from her thoughts. She will leave for Tokyo later this month, where she and her Japanese opposite number will both be looking over their shoulder at Peking which is a powerful factor in an area of interest to India and Japan. The Indian Foreign Minister has been to Kathmandu, and China was a presence in the talks there as well.

Surrounded thus by the unfathomable, India can blunder if care is grievously abandoned in favour of passion. We made the mistake once in 1962, of making so much noise in the halls of public opinion that it confused us more than it frightened the enemy. In relations with Russia we are doing the same now. And to boot, in putting ourselves wrong with the Soviet

Union we are also reducing the chance of improving relations with the U.S.A. Our only complaint against the Soviet Union is that it has resumed supply of arms to Pakistan. But there is nothing to show that the U.S.A. will not. Rogers' refusal to commit himself notwithstanding, the USA has already said it will consider requests for arms "case by case." This is a phrase which can cover a great deal and is known to have covered partial arms releases already. Are we then going to be at odds with the U.S.A. also, throwing away the possibility building up in recent months of getting over the misunderstandings of recent years ? If so, we will have tilted the major triangle disastrously against us, ruining our hopes in respect of the smaller ones also.

As a frequent irritant in our external relations, the supply of arms to Pakistan by other countries should be firmly placed in perspective. Arms of almost any variety are available in any quantity from many different sources, through direct or more devious routes, to anyone willing to pay the price for them. The merchandise may be deadly, but straight deals in it are not something to which we can object. Any country which buys them reduces its investment in other forms of defence, especially if its resources, as Pakistan's, are not unlimited. If it wishes to pay this price, India cannot object. But by raising loud objections in season and out, and on every instalment of delivery, India only increases the diplomatic odds against her own self and makes the burden of the price a little lighter for Pakistan.

Yet if India sets the course with care she may find the unfathomable to be a sea of opportunity. The adventurers in Peking, themselves wholly unreliable as allies, have opened up the possibility for India to have sound relations with both the Russians and the Americans, regardless of whether the Sino-Indian dispute is settled or not.

The Russians are obviously taking the Chinese threat very seriously. They have made this the pivot of relations with countries on the Sino-Soviet periphery and are now seeking to bring Afghanistan also into the containing arc they are building rather in the manner of old George Kennan. They have now

gone so far as to suggest that these countries should form a collective security organization, an idea which in a different context would arouse their bitter hostility.

But this is neither an attempt to float a military security pact of the kind which India rightly loathes, nor to carve out a zone of Soviet influence. Rather this is a further development of what Mrs. Gandhi had herself suggested during her last tour of South-East Asia. She spoke at that time of international guarantees for the frontiers of the smaller countries.

The response from the latter, concerned over the aftermath of British and American withdrawal from S.E. Asia, was one of interest and expectation. The U.S.A. indicated its own response would be similar if the Russians did not take a hostile view. Now that the Russians themselves are talking in comparable terms, there should be some possibility of progress with Mrs. Gandhi's proposal. The visit of India's Foreign Secretary, Kaul, to Hanoi and other S.E. Asian capitals is also a propitious sign. But if the promise of the situation is to bear fruit, India will have to come out of her shell.

Cooperation within the region, uninvolved with military commitments or tutelage to one or another super power has always been close to her heart ; now it is not very far from her reach.

The Constant In Deep Waters

At the start of 1970 it appeared to be possible to speculate about a possible pattern in South-East Asia which would be valid for the coming decade; the main reason for this was that the war in Vietnam seemed to be phasing out. India's main priorities were now required to be that in pursuing what had always been a prominent constant in her foreign policy, she should take special account of the emerging position of Hanoi, should profit from the similarity of Soviet objectives in the area while at the same time not allowing her own objectives to be subordinated to another's, and should work for a clearer recognition of India's position by Japan.

The initiatives taken by India in this respect were in the right direction. But suddenly the Americans intensified the war by extending it into Cambodia, and the prospects of a regional personality of the kind desired by India—and separately and independently by the Soviet Union with some important differences—disintegrated once more. The following five articles discuss the rise and fall of this phase.

towards friendship

Mrs. Gandhi is visiting Japan at a time (iate in June, 1969, when this article was published) when chances of warmer relations with that country are better than they have been at any time since the brief euphoria which followed the formation of the Indian National Army almost a quarter century ago. Japan's attitude towards India has been one of polite superiority and courteous aloofness ; and who will deny that she had reasons for it ? But good relations with Japan mean much to India and are worth cultivating. Now there seems a chance that the aloofness may be ready to abate.

Many things have combined to make the circumstances auspicious. Not the least among them is Mrs. Gandhi herself. By all accounts of the anticipations aroused in Japan, she is assured of a warm personal welcome which will certainly enhance the welcome extended to her as India's Prime Minister. Part of this may be the rippling effect of the extraordinary welcome she received when she went to Australia, a welcome which host and guest will equally remember. Feeling acutely self-conscious as the only white country in a sea of Asians of many different colours, Australia was gratified by the visit of the Prime Minister of the second biggest Asian country. Mrs. Gandhi was also anxious to please and impress because India has been feeling for some time that good relations with Australia can help her to counter the haughtier in Japan.

With her reception in Australia a recent fact and well-observed in Japan, she might find the Japanese willing to be a little more cordial. Relations between Australia and Japan are of competitive co-existence, one part of that phrase meaning as much as the other, and the way the Indian wind blows can make a difference to the balance between them.

A subtler reason for expecting Japan to be more cordial this time is provided by the smaller countries of South-East Asia. There has been a perceptible change in their attitude to India, and Japan was made aware of this when the ECAFE agreed, against Japanese opposition but with the support of some of the South-East Asian countries, to set up, as India wanted, a ministerial conference for the economic development of the area. Japan has been anxious to develop other forums here, such as the ministerial conference for economic development which she has set up with the help of the countries to which she owes reparations. But when she discovered that some of these were also ready to go along with the Indian proposal she withdrew her own objection.

For many years past, the South-East Asian countries have not been willing to welcome India in the midst of their regional organizations. Their resistance came very clearly to the surface when ASEAN was formed. Any suggestion that India should also be in it was firmly resisted (and India did well at that time not to seem overeager to be in it). The reason they gave was that they were anxious to keep Japan out of this body, and that they could only do so by telling Tokyo and, therefore, India as well, that ASEAN was a gathering of relatively small countries and membership of either India or Japan would sink the boat. But the real reason was that they regarded India as a competing recipient of Japan's as well as other donors' foreign aid.

Lately, however, and largely because of India's agricultural performance, they have begun to realise that India may neither be a bottomless pit nor a broken reed ; that she may not be able to extend a great deal of aid for South-East Asia's development but she will not necessarily syphon it off for her own. Therefore, they may be a little more welcoming than in the past to Indian inte est in the region, and this is not a thing which is likely to remain unnoticed by Japan.

More direct benefits may also follow the improvement in India's economic image. The Japanese are acutely conscious of economic opportunity wherever they can find it, and it is possible they believe that they can find it in India as well.

Agricultural growth makes India a rapidly expanding market for many goods the Japanese can tie in with aid. More important, they might see in it the chance of Indo-Japanese collaboration in industrial undertakings in third countries. India may not have as much to contribute to them as Japan. But there are certain things she can : political resistance to a purely Japanese venture, for instance in Indonesia, may be more marked than to one with which India is also associated (and in this sense Mrs. Gandhi's visit to Indonesia is a good piece of timing) ; the abundance of manpower at the middle and lower level of technology is another.

The focus of Mrs. Gandhi's visit to Japan will be primarily bilateral relations, especially economic. Chances of success in it are not insignificant. The visits of some Japanese delegations to India have left encouraging indications. Mrs. Gandhi is not likely to discuss individual projects in any detail but she will be able to pave the way for discussions in future, perhaps on collaboration in offshore oil exploration.

But the effort need not stop there and probably will not, and then it will be the turn of Japan. not India, to show some willingness for closer relations. The likely unfolding of South-East Asian events once the weight of the Vietnam war is lifted will create opportunities for India to contribute to the economic development of the area and to help in shaping political associations. India has the right to expect that a friendly Japan will not try to keep India out of the picture as it has been trying in the past. Japan grudgingly recognises India's right to an interest in countries like Ceylon, Burma and Malaysia, but not further east. This resistance is not offset by the invitation Japan has extended to India to join either ASPAC or the Pacific Asia which Japan is trying to develop out of ASPAC. Both organisations have associations largely unpalatable for India — so much, in fact, that India cannot in any case agree to get involved in them. This much is fully known to the Japanese also ; therefore, their invitation to India is more diplomacy than friendship. The test of friendship towards which India is eager to move lies more in South-East Asia, in the economic and political organisations there.

the bear in quest of warm waters

India's request to the Russians to clarify the meaning of the Brezhnev speech proposing "collective security" for Asia has so far—that is, up to the time of the writing of this article, which was the second week of July, 1969—brought only one reply—the speech itself. The text has been sent, or what is said to be the text. It does not answer all the questions but clearly brings out that on account of their brevity the first reports of the speech caused it to be misunderstood.

Brezhnev did not propose military pacts anywhere or in any form when he said, "The course of events is also putting on the agenda the task of creating a system of collective security in Asia." Therefore, it has been a waste of effort on the part of people here who have been explaining the impracticability of a military pact between diverse and disparate countries of the region or the incompatibility of India's non-alignment with such pact-making.

Brezhnev did use the phrase collective security, but not in the context which SEATO has made familiar in South-East Asia. Rather it should be read in the context of the paragraphs immediately preceding in Brezhnev's speech which spoke of collective security being "the best replacement for the existing military groupings". In this sense the speech is an extension to Asia of the long-standing Russian proposal that "collective security" in Europe should replace both the Warsaw Pact and NATO.

The belief in New Delhi is that Brezhnev's emphasis on "security" is a reference to the danger of China exploiting bilateral disputes between some of its neighbours He advocated two safeguards against this : One, greater awareness of the shared threat from China ; this would induce greater willingness to resolve bilateral disputes or at least not to allow them to endanger the collective security of Asia. Second, Soviet willingness, if invited, to step into the path of China's intervention, whether it is direct or through instigation to either party to the dispute.

Neither of these is an idea to which people in India can have much objection. But they add nothing new directly

to the meaning and substance of Indo-Soviet relations If China intervenes on behalf of Pakistan, India and the Soviet Union may draw closer together, as they did many years before Brezhnev spoke. But that would be a function of the bilateral relations between India and Russia. The degree of togetherness would depend upon whether the current misunderstandings between the two countries escalate in the meantime or decline ; Brezhnev's ideas of "collective security" would not come in either way.

But they would in situations a little further afield, and in circumstances which can cause India not a little embarrassment. For over a year now, Mrs. Gandhi has been advocating international guarantees for the integrity of the countries of South-East Asia, more especially Cambodia, Laos and (divided or not, as the case may be) Vietnam. In Jakarta last week she went a little further and suggested that all the bigger powers in the UN should guarantee the independence and sovereignty of all Asian countries which might be affected by the withdrawal of British and American troops from this area. This is belated recognition on her part that not all the countries of South-East Asia share her confidence that the withdrawals will not create a risky vacuum in the area.

The admission is topical, because only a few days ago, at the five-power regional defence conference in Canberra, Malaysia and Singapore showed considerable nervousness over the withdrawals. Thailand and Laos as well as lately Cambodia, apart from many elements in South Vietnam, are known to have been worried for a considerable time.

But the admission also creates a very topical overlap between the views of Mrs. Gandhi and Brezhnev, and this needs very careful thinking in New Delhi. Any proposal for under-pinning the security of the area or of individual countries in it will make an opening for a "request" for facilities by those who are invited to undertake the responsibility. Some of the countries of the area may not be unwilling to concede the request. At Canberra, for instance, Singapore offered to invite Russian naval presence after the British withdrawal. How would this go with the dominant view held in India so far about the presence of foreign navies in or around the Indian Ocean ? It will not do

to say then that what India asked for was collective underpinning by the UN. The UN in such cases often means one power or another or at best a consortium.

The Russians would probably find in this a heaven-sent second string to the effort they have been making for quite some time now to find an entry into the warm waters east of the Suez. They pressed India for a long time but without success. Russian probings to see whether India would consider a request for a base were rebuffed outright and even the request for re-fuelling facilities was only accepted on very limited terms. Russia asked for a long-term agreement on facilities, rather like those given for commercial shipping. India agreed to consider them "case by case."

Since then Russia has shifted its attention to Pakistan. It is assisting Pakistan in a large-scale fishing programme and as part of *quid pro quo*, Pakistan is said to have agreed to something like long-term refuelling berths (not a base). This, of course, is something of a diplomatic coup for Pakistan : at one end a road for China across "Azad Kashmir" and at the other hospitality to Russian naval-ships ! Whether being double-faced in diplomacy is good for a country or not in the long-run, its short-term benefits cannot be denied. The wooing of Pakistan with Russian tanks is one part of the pay-off. It is for India to decide whether she wishes to emulate Pakistan in fickleness or patiently stick to respectability and principles. But it would be short-sighted to react only, as so often in the past, by crying shame on Russia, when the rewards of double-faced diplomacy are denied to a country which says it will firmly stand by principles and pay the price.

The Russians are obviously pursuing their objectives with confidence and care, using all opportunities which come their way. This, of course, is how a country should pursue its objectives, but it should be recognised in India that her proposal for international guarantees for South-East Asia may also be used by Russia as a further opening in her long-standing quest for an entry into the warm waters of the south. Uncertainties about passage through the Suez, the dispute with China and the search for a new security frame by many

countries in South-East Asia have together made the quest more urgent and promising.

a pattern for '70s

During the 60's a major theme of U.S. policy in South-East Asia was the containment of North Vietnam, and if possible its defeat. The ideology of SEATO, contrived in the mid-fifties, was thus in concentrated action in this area. If the dominoes of the region were to be saved, they must be, it was thought in Washington, in the last country of Asia to throw off the yoke of Western colonialism. If this battle was lost, it was feared all others would be.

The decade of the 70's may well see American fears proving ironically true. Ironically because the American role in Vietnam will be seen in retrospect to have given North Vietnam its present potential for dominating the whole region. Without this most unwanted of all wars, North Vietnam, with or without the South, might have been the strongest country of the area but not necessarily so greatly predominant. But victorious over the greatest military power in the world, it now has the sinews of a hardened warrior and the spirit of a hero. In military terms, none of its neighbours in the South East Asian pulp of disorganized power can stand in its way.

Not even Thailand can, and it would not be surprising if it quits very soon the now discredited American umbrella and tries instead to take shelter in neutral co-existence with its stronger communist neighbours to the north and east. There was the bitterness of disillusionment in what the Thai Foreign Minister, Mr. Thanat Khoman, said in New York last month (that is, in February, 1970; this article was published in March). "Little or no reliance should be placed on outside manpower which may be physically, mentally and psychologically unfit and unsuitable...manpower assistance from outside nations in which unwilling or unsympathetic voices exist in substantial number may not only be ineffective but may have become a liability." Only two days earlier the Democratic Party leader in the US Senate, Mr Mansfield, had also equated U.S. involvement with reversal, though in a different context and in different words. Regretting American military presence on the Plain

of Jars, he said, "That is an escalation. It will mean that the North Vietnamese will get a tighter grip on the Laotian territory they already hold."

The 70's have started with two kinds of development which, between them, can spell the total collapse of the policies followed by the USA for almost two decades in this area. First the proven invincibility of communist ground power, and second the pathetic though understandable American reluctance to get embroiled with it any more. American withdrawal from Vietnam may not be as imminent today as it appeared when the peace talks started in Paris ; at times Mr. Nixon's game appears dangerously to be to deflate the protest at home by making gestures towards it rather than pay heed to the forces which it represents. But at worst this can only mean delay in extricating his country from the coils of Vietnam ; it does not suggest further perseverance with the philosophy of SEATO.

Future US policies in this area are not so well reflected in Mr. Nixon's prevarications about Vietnam as in its helplessness about Laos. Washington has clearly shied off from any sizable involvement in Laos. "I do not see an extended role as far as US ground forces are involved," said the US Defence Secretary in Washington last month. "Our involvement in Laos is tied in with the safety and security of American troops in Vietnam." A very different thing from what the USA did when no American forces were anywhere in the area needing safety or security.

The USA is also reluctant, and for similar reasons, to enter into deep diplomatic involvement. President Nixon has promised help in restoring respect for the 1962 Geneva Accord on Laos. This probably means he is willing to withdraw US military bases from the Plain of Jars if North Vietnam also withdraws its troops. It does not signify consent to a full-scale new Geneva type conference. From that the USA shrinks back at least for two reasons. First, as is well known, it will face round the table not only North Vietnam but a number of other countries which will demand a region-wide settlement, including Vietnam, on terms which may be unpoupular with the Pentagon. Second, today it knows that it cannot force a peace any more than it can impose a defeat upon North Viet-

nam, which has become the strongest political, diplomatic and military power in the area. There can be no hope of success either for the efforts of a new international conference or for those of the ICC without the support of North Vietnam, and in the case of Laos the Pathet Lao as well. The ICC in particular is completely helpless. It can only assist in implementing peace terms ; it cannot conjure peace out of war. Thus the key to peace talks remains as much with Hanoi and the Pathet Lao as the key to ground action.

But the ambitions and objectives of Hanoi and its associates are as yet a mystery. It is possible that for the present they have only one aim in mind, and a limited one at that : to recapture the extensive ground they lost to American-supported Royal Laotian forces last August and September. But the real objective of the DRV may be bigger. It may insist, as it is doing in a diplomatic offensive already, on the withdrawal of American military bases in the area, which it regards both as a provocation and a threat, without making reciprocal withdrawals itself, or making them in such a way only that the Pathet Lao takes over what the DRV leaves.

But do Hanoi's objectives stop even at that? There is much to suggest that in the long run they may not even if they do in the short. How they may be restrained by a possible competition with China is difficult to foresee, but the possibility of a competition itself suggests that much may be at stake in the coming years. Reports are available in New Delhi of direct Chinese control of certain parts of northern Laos, of direct contact between the Chinese and Laotians through which China sends supplies to South Vietnam independently of the North. There is also a history of a triangular rivalry between the Chinese, the Vietnamese and the Thais in this area, which in future will be mainly between the first two. Thoughts of hegemony therefore would not be unnatural in Hanoi, and however distant the future in which they will mature, immediate developments will be seen in Hanoi as intermediate steps and will be taken as such. For the time being there is a preoccupation with the war ; for a time thereafter it will be with integration and reconstruction, and with the desire for acceptance as a peaceable neighbour. But beyond that if may be with a more secure frontier on the Mekong, with a neutra-

lised and sympathetic Thailand, with a somewhat more than a "sympathetic" Cambodia, with something more than hegemony over the large area once known as French Indo-China.

What are India's needs and options in this complex situation ? Her options, unfortunately, are far less obvious than her needs ; while not alone in being helpless, she is rather more so than most other countries which are interested in the area, Obviously the first need is of broader and deeper relations with the area, especially economic, than she has at present. From this follows the next, that as little of it as possible should be under the hegemony of those who may be predisposed to be hostile towards her, and conversely to have as friendly relations as possible with those whose hegemony is inescapable, a given fact of life. In operational terms this can only mean that while political realities may have to be accommodated, forcible change of existing frontiers should be avoided as far as possible. The less monolithic the area the greater will be the chances of more normal relations with a larger part of it. Secondly, such hegemony as there has to be had better be Hanoi's than Peking's, and with Hanoi the relations should be closer than they are, consistently with the susceptibility of other friendly countries of the area. India does not have, and is not likely to have in the near future, much leverage in Hanoi. But it is not in her interest or the area's that she should needlessly throw away, or be made to as not so long ago any opportunity she can develop of giving counsel when needed ; this seems not to be realised by some countries of the area and some more distant which have been more sensitive than wise about India's desire to be in closer touch with Hanoi. Whether or when the desire should be translated into exchange of ambassadors is a matter of detail, but what its direction should be is not open to serious question. Similarly shortsighted is the objection which has been raised by some countries to India's positive interest in certain Russian ideas about the future stability of the area. In so far as they would promote economic relations in the area and collective respect for existing frontiers, as by Russian explanations at any rate they are intended to do, these ideas are in consonance with India's interests and the area's. It would be a pity if they

are suspected or rejected for no better reason than that they happen to be Russian.

russia's problems in south-east asia

Just before the Vietnamisation of Cambodia by America, Russia subtly unveiled yet another shift in its South-East Asia policy. It hoisted a signal, and significantly in Tokyo, that it would be willing to accept American interest in the region on a reciprocal basis.

This time last year the Soviet signals were different (This was published on May 29, 1970). At the international summit of communism in Moscow, the chief of the Soviet party, Leonid Brezhnev, vaguely floated the idea of a collective security system for Asia. Russia was short on clarifications when it was asked for some, among others by India, regarding the purposes, scope and mechanics of the system. But it did not hesitate to explain that in so far as there could be room in it for the big powers there would be room only for one—the Soviet Union.

An authoritative Soviet commentator explained in *Izvestia* that Russian assistance would always be available and it would give every help it could "to ensure firm and dependable peace and security in Asia." But there would be no need for any other "patrons and guardians." Considering that the clear aim was to shut out China as far as possible, the polite hint to America that its help was not needed was not without meaning. Moscow was proposing a solo ride, not a tandem.

The response from the region was most discouraging for Russia. India kept asking for clarifications instead of saying "yes"; Mrs. Gandhi insisted that there was no vacuum in the area which needed to be filled by anyone, and in any case there was the U.N. to do any filling that was needed. The "no" from most other countries was still more unambiguous, and the initiative by Brezhnev failed to produce anything like a region-wide Tashkent.

Then came a second version of the same thought. Not content with explaining, as Kosygin especially did over and over, that collective security meant economic co-prosperity through peaceful co-existence and not military confrontation, Russia put the proposal squarely under the U.N. umbrella. The Soviet

Foreign Minister told the General Assembly that his Government was only proposing "effective regional security...based on the joint efforts of all States of the area concerned (to) function in keeping with the provisions of the U.N. Charter." To this he tagged on the Russian claim, heard elsewhere and in other contexts as well, that Russia was not only an European power but an Asian power as well, and therefore entitled to the benefits of an Asian collective.

Up to now there was no hint of Russia recognising any claim by America that because it had a Pacific sea board it should also be considered an Asian power as well. The resulting inference was obvious. If the USA could be kept out because it was not an Asian power, and China kept out or else contained with the help of countries which considered themselves threatened by it, then the leadership of the collective would be undoubtedly in Russian hands regardless of the U.N. aegis requested by Russia. But the hope did not prosper. The United Nations did not put its impramateur on the project and the countries of the region continued to be lukewarm towards it though now it closely resembled what Mrs. Gandhi had suggested well before Mr. Brezhnev spoke. After a fitful life the Russian proposal appeared to expire with 1969.

But the Russians do not easily give up. Now they have uncovered a new model altogether though they have done so unofficially—assuming that there is anything unofficial about anything which a Russian does, even if he happens to be Dr. Gueorogoi Petrovich Zadorozhnyi, Professor of International Law at the Institute of International Relations in Moscow.

Speaking in Tokyo on "Recent Trends in Soviet Diplomatic Policy" the professor first elaborated some "general considerations" and then applied them to South-East Asia and to Russia's view of the security of the region. "I believe," he said, "that in this corner of the world it is more necessary to create a system of collective security than in other continents because we have here international tension and wars" and "all countries of Asia" should be invited to be members.

"I believe that the United States of America must also participate. The United States is not an Asian country but has

interests here : it has islands and other possessions in Asia and is a member of different international treaties."

Russia, of course, should be included in it but Professor Zadorozhnyi found an interesting way round the problem of admitting China, coming close, in the process, to accepting the two-China theory, at least for a time. "A very difficult question is about the double States—two Koreas and two Vietnams and there is the Chinese question because some countries have relations with communist China and other countries with Taiwan. How to decide this very difficult question ? Naturally, the people of these countries can decide who should represent them in international organisations. But it is possible to admit all parts in this organization until the question of unity is settled ; thereafter only one government may represent the unified country." Since China does not accept representation where Taiwan is present, Peking's exclusion would automatically follow under this policy of generous inclusion.

This was a third shift in Russia's policies in a year. In June 1969 it was working for an unshared hegemony over South-East Asia, by excluding China as well as America. Nine months ago it was willing to give a share to the U.N. but not yet to USA. Now it is willing to have USA as a partner, and also Australia and New Zealand as the Professor explained, and even Iran, Iraq and Turkey.

But in the new circumstances created by the fighting in Cambodia, it is extremely unlikely that even this latest version of collective security will bring Russia any closer to its primary target, the containment of China. President Nixon has made a priceless gift to Peking, because of which we may soon have two South-East Asias where there was only one. Before he started sending American and Vietnamese armies into Cambodia, there was some hope still that the future of Vietnam may be settled either within its own frontiers or as part of a larger packet covering Laos and Cambodia as well. In fact, since it appeared that a settlement would be more stable if it also included the related problems of Laos and Cambodia, and since this kind of a group might have been both able and willing to resist pressure by China, it was even possible to welcome, up to a point, the Cambodian involvement brought about by Nixon.

But what Nixon has ensured instead is that there shall be a line running through South-East Asia, a zig-zag horizontal, dividing the region into two, rather like the zig-zag vertical which has divided Europe into East and West for the past 25 years. He has also promoted the chance that China may hold hegemony over the northern half in exchange for letting the USA hold it over the southern. As first steps towards this, Peking played host a few weeks ago to a summit conference of South-East Asian communism ; on the other hand Washington and its associates have been encouraging throughout this month an alliance between Thailand, South Vietnam, the Royal part of Laos and Lon Nol's Cambodia.

This has serious implications for Russia. (For India too, but these are better taken up later.) They clearly spell the firm inclusion of China, not its exclusion, in any future international system for the region. In fact the exclusion of Russia may possibly follow, carrying to its logical point the loss of anchorage in South-East Asia which Russia has suffered ever since Soekarno's downfall in Indonesia. If the diplomatic knives of the big powers get going and South-East Asia is carved up, the major slices will go to the USA and China ; Russia can hope for only crumbs at best in that kind of a deal.

india's vanishing options

Nehru proudly claimed in January 1947 that India "is geographically so situated that little can happen in the whole of South-East Asia without her concurrence, whether in the matter of trade or defence. . ." This, of course, was never wholly true. The remark reflected not the realities of the day but the euphoria generated by the approach of independence. However, for 10 years after 1947, India had the opportunity to establish a standing in South-East Asia which, compared with today's, would have been tremendous. India's could have been a conspicuous if nota compelling influence in thearea.

In the first half of the decade of the fifties she proved in Korea and at the Geneva Conference on Indo-China what her role could have been. Its shadow was visible at least 10 years earlier. As a war correspondent in South-East Asia in the middle forties, I found it a privilege to be an Indian. The

leaders of the coming renaissance, especially Ho Chi Minh and Burma's Ne Win, showed keen interest in India's struggle for freedom and respect for her leaders and it was a pleasure for them and an honour for me when they exchanged with Nehru messages of goodwill through me. Admiration was warm and reciprocal between them. The developing nationalism of the post-war movements of the area looked up to Indian national. ism as it has never done since, and this gave India an opportune passport into the councils of the area, or could have given it, if only the opportunity had been used.

But the advantage was frittered away in the second half of the fifties. These countries found India to be not a strong and friendly neighbour but a giant too sick even to look after itself, and our weakness evoked not their sympathy but contempt because of what they regarded as our arrogant preoccupation with big power politics and global concerns. Any standing left despite India's own errors was further eroded by developments over which she had no control : the SEATO philosophy lifted South-East Asia to an arena too high for India's reach, and it stunted the growth of local nationalisms so that their actions no longer reflected their own free preference. And then China laid low any role we had yet.

There was a glimmer of new hope some seven years later. India's prestige had risen a little in the middle of sixties because of the smoothness of the succession of Shastri to Nehru and the victory won in the war with Pakistan. When the Paris talks opened for peace in Vietnam it began to appear that the options which existed till the middle of fifties would open up again. Due to the strong emergence of China in the meantime, it was known there would be changes which would be adverse to India. But it was possible to hope that the area would no longer be out of bounds for her.

Three forces were now struggling to be ascendent in the region : first, China ; second, the communist personality aggregated around Hanoi which, for all that it was communist was suspicious of China and would have welcomed a counterpoise ; and third, those countries of the area which were anti-communist in varying degrees.

India had to pick a wary path between the realities of the area, of which the new influence, power and elan of Hanoi was the most conspicuous, and the strong susceptibilities of the anti-communist neighbours of Hanoi. But the mistrust of China, shared alike by the communists and anti-communists, gave India impeccable credentials as the only country against which China had commited direct aggression. Because of this it should have been possible for India to cultivate Hanoi, as she needed and desired to do, without being suspected of covert communism except by those, in India or outside, whom their fanatical anti-communism has made somewhat myopic.

Now (June, 1970) even that chance seems to have disappeared at least for some years to come. The possibility discussed in these columns earlier (May 29) becomes increasingly firm, that South-East Asia will be divided into two hostile blocks, much as Europe has been for the past quarter century, one in the grip of the leadership of Peking, the other a bastion of American influence in the area.

The direct victims of the division may be, only for the time being, the three Indo-China States. But if the confrontation there becomes as rigid as is likely, other countries, willy-nilly, will get ranged around it and the logic of events will be set by this division, not by the influence of any neutrals like India. Thus India will be driven farther than ever from the prophecy Nehru made in 1949, that "India, in southern, western, and south-eastern Asia, has to play a distinctive and important role".

The chance to play this role in her own right and as a power in this area was forfeited by India because of the internal weaknesses and lack of cohesion displayed at a critical time. The chance to play it by virtue of being neutral, as at Geneva in 1954, was available only so long as the principal protagonsists were not too tightly antagonistic. Once they turned their backs upon further accommodation between them, such instruments of peace as they had set up found themselves hamstrung by disagreements, like the ICC in Indo-China, and neutrals like India found their role extinguished. As this situation is not likely to change, India's role may turn out to be as minimal in future as Russia's is going to be for other reasons.

This would be a greater misfortune for India than for Russia. The area is of far greater consequence for India. Any equation which develops here between the USA and China, whether benign or malignant, may interest and affect the Soviet Union, as it may India too, in the larger context of a global balance but it will affect India more locally and directly. Soviet shores are too far to be washed by waves which may be released by South-East Asian politics. But India's are not.

To the geographical nearness of eastern India and South-East Asia a political nearness has been more recently added which increases India's concern with what happens in the area. A carve-up of the region which made China dominant in the north would have serious implications not only for the northern halves of the Indo-China States but also for the northern districts of Thailand and Burma. That would bring their meaning right up to the most vulnerable of India's many doors in a sense from which the Soviet Union is immune.

Hence India's anxiety that the States of the region should themselves be masters of it even if some of them have gone over to communism, and India's own relations with them should be close. This is also the point of India's repeated advocacy of joint action in the area, dating back to long before Brezhnev spoke of collective security. From ASA to ASEAN, and ever since ECAFE, India has welcomed all multilateral organisations in the area in the measure to which they have been free of Big Power motivations. But none of them really added up to much, except ECAFE in a limited economic sense, and like the Asian continent as a whole this region remains without any effective counterpart of the O.A.S.s of African and American States. If such a concert of Asian nations existed, wholly free of overbearing Big Powers, India would have some part to play in it at least as one of the countries of the area if no longer as a power.

But perhaps too much blood has been spilled on too many battlefields in Asia for all the Big Powers to withdraw from it completely. One cannot expect the USA, for example, to disappear from the scene entirely after all that has happened, taking away not only all its troops — which it must — but its interest as well. Any concession to the presence of American

interest must obviously bring China's in as well, and rather than let these two work out a duumvirate between them it would be better to have a much wider council, quite clearly including India in it.

In unfolding Russian thoughts in Tokyo, Dr. Zadorozhnyi proposed an all-inclusive Assembly, a kind of regional General Assembly, with an executive elected on the same rotational and permanent basis as the Security Council. It would not only be the agency of economic co operation but would also forestall and prevent disputes in an area where there are likely to be many because all the boundaries of nations and countries do not as yet coincide in it and many iridescent movements extend beyond more than one frontier.

The scheme, vague and ill-developed as yet, has seeds in it which may be worth evaluating irrespective of the fact that they are of Russian origin. The alternative – exclusive hegemony of the USA and China in this area – may well be even more unpleasant, for India as much as for the Soviet Union.

China's One-directional Frown

No aspect of India's foreign policy has fluctuated so much as relations with China, from the sentimental warmth of the 'fifties to the bitter hostility of the 'sixties. But India has always hoped that a change in the opposite direction can also occur, and has eagerly responded to the slightest indication of this possibility. Her eagerness became especially marked after Soviet and Chinese forces clashed on the Ussuri.

But as 1970 faded into 1971, it also became clear that most of the signals exchanged between India and China did not add up to very much. Although Chinese diplomacy was no longer propelled by ideological zeal, and it was ready to do business with regimes it would have earlier denounced as reactionary, normal relations with India were very low down on its list of priorities. More recently it has also been obvious that any improvement in these relations which may occur after the Indo-Soviet Treaty should at least partly be attributed to the effect of the Treaty.

In the midst of speculation about some insubstantial Chinese gestures towards India, the myth that India invited the Chinese attack in 1962 by refusing to negotiate the future of Aksai Chin with China was given wide currency by Neville Maxwell's book, *India's China War*. The last article in this section examines the myth and the book.

cocktail diplomacy in a cul-de-sac

The Japanese Foreign Minister (who visited India shortly before this article was published, in the last week of August, 1970) has not strengthened anyone's hopes here about better relations in the near future between India and China. The discouraging assessment he has left behind is that not until Mao goes will China return to normal ways. Japan greatly desires better relations with China, and is on the look-out for any glimpse of neighbourliness that China may offer But it offers none. On this Aichi has left no room for doubt. Where there is a direct economic advantage, China may open the door a little, as it has increasingly to Japanese trade, but it will not to the civilities of normal relations. Or not until after the ageless Mao.

This view will confirm India's own hesitation about doing anything very dramatic unilaterally, such as announcing the return of an Indian ambassador to Peking. India will first want to make absolutely sure that China will not loftily turn its face the other way. This has happened to some countries already ; when they sent their ambassadors, China took her own time to reciprocate and in the meanwhile made them look like unsuccessful petitioners India is unwilling to play such a role, and while willing to be responsive she will continue to be cautious. Mr. Aichi's assessment reinforces this policy.

Before the Japanese Foreign Minister came, India had suffered two disappointments already at the hands of Peking. India applied for visas for a few private Indian traders to go to an industrial fair in Canton. But there was no response from China ; the visas were neither refused nor granted, which is a refusal of its own kind. Secondly, the handshake between Chairman Mao and the Indian *charge* in Peking at the May Day reception turned out to be a lead which led nowhere. The *charge*, Mishra, came to New Delhi for urgent consultations

but subsequent exploration got lost in semantics, each side stressing the importance of deeds, not words.

The deeds India expects are, in Indian eyes, at the minimum reasonable level : that China should stop aiding the insurgency in eastern India and the barrage of anti-Indian propaganda should cease. But the deeds China expects, as they are authoritatively interpreted here, would be regarded as unreasonable by Indians at any rate. They include that India should not only stop encouraging insurgency in Tibet but also disown the Dalai Lama, refuse to allow any more Tibetan refugees to come in and turn out those who are here already. They also include that India should not only allow China perpetual use of the Aksai Chin road, which India has always been willing to concede, but should admit China's sovereignty over the entire plateau There is no willingness here to commit either of these deeds

To say this is not to underestimate the very rapidly growing expectation in India that the confrontation with China will soon come to an end.

There is a growing core among India's foreign policy experts, especially the younger generation, who are becoming converts to the view that India invited the disaster which struck her in 1962. She misjudged the situation and threw out of the window the chance she had even as late as 1961 of a reasonable settlement with China. She overestimated her historical claim on eastern Aksai Chin, underestimated China's need of the area, and miscalculated her own strength and China's in a border clash. The mistake will soon be realised and reversed, they expect. But even those who do not share these doubts about India's position fully share the desire for better relations with China. The present confrontation is seen as a drain on India's resources and a severe limitation upon her diplomatic options. And as the habit is with us, what we desire we hope for and what we hope for we expect. Hence the growing expectation in Delhi, not only desire as in Tokyo, that neighbourliness is round the corner. Aichi has left the expectation deflated.

And it is easily deflated because it is insubstantial For years it has had nothing to feed on except little gestures exchanged at cocktail parties and receptions. Perhaps it is the

meagerness of the diet which makes it exciting, but in the cold light of retrospect each crumb turns out to have been nothing more than just that. It was in 1964 that Chou En-lai seized an Indian diplomat by the arm at a reception in Moscow and fondly said "Let's be friends." But nothing happened after that, in terms of "deeds". Six years passed and then Chairman Mao did the same to Mishra at the May Day reception in Peking But this gesture too evaporated under scrutiny. In the interval nothing more substantial happened than the occasional appearance of the diplomats of one country at some functions of the other. Even in oriental terms this is an agonisingly slow pace of events. At this rate exchange of ambassadors may not take place for a couple of years unless, for its own diplomatic reasons or for influencing India's domestic political balance, China decides to alter its tactics at a time of its choosing.

This is not to suggest that the game will be allowed to cool off either. New Delhi and Peking find it equally useful in their respective equations with Rawalpindi and Moscow. China is not loathe to let Pakistan wonder whether Sino-Indian relations are not on the verge of improving ; it might make Pakistan more cautious in wooing the Soviet Union away from India. Apart from the signals of Sino-Indian cocktail diplomacy China sometimes adds one directly in its relations with Pakistan : Air Marshal Abdul Rahim Khan, when he went to China earlier this summer, found his hosts strangely reluctant to associate themselves with his denunciations of India. Similarly India would not be loathe to let the same curiosity raise its head in Moscow

In fact India has played the game with rather more daring than would be believed by those who accuse her of being subservient to Moscow. Despite the similarities between the Sino-Soviet and Sino-Indian border disputes, India avoided taking sides to the limit she could. She avoided comment unless a specific question made further silence impossible, and even then the comment remained economical in sentiments. The view the External Affairs Ministry took was that India should get away from the habit cultivated during the era of Nehru of necessarily taking up a position on everything, and doing so in public.

Certain things, it was decided, were better left unsaid, and support for Russia in this dispute was one of them. When questions were raised in Parliament in April last year about Naxalite telegrams to Mao in support of China, Chavan quietly allowed the opportunity to pass of supporting Russia in his answers. His brief pad included it, but the decision taken in advance was that support should be declared for the Soviet Union only if a specific question by a member made that unavoidable. Since no one directly asked whether India supported the Soviet Union or China, Chavan let that part of the answer lie. For this kind of diplomatic hide and seek, China and India will let the present state of uncertain expectation continue. But a more meaningful thaw is nowhere in the offing.

a neo-revisionism—1

The signals of peaceableness which China is sending out these days (published in November, 1970) are not entirely new. They are only more numerous than they used to be when China was still a devotee of the abnormal. Ever since it staged a stormy walk-out from the world by burning down embassies in Peking and letting its own diplomats loose in the streets of other capitals, China has had plenty of reason to wonder whether it was right to have done so. The doubts took some time to crystallise into policy, but they have been doing so slowly.

Earlier last week China made the interesting admission that international good company is not a bad thing after all; it proposed an international conference on banning the bomb. But this also is not something altogether new. China proposed the same conference six years ago, when it had staged only one big bang of its own, not eleven as now. Just under a year ago, indications appeared, more recently confirmed very authoritatively by the Canadian Minister for External Affairs, that China was no longer feigning indifference to its admission into the United Nations but was showing an active desire for it. Non-alignment is no longer a doctrine deserving contempt alone but a tool which may be useful in opposing super power hegemony ; the non-aligned may be worth cultivating after all. China sent an ambassador to Cairo four months ago after keeping the post vacant for over a year. Agreement to send

an ambassador to Burma followed soon after. And even to Yugoslavia, despised as revisionist not so long ago, though in the intervening years Yugoslavia has sunk even deeper into whatever it was that China despised so much ; even its relations with the Soviet Union are not so bad—or "good," as they were in the eyes of Peking then - as they used to be, and in fact they have been improving simultaneously with the sharp deterioration in Sino-Soviet relations.

India also has not been spared a dose of this return to some reasonableness. Two quick meetings between Indian and Chinese diplomats in Cairo are indeed something new ; one followed fast upon the heels of the other. But the theme "let's be friends again" has been played before ; no one less than Chou En-lai serenaded the Indian Ambassador in Moscow with it six years ago. A year ago the Indian Acting High Commissioner in London was invited to a ceremonial Chinese embassy reception there. Other indications of a thaw came more recently through gestures by China's unofficial agencies such as the Chinese Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong. Mao's famous handshake with the Indian *charge'* in Peking followed on May Day this year and since then mutual representation at ceremonial receptions has been gradually rising.

All these indications add up to a natural return to a path which China once abandoned with fervour. But it will be a slow and agonising return. The return is natural because undiluted revolutionism has been taking a very heavy toll. What it did to the economy can best be seen in the marked shift in emphasis in China's domestic propaganda from revolution to production ; such shifts are generally more revealing than official figures given out for foreign consumption. What it did to China's diplomatic standing can best be seen in the very continent —Africa—to which China sends half of all its foreign aid and where it has mounted its biggest single aid project anywhere at all—the Tanzam railway, which is also the biggest foreign aided project in any African country. Yet even in Africa China can count only half as many friends as enemies. When the last vote on China's admission to the UN was taken ten African countries voted in favour and twenty-one against. Therefore a reappraisal of where it was going was bound to

take place in China sooner or later. The surprise is only that it has taken so long in coming

And it will be an agonising return because there is much less open armed welcome for China in the world today than there was in the 'fifties. There is an instructive contrast between the warm welcome and almost an emotional ovation which Chou En-lai won for his country at the Bandung conference and for more than five years thereafter, and the rebuff he suffered during his African safari in 1964. Presumably the contrast will be present to his mind as he sets out for Africa once more before the end of this year, which he is reportedly planning to do. He will also find South-East Asia a changed world when he sees it again Advancing in the wake of the retreating Americans he may not run into many Russians there but he will into Japanese. The tremendous thrust Japan is making in South-East Asia, for the time being economic only but not likely to remain so all the time, which is one of the serious provocations for the current reappraisal by China, will especially make China's re-entry into the developing world more painful and slow.

To say this is not to underestimate the gains China has made in the past four or five years. Its credibility as a nuclear power of the future has immensely grown. Seeing the potential, some of the bigger powers are now willing to accord it a status which they would not have otherwise. But what is the contribution to it of the domestic and diplomatic turmoil in which China indulged for so many years ? China was obviously unwilling to face this question so long as abnormality was thought by Mao to be a superior way of life. It is only when that phase ended that the cost of permanent revolution could be soberly estimated in the light of experience, and the truth discovered that China could have had the bomb, and all that went with it in terms prestige abroad, without taking on the added burden and distraction of the cultural vandals and other kinds of red guards. In fact it is possible to argue that they may have defeated at least a part of the very purpose, mainly domestic, for which they were unleashed upon the Chinese scene.

They helped in the overthrow of Liu Shao-chi. But groups, factions and schools of thought have been overthrown in other

countries too, whether under communist or non-communist systems, and it has been done in no more time than it took to overthrow Liu and without plunging the whole nation into such devastating turmoil. Surely the Chinese system too, if there is any sense and viability in it, could have made the transition with as much economy of effort and as little cost to itself. And with much greater certainty of effective transition. As it turns out, however, it is hard to be sure what kind of a transition has been made after all. A reaction seems to have set in against the excesses committed in the past few years. In the great struggle for the number two position after Chairman Mao, the victory of Lin Piao was described as the victory of the hardliners against the relative reasonableness of men like Chou En-lai, the victory of revolutionary diplomacy as against the normal power game which all countries play of gathering their friends together against their enemies while the domestic machine is kept ticking over. But with Lin Piao still—presumably—on top, moderation has been found to be the better policy, both abroad as one can see and at home as one can easily infer.

So despite the bizarre detour it took throughout most of the 60's, China has achieved nothing which it could not have achieved, at less cost to itself, by at least such normal means as have been employed by other communist countries. By abandoning the path it had discovered in Bandung, it only created a needless dilemma for itself—whether to be, to quote a French commentator, "pure but poor, and in the long run weak, or great and economically powerful but exposed to the evils of the past."

And now it seems to be getting out of the dilemma by means which were available all along, the nomal means available to all normal countries, but were spurned under the heady influence of Maoist aberration. The purists must deplore this as neo-revisionism.

a neo-revisionism—II

How substantial is China's "normalisation" is anybody's guess. Some of the current symptoms are not very new ; they

have appeared before but only to disappear and may do so again. Some of India's official Sinologists are of the view that notwithstanding its recent revolutionary plumage and doctrinary fervour, the Mao regime never gave up the path of the pragmatism. They believe Mao's quarrel was only with Liu Shaochi's power, not with his policies Liuism will continue after Liu.

As against this is the testimony of the Japanese Foreign Minister, given to India when he came here in August, that China will never be normal again until Mao's departure. Nevertheless, India cannot ignore the symptoms, especially since they are continuing to multiply ; official as well as—or even more—public opinion has to take its bearings afresh. It would be a mistake to ignore either the lure of normal relations with China or the limits imposed upon them by recent history as well as by India's current situation.

Should China really choose to come out of its recent and self-imposed isolation, the change would be for the better. It would help to restrain the two super powers from trying to carve up the world between themselves to the detriment of the real independence of everyone else. It would add to the chance that medium and small nations may be able to force major powers to democratise international relations, which is one of the objectives of the non-aligned countries.

Admittedly China itself is not entirely free of the super power complex, and its reason for emerging from the shell of red guardism may only be to compete with the super powers by mobilising the small. This would be a new form of China's former suspected ambition to displace India from its perch in the non-aligned world But the situation would be no different from and not more difficult to cope with than what it would have been if China, instead of disappearing into the vortex of internal disorder, had continued the march it had begun so well at Bandung, using the springboard of Afro-Asian radicalism which it destroyed instead by its own aberrations. On the other hand, it might do non-alignment some good by restoring some of the lost vigour of Afro-Asianism to it.

Also in matters of more direct and immediate interest to India, some return to normality in relations with China would

be very welcome. Trade and other economic relations may take time to develop ; they did not amount to much even when Indians and Chinese were brothers, and the present economies of the two countries also do not suggest that trade possibilities are going to be great in the near future. But one of the greatest observation posts in the world, of much closer interest to India than to most other countries, would be more adequately filled with an ambassador there than without one. Pakistan would grow slightly more uneasy, disturbed a little as it probably is already by the occasional twists in its relations with China, such as the refusal of the Chinese news agency to circulate an outburst against India by Pakistan's Air Marshal Rahim Khan during his visit to Peking last summer. Such a gain from so small an investment as sending an Indian ambassador to Peking again is not to be scoffed at.

Therefore instead of always being one chary step behind the initiatives of China towards resuming more normal relations, India should take some clear and bold initiative herself ; it would make her good intentions more convincing. An impressive one would be to be the first to announce willingness to exchange ambassadors again, and being the first to send one since she was the first to withdraw one. as soon as a credible assurance is received that China would reciprocate without much delay. Whether something else immediately follows or not, such as discussions for a border settlement on a reasonable basis and with some hope of success, the chance that it may would improve, not deteriorate, after the two ambassadors have gone back to their posts. The fear of adverse public reaction to such a move in India is grossly exaggerated. On the other hand reaction against the present freeze is mounting. Similarly exaggerated is the anxiety in some quarters, fortunately not shared by the Ministry of External Affairs, that Soviet displeasure may make such a move counter-productive for India.

But the critics of the freeze become rather fanciful when they go much beyond this and see in "normalisation" of relations with China an answer to all of India's diplomatic handicaps and defence anxieties. The handicaps and anxieties are indeed very real : so long as India's diplomatic options and defence capacity are tied up at one end because of the confron-

tation with China she will remain open to harassment by Pakistan and the pressure of super powers, or at least remain open so long as she does not greatly improve her position by the very long haul of her own economic efforts. But the confrontation will at best ease a little, not disappear, with the exchange of ambassadors and such normalisation as this may imply ; for it to disappear, far bigger changes are needed in China's basic attitudes than are visible yet in its domestic normalisation.

Whether only Liu has been overthrown or Liuism too, neither had been when China's aggression against India began. What were the causes of this aggression ? Have they disappeared ? Will they disappear with the exchange of ambassadors ? Until they disappear, can we afford either to thin down our guard on the northern frontier or strike diplomatic attitudes towards one or the other or both the super powers which the reality of relations with China will not sustain ? There will be no simple answers to any of these questions in the pockets of either of the two ambassadors when, at last, they are post-ward bound. And until these answers are discovered, and found to be satisfactory, it would be folly to read more into isolated signals from China than the total circumstances allow.

maoism as played by mao

Indian Maoists, whether active in the street or only at seminars, have been facing a tough dialectical problem since the end of March. For years they have looked up to China as the defender of radical movements and wars of national liberation. Now they find that China has let down two revolutions in quick succession. They have tried casuistry to save Mao's image but no sooner have they found one explanation than Chairman Mao has presented them with the need to find another. Those ordinary people who are able to see that China uses State power just as any other country are not surprised that both in Pakistan and Ceylon Peking took the side of established authority as soon as it realised that the rebels were losing. But those who adore Mao as the new Messiah have some difficulty in accepting such mundane explanations.

The Maoists faced their first serious dilemma when Chou En-lai's letter to President Yahya Khan was released on April 13. Until then it was easier to understand China's attitude towards the Awami League, which the Naxalites had already denounced as a party of the petty bourgeoisie. Of course, time was when China's own revolution was led by just such a class. In those days it used to be welcomed as the first dawn of socialism. But that was before the days of the cultural revolution. Since then true radicalism has had no room for such dross as the Awami League and Sheikh Mujib. Therefore Mao's indifference towards them was quite understandable. But then came Chou's letter, which showed that the indifference towards the rebels was matched by support for Yahya Khan, whose class credentials were certainly no better. Praise was showered upon him ; his opponents, who had swept the polls were described as "a handful of persons."

To get over this embarrassment two loopholes were discovered in the wording of the letter. It was decided that, for one thing, the letter was not meant to convey support to Islamabad but a warning to New Delhi not to interfere in Pakistan's "internal affairs." For another, a subtle meaning was read into the paragraph which said "Here it is most important to differentiate the broad masses of the people from a handful of persons who want to sabotage the unification of Pakistan." Did it not show that Peking wanted Yahya Khan to grant as much as possible of the autonomy demanded by the "broad masses of the people" and thus isolate the "handful of persons" who were preaching secession ? Why else, if not for sugar-coating advice which would be unpalatable to Yahya Khan, would Chou say in the very next paragraph "As a genuine friend of Pakistan we would like to present these views for Your Excellency's reference" ?

This helped but only for a time. As April dragged East Bengal into still deeper savagery it became obvious that Yahya Khan intended to concede nothing to the League. Yet China's support for him now ascended from the verbal to the material level. Far from expressing concern over the use of Chinese tanks against the freedom fighters, a form of disapproval from which even the United States had not refrained, China gave

further financial and arms assistance to Islamabad. How was this to be explained ?

Yahya Khan, it was argued, might give up East Bengal in despair if China did not encourage it to hold on, and then two things would happen : an unrevolutionary Mujib would be placed firmly in the saddle in Dacca, and he and his Indian friends between them might be able to reverse the trend towards increasing dissolution of established authority which was preparing the whole of the region from Patna to the Sino-Burmese border for falling into the lap of a real revolution. For averting this double calamity, it was a small price to pay to jettison an old friend, Maulana Bhashani, and to let Yahya Khan, a Sandhurst militarist who retains the options open to him as a member of SEATO and CENTO, vanquish a leader and a party who had declared that under them East Bengal would be non-aligned in international affairs.

As a cynical piece of casuistry even this might have passed. But then a problem rumbled up all the way from Ceylon. There a government of the moderate left, with the help of such hateful enemies of socialism as the United States, the Soviet Union and India, was using guns and aircraft against a very serious bid for a truly radical revolution It had also taken action against the embassy of fraternal North Korea, suspecting it of supplying arms to the rebels, and had even gone to the extent of making suspicious searches of goods shipments from China.

The rebels on the other hand, the fighting force of the People's Liberation Front or the Janata Vimukta Peramuna, were not "a handful" of petty bourgeoisie like the Awami League but hard-boiled extreme left-wing guerrillas who had been training in the jungle for a long time for a violent overthrow of parliamentary democracy ; their armed force nearly equalled the Ceylon army in numbers and was credible enough to merit support. This was a tailor-made case for intervening in favour of a serious, radical and armed uprising. Yet, while imperialist and neo-revisionist countries were rushing help to Mrs. Bandaranaike, China was not doing anything about it.

If this had been the only issue to clarify, perhaps dialectical ingenuity would have risen to it. After all if China had come in on the side of the JVP, with the Soviet Union already sup-

porting the Government, the two major Communist powers in the world might have become directly embroiled with each other, to the advantage of the common enemy, the United States. Revolutions should be tried out in safer ways and places. However, on May 27 it was discovered that China's passivity and inactivity on behalf of JVP was not the only thing to be explained away : China too had now become an accomplice of the government in Colombo and had specifically denounced the guerrillas, whose bodies had been floating down the rivers of central Ceylon for some weeks now as revolutionary offerings to the sea.

A news item which deserved greater attention than it received in the Indian Press announced on May 28, that an agreement was signed the previous day between the Governments of China and Ceylon for a Chinese loan of Rs. 150 million to help Ceylon overcome, as the agreement said, "the chaotic situation created by a handful of persons who style themselves as Guevarists and into whose ranks foreign spies have sneaked." This was a more severe denunciation of the JVP than China had visited upon the petty bourgeois Awami League. Unable to help the JVP, if China had only maintained silence its attitude would not have been too difficult to explain away. But it was a different thing to help those who had crushed a radical revolution, and to dismiss the JVP as "a handful of persons" though perhaps they were a larger proportion of the island's population than Mao's army was in proportion to China's at the time of the Long March.

But there is hope yet. In his letter to Mrs. Bandaranaike, released simultaneously with the signing of the loan agreement, Chou En-lai offered a terminological escape route to India's beleagured Maoists "The Chinese people," he said, "have always opposed ultra left and right opportunism in their protracted struggles." The poor rebel, harassed by his own peculiar circumstances, may not have the time to remember all the theological definitions in Mao's little red book. But if a hundred angels can find the room for a dance on a pin head, surely rebels can discover that precise area between the petty-bourgeoisie and the ultra left in which shines the sun of China's aid ! If they cannot, they have not done their homework well.

In that case they cannot have any right whatever to question China's rights as a nation. China must be left free to decide, like any other country, when to side with established authority, be its ideological colouration like Yahya Khan's or Mrs. Bandaranaike's, and when to jettison a rebellion, be it ideologically as sharp as the JVP's or as nation-wide as the Awamy League's. China must have the right to consign both kinds of rebels to the limbo with precisely the same phrase "a handful of persons." Never mind if that leads to the sacrificing of more revolutions. Enough people will always believe that the flame of revolution burns purest in Peking.

the defeated have no rights

Maxwell's book about China's victory over India in 1962[1] is at its best where he tries to be only a reporter, not an historian or a scholar. There, the enterprising newspaper correspondent shines for gaining access to documents which the Government of India, in its humiliation and shame, has tried to hide from the world. For gaining access and then presenting them in a vivid, lively, enthusiastic narration. But as a scholar or an analyst he reeks with bias, and that mars the book.

Fortunately for India, the documents also show how wrong it is to believe, as many have done, that the Indian army was scattered by the Chinese horde. Only five to six Indian battalions were engaged against China's enormous army of occupation in Tibet. And these few men, though frightfully officered in the senior echelons, fought superbly in many places, to the last man and gun as Maxwell admits. But the main *expose* of the documents is that India's political judgment was blinded by unquestioned faith, at the highest level, in China's goodwill, that all signs and evidence to the contrary were obstinately ignored, that a war which should have been foreseen was not prepared for even to the extent that India's limited means allowed, that when it finally came despite India's efforts to avert it there was serious bungling by political as well as by military leaders, that politicians played at conducting the war from Delhi and the generals played politics. The documents also show in Maxwell's

1. India's China War, *by Neville Maxwell. London : Jonathan Cape.*

powerful prose that when things began to go seriously wrong there was wholesale evasion of responsibility. Hence the government's anxiety to conceal the facts and the credit to Maxwell for bringing them out.

If the author had stopped here his ill-concealed glee in showing up India's humiliation would have found ample scope without exposing him to be a scholar whose bias exceeds his comprehension. But he allows himself to be lured by the tasks of analysis and assessment as he discusses the history of the rival border claims made by India and China and the political attitudes which drove the two countries to war. The story falls into two parts. One relates to Aksai Chin, a bleak plateau on the northeastern marches of the Ladakh province of India and the southwestern marches of the Tibet region of China. The second relates to the border between southeastern Tibet and India's Northeastern Frontier Agency (NEFA for short). These are mainly the borders in question, which also became the two main battle-fronts in 1962. It is a highly complicated story but three facts stand out, each equally important for understanding where Maxwell's judgment betrays the very diligent reporter.

First : After a long period of uncertainty, during which the Aksai Chin border fluctuated according to British estimates of imperial China's ability to prevent Russian penetration towards Ladakh, the British Government of India staked a frontier along what has come to be known as the Johnson-Aradagh line, and this is the frontier which India inherited in this sector upon becoming independent. This is admitted by Maxwell on page 35 : " . . When India became independent in 1947, and for several years thereafter, most official Indian maps still showed the boundary in accordance with the extreme forward formulations of Johnson and Aradagh." This line placed the whole of Aksai Chin clearly within India

The boundary in the opposite corner, between Tibet and NEFA, was fixed as drawn at a tripartite convention held in Simla towards the beginning of World War I, with the representatives of British India, China and Tibet—McMahon, Ivan Chen and Lonchen Shatra—taking part. At the time as well as subsequently, China disputed Tibet's right to independent representation. But Peking acquiesced in it by sitting at the

same table with Tibet for almost a year, and it not only initialled but signed the convention which was drawn up there. At any rate in this sector again as far as India is concerned she inherited a border from Britain which was clearly shown on official maps, although it was not demarcated on the ground.

Second : All countries which have attained independence from colonial rule have had to start with inherited frontiers ; they could not but. Drawing sustenance from the more illustrious name of Gunnar Myrdal, Maxwell tries to argue that this was a case of ambition or pretension on the part of former colonies. But the compulsion here was of historic necessity, not of the presumptuousness of former slaves. No country can deem itself complete without knowing where its boundaries are, and to begin with they can be found only where they are placed at its birth. That is why the nonaligned countries, most of them colonies only 15 or 20 years ago, have been emphasizing the doctrine that historical frontiers should be accepted until they are changed by mutual agreement.

In India's case there was an added reason too for clarity about an interim border in the north. In October, 1947, three months after India became independent, Tibet laid claim on whole districts and provinces of northern India along the entire stretch from Ladakh to NEFA, and it was clearly foreseeable that China would inherit, and at a suitable time assert, the ambitions of Tibet as soon as it regained control of Tibet. Therefore it was necessary for India to make it quite clear that, willing to negotiate adjustments on the border, it was not willing to surrender large parts of Kashmir, Utter Pradesh, Bengal and Assam which Tibet was now claiming and China might, if it found temptation in an undemarcated frontier.

Third : It follows from the unavoidable recognition of inherited frontiers by the inheritor that he should be open to conviction about them. He should not dogmatically lay claim on all the fruits of the expansionism practiced by his colonial predecessor The borders of many colonies were unjustly fixed and at the expense of neighbours. Therefore they must be open to rectification. India and China, the two largest countries of Asia which between them bore the brunt of colonial rapacity, with frontiers between them which had neither been mutually

accepted nor demarcated on the ground, were under a special obligation to be open to changes in their frontiers by peaceful negotiations—and all the three words are important : *changes, peaceful* and *negotiations.*

Maxwell says (p. 325) that China was thus open and India was not. But even his own book shows him to be entirely wrong. When Chou En-lai suggested negotiations in 1951, India agreed readily "but the Chinese did not follow up" (p. 76). In 1952 China raised with India certain other questions about Tibet but none about the boundary (p. 76). Therefore in 1954, when Nehru went to Peking, he raised the question of differences on the border (p. 93), but the Chinese replied that the differences related only to certain "old maps (which they) had not had the time to revise." In 1958 India reminded Peking and Peking said it still had not had time to make a survey (p. 96).

These are not signs of forgetfulness or lack of interest on the part of China in discussing the frontier with India, but of a shrewed farsightedness which Maxwell ignores but history proves. These were the years when China, now busy consolidating its conquest of Tibet, was building a road across Aksai Chin for an easier route into the rebellious western Tibet. China knew at this time that Indian maps had also laid claim to Aksai Chin. Yet it was taking occupation of some thousands of square miles of this plateau without the slightest reference to India while at the same time avoiding discussion for *peaceful changes* by *negotiations.* It had obviously decided that a *fait accompli* must precede negotiations. And this in spite of its promise that "in the meantime China would make no changes in the boundary on its own" (p. 96).

Maxwell's allegation that India refused negotiations is flimsily based upon inferential evidence which is itself very weak. He cites three documents : first. some Indian maps which he says (p 88) showed Aksai Chin as Indian *for the first time* in 1954. But he ignores his own statement earlier (p. 35) that Aksai Chin had been shown this way ever since India became independent. Second, some private correspondence between two Indian officials who, by his own evidence, were only discussing contingency negotiating positions for India

(p. 77). Third, a memorandum (p. 79) privately circulated by Nehru to some colleagues that India's frontier with Tibet "is not open to discussion with anybody." The memorandum went out at a time when Nehru was urging negotiations with China, and only to reassure his colleagues that the negotiations were not going to be in terms of the Tibetan ambitions which have been cited above, but only to determine and demarcate an agreed border.

Maxwell insists that because of these documents Nehru made it "very difficult, perhaps even impossible" for India "to retract (her) claim." But there are at least three statements which Nehru made in all seriousness in Parliament, all of them in 1959, that is, long after the documents cited by Maxwell, which clearly show that India was wide open to negotiations on Aksai Chin. On August 12, 1959, Nehru said, "It is a matter for argument as to what part of it belongs to us and what part to somebody else. It is not at all a dead clear matter. I have to be frank to the House. It is not clear." On August 31, 1959, Nehru said in a further reference to Aksai Chin, "The Ladakh border . . . is clearly one for consideration and debate." On September 4, 1959 : "There are two viewpoints (about the Aksai Chin area) . . . in places like this, decisions can only be made by conferences, by agreement " Some of these statements are recorded in the book but the author completely overlooks them in drawing the clear conclusion—not an inference—which they offer : that what was "impossible" for Maxwell was not for Nehru

This was Nehru's view about the western sector. About the eastern sector he was always much more definite and he remained so. But it would have been folly for him not to be, because, as Maxwell too admits, the Chinese themselves had accepted the McMahon Line as far back as 1951 and it would have been strange if Nehru had continued to be anything other than definite about it. But there was some doubt in the Chinese mind about the exact alignment of the McMahon Line and on this Pandit Nehru clearly offered negotiations and said "I am prepared to discuss any interpretation of the McMahon Line . . . any kind of conciliatory or mediatory process . . . arbitration of any authority agreed to by both parties "

Maxwell, as biased in tracing immediate causes of the war as in examining the attitude of the two countries about negotiations, says India provoked it by her forward policy. Yet what did this forward policy amount to ? It amounted to this : In the eastern sector, where there was no substantial boundary dispute because both sides had accepted the McMahon Line, India set up only one post (less than a platoon in strength) to which the Chinese objected, and even that was south of the crests on which, according to Maxwell himself (p. 74), McMahon had intended his line to be. In the western sector India set up a few posts in similar strength but very nearly all of them on the Indian side of the most advanced border claimed by China until then.

What were China's provocations ? They were : China occupied about 20,000 square miles of territory claimed by India and shown on her maps, including Aksai Chin, and in 1960 suddenly put forward an entirely new line of its farthest claims which extended much deeper into territory claimed by India than any earlier claim advanced by China had done. In Maxwell's eyes India's provocation is bigger than China's. Because the defeated have no rights ?

Changes by peaceful negotiations require that there should be no duress upon them and, if aggression has occurred, it should be withdrawn pending negotiations. China made one proposal toward this end : that each side should withdraw 20 kilometers from what China described as the actual line of control but which in fact (p. 430) coincided exactly with its line of farthest claim. This would have meant China remaining in occupation of very nearly the whole of the territory it had occupied by surreptious aggression and India withdrawing 20 kilometers deeper yet into her own territory which China did not even claim. India countered with a plea for not a spurious but a genuine restoration of the *status quo* by saying (p. 138) that each side should withdraw from the territory claimed by the other, then negotiations should proceed—and in the meantime India would agree that China should continue to have the use of the Aksai Chin road which it needed for access into western Tibet. Completely and unquestioningly accepting the Chinese view, Maxwell dismisses India's proposal

as a clever manoeuver to get the Chinese out from a much larger area than India would vacate. The areas to be vacated would indeed have been unequal under the Indian proposal—but only in so far as China had occupied large chunks of territory which was claimed by India and India had set up only a few posts, under the forward policy which Maxwell finds to be so very ambitious, on the fringes of the territory which was claimed by China. It is not surprising that the most enthusiastic welcome for Maxwell's book has come in India from the CPI (M)—that wing of the Communist Party of India which accepted Mao as the leader when world communism split between Moscow and Peking.

Unrelenting Crisis

With no country have India's relations been so uniformly bad as with Pakistan. Each flutter of hope that they may improve has been swallowed up by a bigger crisis than any reached previously. But never has this happened so dramatically as in the brief period of the first three months of 1971. Hope was never stronger than at the beginning of the year, but never more dim than in the wake of the refugees.

Even until the end of February, it appeared as likely as not that a government would be set up in Pakistan in accordance with the verdict of the elections held in December, 1970 ; such a government would have put relations with India on the stable foundations of good-neighbourliness. But before the summer of 1971 began, war between India and Pakistan became virtually inevitable, with the added likelihood that it would not remain a war between the two countries but would become regional at least and possibly global

The ten articles which follow present the view the present author took at the time as the crisis marched relentlessly from one stage to the next. The last article discusses the inevitability of a future war, but it begins to appear in articles written from mid-April onwards.

moving either way

Zulfikar Ali Bhutto is under a double pressure to withdraw his threat to boycott the National Assembly session which is due to begin in Dacca on March 3. (This article was published in the last week of February). The latest position taken by his party is therefore softer than his own earlier statement. Whereas Bhutto had demanded, as the price for willingness to attend the Assembly, a prior commitment by Sheikh Mujibur Rehman that he would not insist upon his six-point programme, Bhutto's party has only asked for an assurance that the constitution would be based upon a consensus. A further softening is still possible, and before long the news may be that Bhutto will go to Dacca after all.

Bhutto's party agrees with him that the Central Government of Pakistan would be dangerously weak if it had no powers of taxation and even for defence had to depend upon subventions from the constituent units. But many of its members are against a boycott which could deprive them of membership of the Assembly and concede a walk-over to the Sheikh. They have yielded to the fear that in their absence the Sheikh may be able to press a compromise upon some of the smaller parties of West Pakistan. These are not so strongly opposed as the People's Party to the East Pakistan demand for maximum autonomy for the constituent units ; in fact some of them reflect a similar sentiment which exists in the smaller units of the west. Even the Council Muslim League, in which the old leadership of Punjabi Muslims is well represented, is not so adamant as Bhutto is opposing the six point programme. This may be because they resent Bhutto's hegemonistic claim that he represents West Pakistan as the Sheikh represents the East, or because they do not have the hope or ambition that Bhutto has about playing a leadership role. If they proved more pliable in the hands of Mujibur Rehman in the absence of Bhutto, the People's Party would be isolated in spite of its size.

Bhutto is also under the pressure of some powerful advice he has been receiving from General Yahya Khan. During a recent round of consultations the General pressed Bhutto to go to the Assembly instead of taking the unheard of position for an elected representative to take that he would sit in the elected Assembly only if his conditions were met in advance. In doing so the General himself took an unheard of position for a military dictator to take. But he has earned considerable praise abroad for not only allowing but enabling the people of Pakistan to hold remarkably free elections and voting without fear for the parties which were most bitterly outspoken against his own regime. He has grown fond of this role and is willing to play it as long as he can. He was in fact prepared to go further : some months ago he tried to set up a new interim cabinet with the Sheikh, Bhutto and other senior politicians in it. The move fell through because no basis could be found for the Sheikh and Bhutto to sit in the same Government without an agreement on essentials.

The General has a less exalted reason also for wishing to bring the leaders of the two wings face to face in the National Assembly. Bhutto has been rapidly gaining in popularity with the middle and lower rung officers of the army. The generals are still with the President ; the colonels are not and he cannot be sure what course events will take if he does not head off a too direct and immediate confrontation with Bhutto. It would be useful for him to divert Bhutto into an engagement with the National Assembly instead. From that, either an agreed constitution would emerge or such a palpable deadlock that with a clear conscience and without attracting any blame in the eyes of those who have praised him for holding elections for a constituent assembly, he could intervene and impose a compromise solution of his choice.

In the meantime Bhutto would have discredited himself with his new young friends in the army by making such compromises at least as he might make in order to capture the support of the milder advocates of autonomy in West Pakistan against the more extreme demand by the Sheikh. In that case the General, who has kept his counsel on the question of auto-

nomy, could emerge as the advocate of a strong centre and thus capture the appeal which Bhutto has with the army.

Seen from East Pakistan also the prospect looks less bleak for the President if the National Asembly meets than if it does not. If it met, as the Leader of the House Mujibur Rehman would at once face the question - which he does not if he can fasten on Bhutto the blame for the Assembly not meeting at all -- how far he should go in meeting the point of view of the smaller parties from West Pakistan. The question would arise almost immediately because one of the early issues to be settled would be whether the Assembly should take major decisions by simple majority or by special majority. In other words, he would have to choose between being the uncompromising leader of one wing or a statesman who is able to carry the country with him and become its Prime Minister.

But General Yahya Khan is not putting all his eggs in this basket of political hope or the ambition Mujibur Rehman may yet have to become the Prime Minister of undivided Pakistan. The General is also preparing to move closer to military absolutism if he fails to soften the mutual intransigence of the Sheikh and Bhutto. He has cleared the decks for this by dissolving his part civilian and part military cabinet. In drawing up the Legal Framework Order, he wanted to make important provisions of the constitution subject to approval by 60 per cent of the members present and voting. In fact he wrote the provision into a draft of the Order but deleted it upon the insistence of the East Pakistan members of the Cabinet.

If the provision had been retained it might have forestalled the difficulty which will arise if the Awami League decides to use its simple majority in the Assembly to adopt the rule that a simple majority would suffice for all decisions. Attempts are being made to revive the formula, first devised when the task of drawing up a constitution was taken up in the days when Liaquat Ali Khan was the Prime Minister, that important decisions affecting the distribution of powers between the Centre and the units should have the approval of at least 30 per cent of the members of each unit. But it is not clear who would

have the power to enforce the formula if the Assembly, which means the Awami League, opts for the simple majority rule.

But all these calculations make sense only in the context of the problem of ruling a country which has not fallen apart even if it is not as united as it once was. They offer no answer to the question whether or how East Pakistan can be retained against its wishes or West Pakistan persuaded to accept a toothless centre as the price of preserving at least the present outline of Pakistan if nothing else. As it is, the Awami League's resolute insistence on the maximum autonomy possible within a federation has, on the one hand, placed Mujibur Rehman on a seemingly irreversible course and on the other hand has caused such exasperation in West Pakistan that many leaders there think it would be good riddance if East Pakistan seceded.

Some of this feeling is reflected in Bhutto's recent statement that he would be prepared to consider a constitution which provides for two Prime Ministers, one for each wing. While apparently approximating to the Sheikh's position the statement in fact means something very different. To the Sheikh, the appointment of two Prime Ministers would mean acceptance of maximum autonomy within a loose confederation. To Bhutto it would mean either parity with the Sheikh in a meaningful federation or separation from him. That is a range of possibilities on which public as well as official opinion in Pakistan is as ignorant as it is in India.

a dead man's words

With the help of that shortlived phenomenon in Pakistan, Ayub's brother and opponent, Sardar Bahadur Khan, I had my only opportunity of meeting H.S. Suhrawardy. That was in the spring of 1963. The third of the six elaborately unfruitful rounds of talks between India and Pakistan had come to an end, in Karachi, and I was staying on for a closer look at the political scene. Ayub was moving hesitantly—deceptively, according to Bahadur Khan– towards democratic, civilian rule, and I wanted to see more of this strange phenomenon of a dictator stepping down ; seeing it through the eyes of those who knew the scene better was all that was possible during the few days

I was allowed to stay in Karachi beyond the end of the talks. "You are wasting your time with me" Bahadur Khan said. "If you want to understand politics you must meet that old crow from Calcutta." I thought that was impossible. and said as much ; Suhrawardy had just been released from prison, was still under watch and in very bad health. But Bahadur Khan promised to arrange it, and he proved as good as his word.

"He will never give up power." This was Suhrawardy's flat verdict on Ayub, delivered in the midst of "mon cherry" conversations over the telephone with two or three different girls ; at least he spoke to them in two or three different languages. He was a great one for girls, and he wasn't going to change his habits in his old age despite the imprisonment and bad health. "Why should he hand over" I asked "to politicians who made such a mess of everything when they had the chance to do better ?" Suhrawardy gave a mirthless laugh and frankly admitted "yes, we were messy ; all of us."

But he went on to claim that only democratic politics could keep Pakistan together ; a military dictatorship would break up the country, the quicker the more efficient it tried to be. "A dictator will never be accepted in any part of the country to which he does not belong." But all parts, he argued, could "belong" to a fully elected assembly. He thought the country missed the democratic bus when Ghulam Mohammed, the first and only civilian among the long line of dictators Pakistan has had, dissolved the Constituent Assembly after the League was trounced in the first elections in East Pakistan in 1954, by a motley "front" which included Suhrawardy. "Since then, we have never given truly democratic politics a chance."

I have thought often about this coversation in the past few weeks. (The weeks preceding the publication of this article on April 9, 1971) and I find it much more convincing than the scholarly talk which is heard these days about the inevitability of the break-up of a country consisting of such disparate parts as East and West Pakistan. I find the talk inconsistent with earlier scholarly writings about Pakistan and with India's own current experience. Some of those who now say that Pakistan

was bound to break up because of the differences of race, culture and climate between the two wings seem not to have thought so in other contexts. In discussing the weight given to Paskistan in the diplomacy of other powers, and in extolling the success of its own diplomacy, Pakistan was not often thought of by the scholars as a country which was bound to split. All those calculations, for and against, were about a united Pakistan. In any case how can anyone regard the break-up of Pakistan as inevitable because of the differences between the two wings without envisaging a similar fate for India ? Are the contiguous Oriyas and Telugus or Rajasthanis and Gujaratis held together only by the knowledge that they can be more easily prevented from drifting apart than the Punjabi Muslims and East Bengalis can be ?

These explanations of what has happened to Pakistan, rooted in a doomsday view of cultural differences, are less worthy of those who accept India's unity as established than of those western scholars and sociologists who have been simultaneously and for the same reason depicting the inevitable dissolution of India as well. Suhrawardy's explanation is far more convincing ; it also fits in with the Indian official anticipation, commented on in this column six weeks ago, that Yahya Khan was getting ready to move either way : to bring Mujibur Rahman and Bhutto as close together as he could and then impose his fiat on any gap that may still persist between them, or if this strategy failed on account of the refusal of either or both these leaders to move at all towards a compromise, to impose a far stricter martial law upon both wings. It also solves the riddle which has been fancifully read into the contrast between the freedom with which the elections were allowed to be held by Yahya Khan in December last year and the machiavellianism practised by him in March this year.

If the democratic process had not been thwarted in Pakistan by the ambition of dictators for personal power and by the refusal of the West Pakistani elite to give East Pakistan the due advantage of its numbers, it would have been possible to forestall the build-up of the explosive resentments in East Pakistan ; means would have existed for them to express themselves

openly and in time instead of building up into an earth-shaking subterranean swell and for them to be remedied by the power which democracy confers upon numbers. A politically inert people may not discover their grievances, or may put up with them. But not those who quiver with political awareness as East Bengalis do ; for them nothing less than a frankly and effectively functioning democratic apparatus is enough.

It is only when the West Pakistani bureaucratic and military elite made it obvious that it would not yield power at all—it was not stepping down in favour of the people of West Pakistan either—that East Pakistan veered round to the demand not only for maximum democracy but for maximum decentralisation too.

In a democratic system Pakistan would have not only survived but also retained a strong centre if the unavoidable implication had been accepted, that the dominant power in such a centre would belong to the majority ; even if the majority be of East Pakistanis the rule must be of the majority. Having been accepted, the implication would have been softened by all the processes of compromise and consensus building which go in a working democracy If they have loosened the frontiers of caste and community and ethnic differences in India, they could have done so in Pakistan as well. Pakistan had democracy of a kind for a time, of the kind described as messy by Suhrawardy. But in the first place, in West Pakistan at least it was a democracy only in name ; its members in the National Assembly were never properly elected. In the second place it was deprived of its own corrective mechanism, which is—and who will doubt that after the elections in India last month ?—that when one set of politicians brings its working to a standstill, the power of the electorate should be invoked again, not the power of the man with the biggest fist.

As for the illusion that any irreconcilable ethnic or cultural differences between the two wings brought the democratic machine to a halt, it should be remembered that the politicians most guilty of the mess were mostly from West Pakistan, and the majority from West Punjab. Their principal sin was not ethnic and cultural incompatibilities but sheer political illiteracy,

incompetence and corruption, which was spared the educative blast of elections because a succession of strong men, from Ghulam Mohammad to Ayub Khan, considered elections to be a dangerous concession to the whims of the people.

If this attitude persists, it would not be surprising if trouble also erupted between the rulers and the people of West Pakistan and perhaps also between the different units therein, leading to the complete overthrow of Yahya Khan not only in the East but in the West as well. What will happen after the uprising in East Pakistan will not be foreseeable until it is more clearly known what the outcome of the uprising will be; perhaps there has been some premature rejoicing about it. But the likelihood is that Yahya Khan will survive in the West only if he manages to bludgeon the East into submission; if he is defeated in one wing he will be overthrown in the other, and then there will be a tussle for power between Bhutto, who would want to make himself the civilian dictator, and his new-found friends in the army who helped him in February to force Yahya Khan to postpone the National Assembly.

Yahya Khan had at least one moment of lucidity, during which he held the only free elections which have ever been held throughout Pakistan. He could have camouflaged his dictatorship behind doctored elections if his intention had been only to divert and deceive the rising pressure of the demand for elections But he chose not to. Thereafter, however, lucidity took leave of him too, or else he ceased to be a free agent. One of the easiest animals to tame and exploit is a soldier who is proud of his forthrightness but unaware that he lacks the subtlety required for the tasks undertaken by him. Either, out of his political innocence, he persuaded himself, or else others persuaded or coerced him into believing that he was bound by a soldier President's honour to make a last ditch stand against the dissolution of the country which would follow if he conceded to Mujibur Rahman the extreme autonomy demanded by him.

But Yahya Khan did not or was not allowed to see that the course of repression he was about to embark upon, especially enraging because the preparations for it were made under the

cloak of negotiations, would make dissolution of the country unavoidable in future despite any temporary success it may achieve. It would completely eliminate any hope there may be of relations between the two wings becoming deeper some day if allowed to develop freely, without the coercive apparatus imposed upon them by a long succession of civilian, semi-civilian and military dictators. It is the tragedy of Pakistan that this should be happening at the hands of the only dictator who came within an ace of disproving the late Suhrawardy's dictum that a dictator never gives up power voluntarily.

unmasterly inactivity

On the morrow of elections, it has been proved how valuable it is to have a government with a safe and stable majority behind it. If Mrs. Gandhi had been as vulnerable to opposition pressures as she used to be, she would not have been able to play the East Bengal crisis as coolly as she has done. She would have been driven into postures which, while doing little positive good to Bangla Desh, would have enabled West Pakistan to cloud the whole issue in the eyes of the world. Suspicion would have been more successfully cast upon the Awami League, the Sheikh would have been denounced as an Indian agent and the world would not have been allowed to see the movement as the struggle for independence which it is.

Slow as the world has been already (at the time of publication, on April 16) in taking notice of the agony of East Bengal, it would have been slower still if extravagant speeches or careless actions by Indians had lent colour to Pakistani charges of Indian instigation. International opinion may not be worth bothering about very much when national interests are at stake. But there is no wisdom in ignoring it if it can be cultivated instead. While waiting for such opinion to crystallise there has been delay in organising assistance for the liberation forces. But there is some compensation. They have had the chance to prove that even without outside assistance they are resolved and able to take and hold territory. This puts the case for recognising and assisting Bangla Desh on a much better footing.

So far so good. But what happens next. Discretion has played a part, and a very valuable one. But can calculated in-

activity be adequate for always ? This seems to be very doubtful. All the evidence which is gathering eloquently suggests that something more positive must be thought of and instituted without further delay Its nature and timing should be certainly left to the Government. But there needs to be better proof than there is of the country's willingness and ability to face the next stage when it comes.

The battle is not going to be won by either side very quickly The liberation forces have survived what was obviously intended to be a knock-out blow. But they can at best fight a long war of attrition ; they cannot throw out the West Pakistan army in the kind of fixed battles which are quickly ended. Similarly, the army will not be able to hold the country but it can sit out for a long time at strategic points of its choice. West Pakistan will have to pay a heavy price even for such selective occupation ; its economy will be stretched to the limit, especially if the aid giving Western countries chose not to bale it out, and its standing in the world will plummet like a stick. But it may decide to pay the price because the alternative may be not only the loss of East Bengal but a severe disruption of West Pakistan too plus the certain overthrow of General Yahya Khan.

As the fighting drags out, with the army striking the bloody blows of a butcher and the liberation forces bleeding it in turn with the people's war tactics of destroying everything rather than let anything fall into the hands of the enemy, such privation will stalk "sonar Bangla" that largescale relief will have to be sent in or else there will be a heavy influx of refugees in distress. How is the relief going to be organised and sent across ? Sending it surreptitiously in driblets will not meet the needs. Sending it on a sufficient scale means that it will have to be sent openly. Can that be done without recognising the Bangla Desh Government or without at least recognising the de facto control of the established authority ? The present state of relations will clearly not be enough. Nor will it be enough to leave the job of organising it to purely private agencies as at present. It will be difficult for them to rise to the required scale ; this is not going to be like furnishing comfort for a limited area in distress.

More serious is the danger that the conflict will change its character if it is drawn out for very long. It is virtually a law of guerilla warfare that as the privation becomes sharper and bitterness mounts, leadership passes into the hands of the more extremist elements If that happened in East Bengal, what would be the effect on the political situation in the eastern region of India ? It appears to be certain at the moment that if not Sheikh Mujibur Rahman himself then his close associates are still in charge of the movement. How long will that last if they are not able to register the kind of successes which will keep the population with them ? It is no secret that other forces are competing with them. If the movement runs into a prolonged stalemate, even if serious frustration is avoided, its leadership can easily pass into their hands, and if they happen to be especially inimical to India, as some of them are known to be, West Pakistan itself would not hesitate to promote the change. If lose out it must, the army would rather lose out to those who can be counted upon to be a thorn in India's side.

Contingencies are imaginable which can shorten the conflict. Big power intervention can be more effective here than it has been in the West Asian war The belligerents there have much greater material as well as psychological resources than Pakistan had even before it consigned the wealth of its eastern wing to the flames of this conflict, and the Soviet Union and the United States appear to be in greater agreement about preventing this clear case of genocide than they are in defusing the much more complex factors which are responsible for the war in West Asia. The rights and wrongs of it stand out so much more clearly in this case that the super powers should have little difficulty in dissuading other countries from doing anything which would prolong the agony of Bangla Desh. But it would be unwise to leave it to such a contingency to help India cope with the consequences of a war which may go on for many months. The contrary contingency has also to be provided for.

Quite clearly India's first obligation must be to use all the persuasion it can with other countries to see that the butchery in East Bengal comes to an end. The Arab countries need to be told a thing or two ; they have been dragging their feet

absolutely shamelessly in putting any kind of a pressure upon West Pakistan. India is not without any bargaining capability, and she should not hesitate to use it in this case. Hesitation would have been immoral in any circumstances ; now it is unnecessary too because by their own actions in East Bengal the authorities in Islamabad have made the Kashmir question innocuous from India's point of view and have sharply reduced India's dependence upon the Arabs.

Some of the other countries may be easier to persuade because they have no special ties with Pakistan to make them partial to this crime. Countries in the close vicinity of Pakistan have an added self-interest in seeing to it that large numbers of people are not sent fleeing out of Bangla Desh ; their pressure on West Pakistan can be of critical importance, especially Burma's But even after all that is done the danger will remain very real for India that the war may continue not only till but well beyond the monsoons and there may be an overspill of its effects. Therefore the second line of India's diplomatic effort must be to prepare countries which are friendly as well as those which are not for those counteracting measures which India must take

But more important than diplomatic effort is domestic mobilisation. The scale on which it is going to be needed requires preparations which are nowhere in evidence. This is a price which the calculated inactivity which has been practised hitherto should not be allowed to pass on to the future, either the future of India or of Bangla Desh.

guts and credibility

What should have been a soft revolution from the start and by choice has become so now by the force of circumstances. This poses a severe problem of guts and credibility for East Bengal But not for East Bengal only. For us as well.

Awami League forces appeared to be sweeping into major towns and communication centres until a few days ago (published on April 23), routing small-sized units of the Pakistan army. But this was too good to last. It made exciting headlines for a time but it made very little sense on the ground. No

popular uprising has ever succeeded in rushing the nodules of military power without fighting a war of attrition first. If the Mukti Fouj appeared to be doing so for a time it was only because the West Pakistan army was almost as unprepared for the strength of the uprising as the people were unprepared for the sudden brutality unleashed by President Yahya Khan.

The West Pakistan army was probably in never more than about a division strength in East Bengal until about March 20. Half of it was thinly spread out all over the province and on the border in pickets of company strength or less, and half less thinly garrisoned in Dacca, Sylhet, Comilla, Rangpur, Dinajpur and Saidpur. Real concentration of force was represented only by the two tank regiments which the army could boast of in East Bengal, with one tucked away in the north-western corner jutting into India. In the third week of March reinforcements began to arrive from West Pakistan but probably were not in extensive deployment when the army struck on the night of March 25 They were handy in Dacca and Chittagong, able as they thought to march out where needed, but the more distant garrisons, including some important ones in the north-west, north-east and south-east of the province, remained very small.

Therefore it did not add up to any major success if these relatively small units were overpowered by the Mukti Fouj and either captured or driven out. In many places perhaps even that did not happen : towns were declared to have been "captured" which had either no garrisons at all or had them only in the outskirts ; capture in such cases only meant that the local population, which must have been enthusiastically in favour of the Awami League, was able to proclaim independence with little hindrance from the West Pakistan army. The army for its part did not go in for a battle with the freedom fighters during this phase. It simply let loose a massacre of the unarmed civilian population wherever it could, probably expecting that this wave of terror would be enough to destroy such taste for freedom as East Bengal nationalism may have acquired. Therefore the victories claimed by both sides were, in the military sense, empty. This phase lasted into the first week of April.

The second phase, which ended about April 10, was closer to the realities of a revolution. The scattered and strung out penny packets of the army regrouped and concentrated in communication hubs and strong points of their choice and here the more serious battles occurred. Units of the Mukti Fouj, in excellent heart because of what appeared to them their initial successes, tried to overrun these concentrations also ; the army, now better placed because more concentrated, attacked or counter-attacked in greater force. Heavy losses were suffered by both sides and some places changed hands more than once.

But the tactics of the Mukti Fouj continued to be more dramatic than realistic Before the second phase ended it could be clearly foreseen, as stated in this column on April 16 : "The battle is not going to be won by either side very quickly. (The liberation army) can at best fight a long war of attrition . . (the army) can sit it out for a long time at strategic points of its choice." The Pakistan army adjusted itself to the changed situation more quickly than the Mukti Fouj, and in the third phase of the fighting, which began soon after April 10, the army concentrated still further Taking advantage of the latest reinforcements also, it began to carry out raids and armoured ground attacks with such concentrated strength and coordination that it was able to capture any declared objective. In the more distant places also its garrisons, now reinforced, took the offensive : they started going out of their strongholds on missions of destruction and occupation now, not confining themselves to the survival task of foraging for food.

On the other hand the Mukti Fouj did not change its tactics until a week ago, by which time it had already lost three weeks of precious time. If the consequences are disheartening for the Mukti Fouj and its friends, they have only themselves to blame : they did not see in time that the "victories" scored in the first phase were unrealistic and that it was folly to try to repeat them in the second and third phases. The strategy of capturing enemy positions suits a hard revolution ; soft revolutions can only win by wearing down the enemy in guerilla warfares. The guerilla tactics announced last week by the Mukti Fouj should have been adopted to begin with, and

not because it was no longer possible to capture and hold nodal positions but because that should not have been attempted in the first place. In that event the opening rounds of the struggle for freedom would have been less dramatic for the Mukti Fouj. But the gains, being more natural, would have been surer, such positional successes as might have come in the course of such fighting would not have been the due wages of war but unexpected and therefore doubly effective morale-building bonus

What has happened instead is exactly the opposite. The Mukti Fouj appears to have incurred reverses and suffered the demoralisation which goes with them, whereas the truth is only that unexpected "gains" which could never have been realistically aimed at have come to an end. The army, for whom the morale of its men is as important a factor as it is for the Fouj, has been given the opportunity to feel that it has turned the tide. It has done nothing of the sort : the situation is as heavily loaded against it as always, but its morale has gone up instead of going down as it would have after four weeks of harassing guerrilla warfare with the prospect of the monsoons yet to come.

More important is the loss of credibility which the Bangla Desh movement has suffered abroad and unfortunately on the eve of its proclamation last Friday, announcing the founding of the new republic. The same event, coming after some weeks of intense guerilla warfare, would have had a much better impact than it does in the wake of the "reverses". In this sense it is better not to have "won" than to have "won" and "lost" All countries hesitate to recognise a rebel government if it suffers loss of credibility either through inability to consolidate and administer its territory or—and even more—through inability even to hold its gains. A neighbouring country hesitates even more if it fears that after extending recognition it will have to play host to an emigre government.

But better late than never. The Mukti Fouj has done well, even if only under the pressure of necessity, to announce that it is switching over to the classic strategy of guerilla warfare.

The scope for success in it remains very great. Although the Pakistan army has about 30 battalions in the field now, it faces a burden which is much bigger than its resources. Surrounded as it is by a sea of civilian hostility, it cannot hold positions in less than a battalion strength. West Pakistan cannot send in many more troops for fear for its own security either against Indian hostility or internal disorder and with the troops available in the east the army cannot hold all the positions it needs and protect their supply lines as well in sufficient strength to withstand guerilla attack.

The opportunity is therefore wide open still for the Mukti Fouj. If it avoids the wasteful temptation of trying to capture strong points before they are ripe to fall, if it furiously nibbles away at their periphery instead and disrupts lines of communication while conserving its resources as much as it can, it can bleed the enemy to death or force him to depart. Many months of effort will be needed for that—a mistake is being made in pinning too much hope on one monsoon season ; in retrospect this will become another invitation to disappointment—but more than that what is needed is guts, the most important resource for sustaining guerilla warfare. If morale is not lost, the lost credibility can be recaptured still.

India also faces a problem of guts and credibility. It has shown concern, but many countries must be waiting to see what else it will show. It should be obvious to everyone that what ultimately happens in East Bengal is a matter of serious interest to India ; stability in the eastern region of this country will be variously affected, depending upon whether a free Bangla Desh emerges—and whether under the leadership of the Awami League or some other force—or a cowed down and subjugated East Pakistan. Everyone also knows that India is not without some ability to influence the course of events. It surrounds Bangla Desh on three sides, and with a border which will remain open to a depth of ten or fifteen miles at most places.

The Pakistan army will seal off as many inlets from India as it possibly can. But in the first place it cannot seal very many, and in the second it will not try to seal them at dis-

tances of much less than 10 miles from the border because it will be anxious to avoid entanglement with India. About the middle of April a few Pakistan shells landed on Indian territory. India made the right noises about them to warn Pakistan not to take Indian passivity for granted. But no one in New Delhi seriously believes that the Pakistan army will try to resume its positions on the border ; it would have to do so, if it wanted, in such strength that there would be little left of it to garrison East Bengal.

The people and leaders of East Bengal have openly asked for India's help ; formerly they did so as individuals but now as the Republic of Bangla Desh. How will the Government and the people of India respond ? By the manner they do other countries will decide whether to be more impressed by India's respect for legality, propriety and the principle of non-interference or for its guts, capacity and credibility as a major factor in the region. The choice has never been sharper for India. Of course there are external constraints upon the choice. Thought of what China may do is one of them. But it is precisely in respect of these constraints that India's credibility will be judged by its neighbours in the first place, by the southern Asian and south-eastern regions next, and finally by the big powers themselves including China.

tables turned on india

Within the short space of one month, President Yahya Khan has converted Pakistan's biggest ever crisis into a most dangerous situation for India. Until the middle of April the Indian public was being told - and let official Indian agencies not pretend that they did not help to spread the impression— that the West Pakistan army had lost control of Bangla Desh, that for a time it may be able to sit it out in a few cities and cantonments but soon it would be driven out of there as well, and that India's only problem was whether and how it should help to hasten the process. Waiting and watching were accepted as an adequate policy for the time being, since delay was not considered likely to spell any direct harm to this country. The worst consequence of a delay in the victory of Bangladesh was feared to be excessive radicalisation of the movement for

freedom, not a refugee problem for India of such enormous proportions.

The speculation was mostly about the likely adverse repercussions for Pakistan and hopefully beneficial ones for this country. Pakistan, it was thought, would now cease to be a thorn in India's side ; it would no longer have the face to raise the Kashmir problem at world forums ; with a friendly government in Bangla Desh, it would be easier to tackle the economic problems of the whole of that region, including eastern India ; the smaller countries of the neighbourhood would quit playing Pakistan against India and even the bigger powers, including China, it was hoped, would at last discover that it was nonsense investing in Pakistan as a counter-weight to India.

Instead it is Islamabad which is now (published on May 14) counting the chickens. It has already gone some way and hopes to go some more towards knocking out the eastern wing's numerical advantage against the western wing. Counting those killed in or driven out of East Bengal, and adding those who may yet be, Islamabad can be said to have reduced East Pakistan's statistical advantage to a substantial extent ; what remains of it will be politically neutral because after such mass extermination enough of those who remain will be forced to remember the power of the West for a long time. Therefore Islamabad's calculation now must be that the danger of East Bengal asserting its democratic rights as the more numerous people has been extinguished for the foreseeable future. To add savour to this thought would be not only the prestige which goes with a victory won but the tremendous satisfaction of putting an almost unbearable burden upon India.

The financial burden of refugees relief which India faces already is bad enough ; about Rs. 50 lakhs a day for the estimated two million people who have been forced into India. But with no visible ceiling to the refugee influx, the cost of daily relief may soon match the present daily cost of military and "pacification" operations for West Pakistan, estimated at present at Rs. 1 crore but likely to go down when the operations taper off. In the next couple of months, India will have to spend more on refugee relief than what it had to spend—

Rs. 50 crores—on the 1965 Indo-Pakistan war.

But even if international aid takes off most of the financial burden, in recognition of India's good behaviour in letting the East Bengal people die for their freedom while India waited and watched, other burdens will remain, and they are heavy enough Communal flare-ups is one of them, as some of the non-Bengali refugees try to go back to their homes in some of the eastern India States, or the influx of Hindu Bengalis into such non-Bengali areas as Assam threatens to change the linguistic balance there. The dislocation in the eastern States, serious enough already, is yet another, and if Pakistan has succeeded in smuggling in a large nnmber of people of its own choice, then the added security risk is the third burden.

Farther afield, there is the threatened dislocation of India's overall economy and a setback to such proposed measures as relief of unemployment; also, the likely setback to the new-found reputation of Mrs. Gandhi's leadership for decisive and firm action when the occasion calls for it. The diplomatic repercussions can be serious too. Whatever the subtle considerations which the Government of India has been weighing for over a month while the situation on the ground changes from day to day, the broad facts as seen by India's neighbours, and by many Indians too, are very simple : that next door to India, seventy million people, not only willing for it but wanting close and good neighbourly relations with India, rebelled to a man against their alien oppressors who have declared India to be their enemy number one, but India did—or could—do nothing to help them as they were massacred in sleep or bombed out of their homes ; that India rushed in with a parliamentary resolution and other encouraging statements and gestures, but when more concrete help was needed India decided to wait and watch.

Whether India was restrained by friendly big powers or intimidated by China or simply caught in its own hesitations, the net meaning for our South Asian neighbours is that either India cannot see or cannot save its friends; that even when there is an overwhelming moral issue and India's interests coincide with it, external constraints or some inner weakness

can make India powerless. This would be a bad enough for India's credibility as a power factor in southern Asia. What makes it worse is the contrast with Islamabad, which decisively and swiftly intervened from three thousand miles away, defying all the laws of logistical caution, and despite condemnation by public opinion virtually the whole world over, firmly pushed in the sword all the way to the hilt. If it was China's backing which made it so bold while paralysing India, then that too is something from which other countries will not fail to draw their own lesson. Perhaps the Soviet Union and the USA should note this as much as New Delhi.

Soon after the Pakistan army began the assault upon a people who had proclaimed their independence with convincing unanimity, people in New Delhi who were later to be dismissed as reckless hawks advised the government that the independence of Bangla Desh was a matter of vital interest to India and the Awami League should be given all the help it wanted ; that there should be no act of intervention which was not strictly necessary, and once undertaken it should not last a day longer than was needed, but nothing that was necessary and was desired by the people of Bangla Desh should be shirked merely because China or someone else might be offended. They also pointed out that physical intervention would be more expensive and less easy to justify as the West Pakistan army took up more positions and the Mukti Fauj lost control of any sizable territory which it could justly describe as Bangla Desh.

In spite of what Pakistan did twice in Kashmir, that advice was considered rash and was rejected. The public did not notice the rejection much because to it also the advice appeared to be premature. At a time when the Mukti Fauj was reportedly doing well enough on its own and countries like the Soviet Union were also making helpful noises, it was generally thought it would be better if India acted later and in company with other countries rather than sooner and alone. The counsel of patience has not paid off, helping Bangla Desh single-handed has become increasingly difficult, action in concert with other countries has become increasingly unlikely, while the price India may have to pay for inaction has become constantly

higher, most probably higher than it would have been if India had given swift, timely and effective help to the Awami League first and counted the cost afterwards

Perhaps this pessimistic diagnosis will be disproved yet. It may well turn out that more is in fact being done behind the scenes than we are aware of and West Pakistan will yet be forced by other countries to respect the clearly expressed wishes of the people of East Bengal May be. But the yardstick by which the results of such action should be measured by India is now clear. They will be adequate only if a regime comes into being in East Bengal which is sufficiently responsive to the wishes of the people for all the refugees to feel that they can go back to their homes in safety. Not only the Muslims but the Hindus too and all those, whether Hindus or Muslims, who were known to be supporters of the Awami League, should be able to go back without danger to them. That alone can be the test of any political settlement which President Yahya Khan may be persuaded to concede. The policy of waiting and watching will have been very poorly justified if all that it produces is a generous dole to the refugees through international charity.

rights for refugees

If official Indian policy is fully reflected in official Indian pronouncements, then India has yet to discover the true challenge which the problem of Bangla Desh poses for her. The emphasis has mostly been on the burden of refugee relief which has been thrown upon India and on the urgent need of international aid. This is indeed an important issue ; there is evidence already, which has been officially confirmed, that Indian planning has been thrown out of gear by the enormous charge which refugee relief casts upon this country's very limited resources. The fear is that the charge will continue to grow indefinitely if West Pakistan is allowed to drive out more and more East Bengalis from their homes into India. And yet, heartless though one may seem in saying so, the refugees are not the most important issue and international charity is not what they need most. The real issue is the restoration of their demo-

cratic rights to the people of East Bengal and to the refugees who have been bombed out of their homes.

That this also happens to be the only answer to the problem of refugee relief i only an additional reason for pressing it, not the main reason. So long as the emphasis continues to be on putting together relief supplies for the refugees, they will continue to be an Indian responsibility, the more permanent the more India diverts her attention to relief measures from organising support for the rights of the people of Bangla Desh. International relief, if organised on a sufficient scale, will only more quickly make the refugees parmanent denizens of their tented misery. The million and a half Palestinian refugees are a frightening reminder of this. On the other hand international support for the restoration of democratic rights in Bangla Desh will enable the refugees to go back to their homes with reasonable assurance that their lives will be safe.

The United Nations relief mission is reported to have agreed that the refugees have the right to go back to their homes ; it is even reported to have expressed the hope, earlier expressed be Mrs. Gandhi, that they will be able to go back within about six months' time. But the right and the hope will both remain empty so long as conditions for their return do not exist in their homes. Neither the UN nor India or any other authorities will be, or will be allowed by public opinion to be, heartless enough to insist that the refugees must go back to the very tyranny which drove them out in the first place. In the eyes of the West Pakistan soldiery which has an unbridled right over the life of every East Bangali at present and has amply proved how brutal it can be in using this right, every refugee has a self-confessed sympathy for Bangla Desh ; otherwise he would have stayed behind to welcome the "liberator" from 1,200 miles away instead of running away to India. His life would not be worth a moment's purchase once he is back in the grip of Martial Law or any puppet version thereof.

There is a hint of other answers to this problem in the Indian note to Pakistan dated May 14. (This article was published a week later, on May 21.) It demands compensation from Pakistan for the burden of relief which has been thrown upon

India, and authoritative comment has suggested that India has territorial compensation in mind ; this suggestion has been read into the statement in the note that most of the refugees have come from a fifty-mile belt along the Indian border. Whether the suggestion, if made at all, was seriously meant remains to be proved as yet ; Mrs. Gandhi did not quite underscore it when, in reply to a question in Calcutta on May 16 whether the note meant that India would demand Pakistani territory for the refugees, she said she had not seen the note. Indian hesitations in pressing it can weaken this approach even more than the likely Pakistani answer that the search for territoria compensations, once begun, should go all the way back to the massive two-way traffic of refugees in and around 1947.

India's approach to other countries to support the democratic rights of Bangla Desh may be dogged by an insubstantial parallel with Kashmir. But leaving aside India's claim that democratic elections have been held in Kashmir several times over and the people of Jammu and Kashmir are fully represented in the State legislature and in the Union Parliament, Pakistan is being asked to do nothing more than to respect its own elections. Under the auspices of the military regime, whom no one would suspect of being partial to East Bengal and even less to the Awami League, elections were held which the government itself accepted as fair. They made the League virtually the sole representative of East Bengal ; it secured more than 70 per cent of the votes and more than 90 per cent of the East Bengal seats in the National Assembly. All that Pakistan is now asked to do is to accept the verdict of the electorate and to let the National Assembly meet and frame a constitution by democratic procedures. Once Pakistan ensures this, India would have the right—but only then—to expect that the refugees will go back to their homes and that more will not come. This, not charity should be the focus of its appeal to the world ; all countries have the obligation to listen to it, especially those which have been giving aid to Pakistan. In the meantime if there are any parallels to be drawn with Kashmir they are that Pakistan had no hesitation in recognising the Azad Kashmir Government, and in twice sending its Army into India on behalf, as it claimed, of the liberation of Kashmir.

The United States and, even more, Britain appear to be firmly opposed to any pressure upon Pakistan to honour the verdict of the last elections They regard this as interference in the internal affairs of Pakistan. This is true according to the technicalities of protocol. But in real moral and political terms all that East Bengal expects these two countries to do is to end and undo their past interference. More than any other single factor, it is the policies of Britain and even more the United States which are responsible for the present plight of the East Bengali ; not to help him overcome the effect of these policies is as much an act of continued interference by default as pressure upon West Pakistan to end its terror would be.

Sheikh Mujibur Rehman is not the first person and the Awami League not the first party to have tried to secure a more honourable place for East Bengal within Pakistan The authors of the founding document of Pakistan, the resolution adopted by the Muslim League at Lahore in 1940, had defined Pakistan as consisting of two "independent States" in the north-western and north-eastern parts of India, consisting as they said, of "autonomous and sovereign states." Successive leaders of East Bengal have tried to get—not "independence" and "sovereignty"—but a share of political and economic power for East Bengal within Pakistan which would be commensurate with its population and its contribution to the economy of the country. Each attempt has been put down by the power of West Pakistan from its sanctuary in the armed forces and the bureaucracy, both overwhelmingly West Pakistani. Suhrawardy, Fazlul Haq, Nazimuddin, Maulana Bhashani, Mujibur Rahman—every leader of East Pakistan has been made to feel the crushing weight of this power ; each one of them has been dismissed from office and charged with treason or conspiracy with India, or jailed on one excuse or another – to some including Sheikh Mujib, all these things happened in succession while their real offence has always and only been that each in his day and way represented the political power of East Pakistan, the more populous wing, and rested upon it his claim for a share of the central power for East Pakistan The strength of the leaders of East Pakistan lay only in democratic politics, their opponents in control of the power of the army.

The confrontation between the two opposing areas and the two opposing sources of power became as clear as could be when a "front" of East Bengal parties formed by Suhrawardy and Fazul Haq -- Mujib was a member of this newly emerging group of democratic political power—trounced the Muslim League in the only elections, in 1954, ever held in East Pakistan or anywhere else in the country before the last elections to the National Assembly in which Mujib swept the polls in the eastern wing. The power trio of the day in the western wing, Ghulam Mohammad, General Ayub and General Iskandar Mirza, dismissed the popularly elected government of Fazlul Haq, charged him with treason and sent in Iskandar Mirza to rule East Pakistan. At that very time in the midst of this battle between democratic and political ways of ruling Pakistan, the United States concluded an extensive military aid programme with the ruling clique in the West and forever tilted the balance against those who were trying to uphold the democratic process.

This was not probably the American intention, but the effect was not only forseeable ; it was clearly foreseen and America was forewarned about it and it has been the governing factor in Pakistan's life eversince, in its domestic as much as in its external policies. In the given circumstances it was as clear an act of interference as for instance, supplying weapons to the army in a country like Thailand in the midst of a struggle for power with the navy or the police. At the present juncture the western powers are not asked to do much more than to undo this longstanding interference, and its effects, in the internal affairs of Pakistan. The West Pakistan military clique cannot hold East Pakistan in bondage for very long if it is denied continued Western assistance in any form. The refugees will be able to take care of themselves if the Western powers intervene only to the extent of taking care of the anti-democratic imbalance which they have injected into Pakistan by their previous policies.

between hopes and illusions

Mrs. Gandhi's speech in the Lok Sabha on May 24 is in some ways an advance upon her previous speeches. The fact that for the first time she spoke about Bangla Desh, not East

Bengal, would have signified little by itself. But it was heavily underscored by the tone of her speech, which was altogether more serious, more loaded with warnings about the consequences which may follow if no one pays heed to the plight of Bangla Desh and the burden which Pakistan has thrown upon India. But she gave away very little about how much heed she thinks anyone is going to pay. The ominous note in her speech has been interpreted in two ways ; that Yahya Khan is softening up under the pressure of events and a little thunder in her speeches will bring India some credit for what is likely to happen anyhow, or alternatively that the world is indeed taking "unconscionably long" to wake up to realities and she must prepare India for the dangers and responsibilities which might follow. But the most likely interpretation is the least unlikeable of the three : that while concern about the emerging realities is certainly growing within the Government, variable rhetoric is the only answer we have found as yet. So far (that is up to early June, when this article was published) we have not squarely faced the possibility that neither the foreseeable internal nor external pressure may prove sufficient for the gentlemen in Islamabad and to ensure India's security it can become necessary for the Government to take "all measures" about which Mrs. Gandhi spoke.

The pressure which India would like to see international sources apply upon Islamabad is mainly economic. It is firmly believed in New Delhi that West Pakistan will have to come to a political settlement with East Bengal, or else give it up, if it is not allowed to defer its international repayment obligations and, beyond what was already on the way at the end of March, is not given any further aid for the next six months or so. In that event, it is thought, West Pakistan will not be able to wage even the limited scale operations which would still be needed to cope with such fighting capability as the Mukti Fauj is still able to muster ; the rest will be seen to by differences within the military junta in Islamabad and between the army and aspiring politicians who will want more power than embattled army commanders are usually willing to transfer to political hands.

This prescription is correct. But one does not see any pharmacy which is willing to dispense it. As far as India is formally and officially aware, the only economic denial to which the aid giving countries find themselves committed is that all the foreign aided projects in East Bengal have come to a halt and there is little likelihood of their being resumed for several months, perhaps for two or three years. But this is less the product of the displeasure of aid giving countries with West Pakistan than a physical consequence of the chaos prevailing in East Bengal. By and large the other members of the consortium will take their cue in this matter from Britain and the United States, and if the current political attitude of these two countries is any indication of what their future economic policy will be, then India should not expect too much in that quarter. The public and the authorities in both countries have been fully exposed to the gruesomeness of what has happened in East Bengal. The British and American Press has been remarkably frank ; even those correspondents have been who were taken on a conducted tour through whitewashed scenes of the recent savagery. Their coverage has won praise from people in New Delhi who are not normally given to paying compliments to the Western Press. But even then, official comment in Washington as well as London remains careful not to hurt anyone's feelings in Islamabad, which only shows how hard sold they are on their idea that an anchorage in Pakistan, which mostly means West Pakistan to them, is very important for them, in their own interests.

The best example of the contemporary Anglo-American attitude was provided by the British Government on May 25. While it was stated in the House of Commons that day that a special envoy of President Yahya Khan had been told of Britain's concern over the "East Bengal situation" (wheher the situation means the refugee exodus or the military terror or the suppression of the popular will was left carefully vague) it was also stated that Britain had welcomed the envoy's emphasis upon President Yahya Khan's "determination to seek an early political solution to Pakistan's internal political difficulties " In other words, President Yahya Khan can decide for himself what would be the best "solution" for what his envoy euphemis-

tically described as "internal difficulties."

Only a few days earlier, Yahya Khan himself had made it abundantly clear that in his "solution" there would be no room for the Awami League though it had proved itself to be synonymous with the people of East Bengal. One of Yahya Khan's resounding declarations was that "we will deal with Mujibur Rahman as we see fair"; another that there would never be any negotiations with the Awami League ; and yet another that he was determined to punish those Awami League leaders who had "committed crimes", and since he also said that Mujib had plotted to arrest him, the President of the country, he clearly implied that Mujib could also be treated as having committed a crime and dealt with accordingly. He did hold out the carrot that Awami League members of the National Assembly would be treated as having been elected as individuals, not as candidates of the League ; therefore the ban on the League would not necessarily be extended to them as well and those who were considered to have been sufficiently reformed by their experiences since March 25 might be accommodated in the "political solution." But other West Pakistani leaders have explained what the accommodation would be ; by holding fresh elections in the light of "the changed political realities in East Pakistan" the status of a minority would be conferred upon the majority. With so much in common between them and Yahya Khan, and between Yahya Khan and the hardline generals who constitute the bulk of the military junta, hope should not be invested in an internal break-up in West Pakistan unless difficulties arise in the wake of denial of foreign aid to the barbaric oligarchy.

Foreign governments have shown much greater understanding of the refugee problem on the Indian side of the border than for the political problem on the other side Their response can be described as generous. So generous in fact that Indian fears of the purely economic aspects of the burden begin to seem unrealistic ; after all, as against the three and half million refugees who have come already or the five million who may, we normally add fifteen million people to our population every year, and that without getting any promises of any special assistance for keeping them alive. Given moderate efficiency

in relief management, the refugees can be confidently hopeful that they will still be alive at the end of six months or even as many years. But whether they will ever cease to be refugees is much less certain. From relief they must go either towards rehabilitation or repatriation ; but prospects about one journey are as unsure as about the other and will remain unsure unless either the big powers change their policy towards Pakistan or India decides to act independently of them. In fact the more people talk about the problem on the Indian side of the border rather than the one on the East Bengal side, the less likely does it become that the refugees will ever be able to go back to their homes.

No matter how hard India presses for "credible guarantees" for the refugee when he goes back home, they will never be credible in his eyes if their implementation is left in the hands of Yahya Khan or any puppet regime that he may yet be able to contrive in Dacca. This is especially true of the two million Hindus, who have been driven out and those who may yet be; their sources of livelihood, especially land which has already been seized and distributed by members of the Muslim League, will never be restored to them by a government which is hostile to the Awami League. That is, if they are able to go back in the first place. During the long and laborious process which Yahya Khan will be able to insist upon for sifting the refugee from the Indian destitute, the world will lose all interest in the problem and then only a thin trickle will be allowed to cross back into East Bengal. And yet it is happening every day that the political problem is being pushed into the background as everyone talks more and more about the economic and human problem of refugee relief. If this goes on, the political problem will remain unsolved in the end and therefore the human and economic problem as well. It is an enormous illusion that the latter can be solved while the former is forgotten. Either India must act in the context of the political problem or the aid giving countries must show much greater awareness and purposefulness than they are showing at present if the triple problem is not to become a permanent legacy for Bangla Desh and India.

the treacherous phase

Indian statements about East Bengal, even those made at the highest level, have not enlightened the country very much about what lies ahead. The Prime Minister said very forcefully the other day (a few days before this article was published, on June 26) that India must get ready to go through "hell". But the wording led to diverse interpretations : according to one she meant the financial burden of refugee relief ; according to the other the very different burden of forcibly opening the borders of East Bengal to lead the refugees in. Both burdens are serious enough to warrant the strong expression she used, but they require very different kinds of mobilisation.

It was easier to understand the uncertainty in our statements until a couple of months ago : although there had been knowledgeable warnings about the size of the influx which may be expected, policies take time to adjust to events of such magnitude. But that by itself does not explain the persistence of contradictions. For example about the likely duration of the burden of refugee relief. For some time the government publicly estimated the duration to be six months. But the public knew of no evidence which would support either the cryptic statements made by Mrs Gandhi or the more elaborate ones to the same effect by Khadilkar. Nor did the people directly concerned with organising relief know very much more ; their task, very difficult in any case because of the unprecedented weight of the problem, was made doubly more complex by the vagueness of the time horizon. Considering the circumstance, they did very well, but they had no idea whether the refugees should be concentrated close to the border ready to move back, or dispersed further inland for more systematic relief. Later, some were dispersed enough to show that the six-month deadline was not seriously meant, not enough to give any visible relief to West Bengal Ultimately, and wisely, the deadline was dropped ; the reasons for the change, however, remain unstated, as those for which the deadline came to be mentioned in the first place.

One would be glad to believe that this is only confusion about the presentation of policy, not about its content. But

at times it becomes too substantial for that, as in the course of Swaran Singh's tour abroad and since his return. What India may be spared or forced to do in the coming months depends very largely upon what other countries are prepared to do. If they wish to they can force President Yahya Khan to bring about the kind of political settlement in East Bengal, the only kind, which will enable the refugees to go back without a shot being fired But if they are willing to allow him to hoodwink them with his kind of settlement, then India may be the worse off for having gone to them in the first place. Yet on this crucial aspect there is considerable variation in the publicly stated estimates by Mrs. Gandhi and Mr. Swaran Singh.

The Foreign Minister must have been sending back reports of his progress from one capital to the next. Yet he had already reached Washington, the farthest point of his orbit, when Mrs. Gandhi gave the Rajya Sabha a very cheerless estimate, in strong contrast with what she had said only a few days earlier, of the interest taken by foreign governments in the problem. This estimate she has since repeated. On the other hand Swaran Singh's view has been far more optimistic, both as expressed by him and as reflected in briefings traceable to his ministry. The joint statement in Moscow at the end of his talks there on June 9 was presented in Delhi as a diplomatic triumph for India though the text was positively discouraging for this country, much more so than the statement jointly issued in London by the Indian and British Foreign Ministers. If there were any unrecorded understandings between Swaran Singh and his Russian hosts, they did not come through in the statements by Mrs. Gandhi. As recent history proves, Moscow has the power to make Islamabad see reason if it makes up its mind to do so. Therefore, if the External Affairs Ministry's optimistic interpretation of Moscow's mind is correct then Mrs. Gandhi's pessimism is not, and *vice versa.*

In the closing stages of his tour and after his return, Swaran Singh made statements which are still more ecouraging from India's point of view and more clearly at variance with the sharp disappointment earlier expressed by Mrs. Gandhi.

In fact the impression given by the Foreign Minister is that were it not for the caution which is in his nature he would have much to say which would ease the grave anxieties of the Prime Minister and the country. He said in London on June 22 that he was satisfied with his discussions with other governments though he would not like to repeat in public what he was told in private. About the assurances given him in Washington, he was so confident that on his return to Delhi he "could not accept the correctness" of the *New York Times* report about the two shiploads of American arms for Pakistan.

Perhaps some of the good cheer in the Foreign Minister's remarks comes from what has undoubtedly been, as far it goes, an achievement by him on India's behalf: he has corrected an imbalance in the thinking of other governments about India's crisis and East Bengal's. Before he left on his tour, it was thought by many countries, largely on account of a fault in emphasis in our own public position, that our main worry was financial. This misconception could have been a trap for us.

For right reasons or wrong—I believe they are right—India has decided to convince the world that she is willing to try every other method before trying the last to enable the refugees to return to their homes. But when the day came for the last method, it would have been difficult for India to convince the world that she was driven to it by the financial burden of barely feeding seven or eight million refugees. Swaran Singh has done admirably well in removing this misconception; the world has a much better idea now of what the real issues are. There is evidence of that in the different tune Sir Alec sang as well as Mr. Rogers after their discussions with Swaran Singh. With this much accomplished, any foreign minister has the right to indulge in a little optimism—especially if he has staked diplomacy's claim to be more efficacious than other methods.

But in fact India's diplomatic journey has only just begun. So far what we have been able to do is to scramble back to what we should never have lost as our starting point: that relief for refugees is a small part of the problem; the greater

part is restoration of the democratic rights of the people of East Bengal. It is there that India's and Pakistan's "internal affairs" most forcefully fuse into a world problem. Swaran Singh has brought the leaders he met face to face with this. But with what results is as yet unknown. We can be surer now that they see what we mean, but not that they are in agreement with it.

If their response remains as incomplete on the larger issue as on relief for refugees, India will be left holding half an answer to her basic problem, and when she sets out in search of the other half she may find her sails deflated by the half answer received earlier. Complete response by the major powers, and this applies as much to the Soviet Union as to the United States and Great Britain, will not be available unless they rethink their basic policies to this part of the world. If they remain wedded to their amazingly unrealistic notion that Pakistan can be developed, and should be, as a constraint upon India or at least as a parallel force, they will not do anything which may weaken the grip of West Pakistan over East Bengal. To cover up this intention they will still try to use the tattered pretext they have used so far, that they do not wish to drive Pakistan still more firmly into China's arms.

If they are in fact so minded, it will not be difficult for other governments to substitute, to their own satisfaction at any rate, President Yahya Khan's meaning of a "settlement" for what India or East Bengal may mean by that or even sections of public opinion in their own countries. There is sufficient vagueness in their statements to facilitate the substitution. Take Sir Alec's. In the joint statement with Mr. Swaran Singh on June 22 he said "a solution acceptable to the people of East Bengal must be found." Very good. But in the House of Commons on June 23 he indicated that aid could be resumed when "progress" was made towards "peaceful conditions . . . and normal political life". Similarly the aid consortium's conditions for resumption of aid are that Pakistan must "try" for a political solution and a settlement must be brought "in sight."

It is not necessary to impute duplicity to these countries to examine the danger that what they may accept as "progress" and "settlement" may not encourage the refugees to go back and yet may make India look very unreasonable if she insists that either there must be more progress and a more genuine settlement or else, an unavoidable corollary from Mrs. Gandhi's double declaration that the refugees must go back but not be exposed to butchery, she must force open a way in for them and ensure their safety when they are back home. World opinion has only just begun to recognise that India has the right to defend herself if the world cannot make President Yahya Khan see reason. But the recognition can evaporate in the heat of an argument as to how many Awami League legislators must be won over or how many refugees accepted back before he can be seen to have seen reason. This can be a very treacherous phase of India's diplomatic journey, much more treacherous than when a painful problem clearly called for an unambiguous answer however painful it may have been.

There are answers of course, to this phase as well. Responses can be graded up or down as the challenge is : they can range all the way from assisting to promoting to taking over the tasks of resistance ; from a selective and occasional to a total blockade to prevent reinforcement of the West Pakistan army in East Bengal. But behind each stage there has to be a country which clearly knows and understands what the objectives are and where the world stands in relation to them because that will decide what the burden will be. It may be that the major countries have not yet taken their final positions. Their response may not only improve as India's likely response becomes clearer to them, but could get transformed if Mrs. Gandhi herself makes a selective trip to a few capitals of the world and clearly tells them what is the boiling point of India's own toleration. But the time for that will come only after the government has enabled the country to understand and take up a clear position with the resolution to match it.

invisible means to undefined ends

The Foreign Minister, Mr. Swaran Singh, announced in the Lok Sabha on July 2 that in view of President Yahya Khan's broadcast on June 28, in which he rightly saw a permanent ban on normal conditions in East Bengal, India would have to review its policy about Bangla Desh. Up to the time of writing (July 16) no signs of a review have appeared in public. That by itself would not be tragic: Governments have to work out their policies in private; only the end results can be made public. But what is tragic is that India should have needed the broadcast to discover that whatever it is that passes for its policy in this case—the word is usually reserved for something much more precise, with carefully worked out ends and means; our "policy" is only a cluster of contradictory attitudes—has long been overdue for a thorough review.

President Yahya Khan's broadcast could not have come as a surprise to anyone, not even to our Government. Mrs. Gandhi confirmed that it did not when she said, in an interview to the London *Times* three days before Swaran Singh spoke, "President Yahya Khan did not say anything that one did not expect him to say." Then why did it shake the Foreign Minister into the realisation that a review was called for?

One would like to believe that Swaran Singh was only doing a little bit of legitimate double talking. If that were so a compliment to him would be in order, because the broadcast has caused so much disappointment in other countries that they would look more understandingly at a consequent stiffening of India's policy. These countries, less acquainted with the unyielding motivations which prevail in Islamabad at present, had probably expected that even the minimal pressure they had consented to apply would put President Yahya Khan in a more reasonable frame of mind.

When he spoke in such obstinate terms, dashing all expectations of a genuine political settlement in East Bengal, they did not care to conceal their disappointment. It is in India's interests, therefore, that any change of policy on her part should be seen as a consequence of a similar disappointment suffered by her. But more than double-talk, it is con-

fusion in thinking which went into the statement by the Foreign Minister, a confusion with which we are trying to fill the enormous and still widening gap between the declared purposes of the Government and the means chosen to fulfil them.

It is extremely unwise of the Government of India to let it appear that we are only interested in the refugees going back to their homes ; as unwise as our earlier mistake, fortunately corrected by Swaran Singh and Jayaprakash Narayan during their tours abroad, that India is only worried by the financial burden of refugee relief. But leaving over that problem for later comment, we seem not to have discovered, much less adopted, any visible means of attaining even this very limited and wholly inadequate end.

Unofficial comment, not in this column only, has been pointing out for a couple of months at least that President Yahya Khan has created almost impassable barriers, both political and terminological, in the way of the refugees being able to go back by any means short of the use of force. Despite the pressure promised by the major countries of the world, and the gap between their promise and performance is going to increase with time, not diminish, the President continues to show blunt refusal to let the Awami League form the government in East Bengal, which it is entitled to do by virtue of its sweeping victory in the elections last December. Without such a government, there is no chance of the refugees feeling safe enough to go back.

The Pakistan President has already put it about that most of these helpless people are not refugees at all but India's own destitute. In these circumstances most of the refugees will either be denied admission to East Bengal or will feel too insecure to go back unescorted even if Pakistan agrees, as reports from Islamabad suggest it may, to some kind of international supervision of the conditions for their safety. Yet the highest-level spokesmen of the Government of India, including the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister, are persisting in the patent contradiction between their oft-repeated declarations that the refugees must and will go back and the equally well-reiterated refusal to countenance the use of force.

Far better would it be for India to frankly settle down to prepare for the "hell", to use Mrs. Gandhi's word, of one course or the other ; either to shoulder the economic, social and political burden of their permanent stay in India (and in doing so let us not, for heaven's sake, speak of the refugees, as some of our leaders constantly do, as though they were messy picnickers in the backgarden who have overstayed their welcome ; they have not come here because they chose to do so, and in their misery they deserve kinder words than we generally use for them), or the alternative "hell" of using force to enable them to go back and live in safety in their homes under a government which recognises and treats them as its own people.

The inadequacy of the world's response, or what Mrs. Gandhi candidly described on June 30 as the "inability" of the world powers to see the truth or their "willingness" to turn the Nelson eye upon it, has made it necessary for India either to accept the refugees as permanent citizens or to accept the risks of war. It is only the persistent vagueness in defining our ends which makes it possible for us to talk simultaneously of two mutually contradictory policy objectives.

Here again, double-talk could be accepted as a diplomatic necessity, but what one discovers is the more dangerous doublethink A country may hold out the threat of war without meaning to wage it ; a credible threat may forestal the necessity, and the fruits of victory may be won without the costs of war. But of that approach there is no evidence whatsoever. Not only does the Government not spell out any such threat itself ; it squashes the demand for it from wherever it comes and promptly issues contradictions whenever even authoritative sections of the foreign Press say that India is contemplating what any other country would have done long before now. Obviously the Government has no interest at all in holding out a credible threat.

Alternatively, a Government which in fact has accepted the necessity of the use of force may pretend that it has not. But of that approach too there is no evidence in India. The reluctance is not only genuine, as it should be (nobody wants

to see lust for war in any country) but so overpowering that it inhibits even other ways of helping the resistance in East Bengal lest one step should lead to another and ultimately to war. When the London *Times* correspondent asked Mrs. Gandhi on June 29 whether India would impose a naval blockade upon the West Pakistan Army in East Bengal—this was after reports had appeared already that three ships carrying further supplies of American arms for Pakistan were on their way—she did not even dodge the question. She answered it, clearly in the negative, with the counter-question "Isn't a naval blockade the same as declaring war, or doesn't it amount to an undeclared war ?" I for one would be very surprised if after this supplies of arms to the West Pakistan Army in East Bengal are obstructed by India by any means at all without the Government recognising far more clearly than it has done as yet that without acceptance of the risks of war by India the odds against the Mukti Fouj will continue to be overwhelmingly adverse.

Therefore the chances of a substantial number of refugees accepting that conditions in East Bengal are normal enough for their return will continue to depend upon such goodwill as President Yahya Khan may show towards them in future. But if India thinks he is not going to show any, and there is no evidence that he will, then how is the Government going to pay the political debt of its pledges ?

There is a tendency—noticeable in other areas of national policy too until the crisis over East Bengal offered a plausible cover for every kind of inaction—to rest on the hope that time will dissolve this problem, one day. But this is very unlikely. Unless there is a strong enough intervention from outside, and that soon enough, the greater likelihood is of a very dangerous stalemate. This may result from the persistence of an inconclusive situation on the ground in East Bengal, with neither side able to vanquish the other or willing to give up the battle, or from the United Nations imposing a freeze which will neither create effective peace in the area nor leave scope for any external intervention. In either event the forecast for India will continue to be "very disturbed conditions

in the eastern States", and six months hence there may be more people deploring why India did not act today than there are who recognise today, belatedly—I am one of them—that it would have been better to have acted three months ago.

a contradiction unveiled

President Yanya Khan's threat of a general war, which New Delhi would do well to take seriously, unveils a major contradiction in India's Bangla Desh policy. The contradiction has been there since the end of June, perhaps ever since the first few climactic weeks of the revolt in East Bengal. But now it stands out for all to see

Probably most people in West Pakistan accept Islamabad's allegation that India's aim is nothing less than the total destruction of Pakistan But this is a profound falsehood. Nothing would have pleased the Government of India more than East Bengal occupying a place of honour within Pakistan in accordance with the mandate won by Sheikh Mujib for substantial autonomy. This would have benefited both India and Pakistan.

Positively, East Bengal's long standing desire for closer economic relations with India would have been fulfilled ; that degree of cooperation between eastern India and East Bengal would have followed without which it is difficult to solve a host of the political and economic problems of the region, and with a substantial say for East Bengal in the affairs of Pakistan, Indo-Pakistan differences would have fallen into an entirely new and more healthy perspective. Negatively, India would have been spared all the enormous uncertainties which the unrest in East Bengal has created for her, and the still more complex uncertainties which may follow if Pakistan breaks up as a result of an internal revolution or Indian machinations.

Any suspicion or hope—depending upon the point of view—that the Government of India was contemplating warlike intervention in East Bengal should have vanished when India refrained from many possible steps mainly for the reason that they entailed the risks of war : for example, taking advantage of the West Pakistan army's extremely weak position in East Bengal

until the middle of April ; recognising the Bangla Desh government ; or giving substantial assistance to the Mukti Fauj when it could have tilted the scales.

What little chance was left after that of a war by India on Pakistan was put out of commission by Mrs. Gandhi in the last week of June when, before relapsing into her present quite astonishing silence on the country's most serious problem, she harangued everyone not to think of war. Leaders of opposition parties were coaxed at private sessions, Congress men at semi-private meetings of the party, and others from any platform available. Finally, the frightening burden of the refugee influx riveted India's attention on this by-product problem, driving out any thought of anything adventurous, if it existed ever.

At least since the end of June, then, India's Bangla Desh policy has had only two elements in it : that conditions in East Bengal should be such as will persuade the refugees to go back to their homes, and the risk of war with Pakistan should be avoided. But these elements are locked in an obstinate contradiction.

Everyone realises except official Washington—though not everyone is willing to act on the realisation—that nothing will persuade the refugees to get back, because nothing will convince them it is safe to do so, unless East Bengal is put back on the democratic path from which it was so rudely plucked when the scheduled meeting of the National Assembly was abruptly cancelled by President Yahya Khan. But it is not clear whether official New Delhi realises that nothing will bring back the *status quo ante* except methods which are not free of the risk of war. Because of the bloodshed and bitterness which have intervened since the end of March, a National Assembly dominated by the Awami League will not produce an autonomous East Bengal but an independent Bangla Desh, and West Pakistan neither can nor will allow this to happen without trying out its fortunes on the field of battle. This is the real meaning of the unveiling act by President Yahya Khan, however false his reasons for it.

There might have been a chance of the peaceful transformation of a colonised East Pakistan into an autonomous East Bengal if the international community—not public opinion, which has been hearteningly vocal in a number of countries, but governments, which have dragged their feet in most—had realised its responsibility better than it did, or if the two big powers had given it a better lead. But that chance has been lost, thanks largely but not only to the Nixon administration.

New Delhi clings to the illusion that an alternative chance exists in the low level warfare which the Mukti Fauj is conducting at present. Even assuming, leaving over the dangers of this assumption till a later paragraph, that such low level combustion can suffice for a take-off into the desired transformation, the risk of a war on the sub-continent, bi-lateral or multilateral, is as great as it would be if the combustion were more vigorous.

President Yahya Khan and the generals around him cannot afford to lose East Bengal to a mere guerilla movement. If they did, West Pakistan would not long remain a single entity : the two wings are too far apart for a genuine meeting of the minds between them, but not for the fall-out of a successful revolution to travel from one to the other. Losing East Bengal in a general war would be different ; it would be another, larger and psychologically more potent Kashmir to help cement West Pakistan in still more fanatical opposition to India and would enable the military leadership, as wars always do, to make its grip on West Pakistan tighter still.

This would have been the West Pakistan army's calculation even before the emergence of a substantial *detente* between the United States and China as near-history's most significant promise. But the *detente* will further encourage the calculation because it will add a new dimension to it.

It is very likely that the West Pakistan leadership sees itself as the catalyst not only in further promoting the Sino-American *detente* but in invoking Chinese leadership in southern Asia with tacit American acceptance of this role. If China agreed to play the role, it would force the birth of two opposing configurations in southern Asia, respectively under Chinese and Soviet

auspices, with Pakistan in one and India in the other ; it is not for nothing that President Yahya Khan and Swaran Singh have both been claiming "we are not alone" or that voices are heard in South-East Asian capitals which presage their future positions. Knowing how a war may tighten such a configuration, a desperate West Pakistan, invoking the gambling instinct of a military oligarchy when it is in a tight corner, may decide that hope lies in widening the conflict, from which who knows what may be salvaged if the weight of America and the fortunes of war go the right way.

In other words the more India's present policy succeeds in respect of one element, the more it fails in the other because the closer the Mukti Fauj comes to success in dislodging the army of occupation from East Bengal, the greater the chances of war will be. This is a hard choice, but it is a dangerous assumption that an escape can be found from it in guerilla operations if they remain at their present low-key level : they are proving to be highly counter-productive except in so far as they show the feasibility of an early step-up.

What is happening today is that while the guerilla action is not strong enough to oust the West Pakistan army, it is provocative enough for the army to undertake massive retaliation against each area of action. This only means a continuous exodus of refugees and uprooting of population on an ever rising scale, creating potentially uncontrollable conditions. This is a game which the West Pakistan army can endlessly play, and not only at East Bengal's expense but India's too.

India's acquiescence in it may help to ward off the suspicion, though even this is unlikely, that India is promoting the activities of the Mukti Fauj. But since everyone knows, and especially the countries of this region, that the stakes are extremely high for India, her demonstrated inability to influence the course of events takes a very heavy diplomatic toll in terms of India's credibility as a factor in this region. Stepped up operations, which alone can show the results desired, may raise the suspicion that India's hand is behind them, but as proved by the reactions to the tragedy of Bangla Desh, governments do not apportion praise or blame according to facts but as their own interests dictate. However,

operations cannot be stepped up to the desired level without assistance on a scale which cannot be reached without accepting the risk of war.

Therefore *if* the refugees are to go back at all in terms of the first element in India's Bangla Desh policy, the second element has to be downgraded severely, the risk of war has to be clearly accepted and the country prepared for the consequences. In doing so, the diplomatic balance sheet of praise and blame has to be set off against the price of the constant festering in East Bengal and the spill-over into India, and against the difference between military decisions being taken by India and being forced upon her. This too may be a hard choice to make but, a decision either way will be less painful and less costly in the long run than further prolongation of the present hesitation in which there is neither room for the repatriation of the refugees to East Bengal nor for their proper rehabilitation in India.

Old Quest in a New Context

The articles in this section, the last, are in some ways the most important. They pull together the threads of all the previous articles, place the constants and variables of Indian foreign policy in a unified perspective and, with Part I, complete the circle of the argument and purpose of this book.

The first three articles were published, on August 6, 13 and 20. The first two were written before the Indo-Soviet Treaty was announced, the third a few days later. In this lies part of the reason for including them; they underscore what was suggested in many articles in earlier sections, that what is surprising about the Treaty is the suddenness of its announcement, not the substance of the policies which produced it.

The last pages of the book carry the text of a broadcast made over All India Radio a few hours after the Treaty was announced; it is the only comment in this album which was specifically occasioned by the signing of the Treaty.

new duet for old—I

The approaching *detente* between the United States and China may create for the next five to ten years a parallelism between Chinese and American policies in the Indo-Pakistan area, replacing the similar parallelism between Soviet and American policies which lasted through the greater part of the '60s. Mainly as a result of the co-existence forced on the United States and the Soviet Union on the global plane by the balance of terror between them they reached a tacit understanding which had three elements in it. First, even if a more positive peace was not attainable yet, they must ensure at least the continued avoidance of a direct war between them which, if it came, would annihilate both. Second, that within the over-riding limits of the first the co-existence between them would have to be of competitive, not the harmonious variety, because neither power could give up its desire for hegemony in such strategic areas as, for example, West Asia and middle Europe. Third, within the limits of the second, each would go as far as possible to recognise the essential interests of the other because by not doing so they could jeopardise the first.

At a lower level, and partly as a result of the third element in the tacit understanding between them, the *detente* affected the relations of each of the two big powers with a number of other countries. It made each more influential with its respective client state than it would have been if the client could have turned to the other super power in a situation of unrestrained competition between them. Recognising and respecting areas of each other's essential interest was only one step short of what the Chinese were loudly accusing each of them of ; that the super powers were trying to divide up the world between them. The accusation exceeded the tact but was not fictitious ; the Soviet Union and the United States were clearly trying not to cross each other's path in any area which was critical to

either of them, and in the process had mentally demarcated the zones of each other's influence. Three outstanding examples were the clear acceptance by both of an invisible dividing line between eastern and western Europe, greatly reducing the area of overlapping jurisdiction in the middle ; the Russian withdrawal from Latin America after the crisis over Cuba, leaving local revolutionaries to their own devices or Chinese inspiration. and the avoidance of any overt interest by the United States in the Sino-Soviet frontier dispute.

But two areas of dangerous competition persisted for some time. First, West Asia, where the Americans had invested too much in Israel and the Russian's in the Arabs for either to withdraw in the other's favour. Second, South-East Asia, where American investment, initially against all varieties of communism—when SEATO was born, Russia and China were still an ideological monolith—but now concentrated against the Chinese variety, were too heavy to permit withdrawal. and Russia's ideological stakes were too serious, partly because of the competition with China for the loyalty of communist parties round the globe, to permit Moscow to abandon the communists of North Vietnam for the sake of any of the three elements in the global *detente*. The overlap in these two areas was not only dangerous but dangerous enough to imperil the whole structure of competitive co-existence, as was amply visible at one end when American armed intervention in the Lebanon appeared to be imminent and at the other end when it was feared, after the Gulf of Tongkin incidents, that the Russians, denied land access to North Vietnam by the Chinese, would try to reach arms to North Vietnam by forcing a way through the American naval blockade.

But in the latter half of the '60s the two super powers struck what on evidence looks like a bargain over South and South-East Asia which de-fused the danger of a direct conflict between them over Vietnam. The Russians veered off from a deeper involvement in the Vietnam conflict in return for American recognition that Russia had a deeper interest in the Indo-Pakistan area. It is besides the point whether the Russians de-escalated their engagement in Vietnam more because they thought the North Vietnamese were going to be able to look

after themselves very well, as they did, or because they felt it would be best for them not to jeopardise the top priority objective, the avoidance of the risk of a direct war with America, for the sake of a lower priority item, the competition with China for the loyalty of other communists The point here is that they did not aid North Vietnam in any way which, either by the size of the aid of the manner of giving it, would blow up the co-existence. It was after, and perhaps because of, the demonstration of the Russian moderation from the mid-sixties onwards that President Johnson decided it was now safe enough to step up the war in Vietnam because there would only be the danger, if that, of a confrontation with China alone, not jointly with Russia and China, though for reasons which are not relevant here, even China did not attempt anything like direct intervention.

It is also from about this period that the Americans began to recognise Russia's interest in the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent. For about ten years, that is from the time of the mutual security agreement between the United States and Pakistan, the two big powers had been clearly ranged on opposing sides in the internal tensions of the sub-continent, the Americans clearly with Pakistan, the Russians clearly with India. But from the time of the Sino-Indian conflict a congruence began which enabled the two super powers to start moving towards parallel rather than conflicting policies and ultimately led to the supremacy displayed by Russia in arranging and conducting the Tashkent conference in 1965. This was probably a spill-over from the American recognition that Russia had an over-riding stake in the confrontation with China, and the situation between India and Pakistan was more important in that context than in any other; by comparison, its importance in the context of Russian-American rivalry had almost disappeared. Russian and American policies had a similar and parallel interest in preventing a war between India and Pakistan; beyond that, Russian interests were suprior.

Global diplomacy might have remained in this mould for India and Pakistan for some years to come had it not been for the sharp intensification of the Sino-Soviet rivalries in the

latter half of the sixties, especially in actual armed clashes between them along the Ussuri river in February and March, 1969, and the credible threat of a pre-emptive nuclear strike by Russia at Chinese nuclear installations in Sinkiang. This created such an enormous new opportunity for the United States to tilt the global balance of co-existence against the Soviet Union that it would have been unrealistic to expect it not to succumb to it Russia's nuclear options having been shut already by the balance of terror with the United States, it would now be possible to put its conventional military power also under a severe restraint if the Chinese received the assurance implicit in a gr atly improved relationship with the United States. From the American point of view, this would be the grand finale of the policy of containment of Russia which America began in the early fifties, forcing Russia now to co-exist on American terms, not mutual terms. For the Chinese this would mean a clear advantage over the Soviet Union, now regarded as the enemy No. 1, made possible with the help of the United States, now demoted to the status of No. 2 enemy. For both the United States and China it would possibly eliminate the danger of Russia acquiring such a preponderance over China that its hegemony would become unquestionable over the whole of the Eurasian land mass from the Atlantic coast to the Pacific coast.

What Nixon has done is to make the possible probable ; by calling off the implaceable hostility of American foreign policy towards China he has brought closer the realisation of each of the possibilities mentioned above of Chinese, American or Sino-American advantage over Russia. Those who do not like the development have been trying to take comfort in the thought that the obstacles in the way of a Sino-American *detente* are both serious and obstinate—for example the anger in Taiwan, the resentment in Tokyo, and disappointment in South-East Asian capitals which the United States has been feeding on its own opposition to China for the past two decades ; corroboration of the obstacles is altogether too readily seen in the abuse China continues to pour upon the USA despite Nixon's impending pilgrimage to Peking. But this sense of comfort is a dangerous illusion. The United States as a whole

has lauded few actions of the Nixon administration as wholeheartedly as this one and Nixon himself has not given this drastic new turn to his policies only to let Chiang Kai-shek come in his way. Other Asian reactions may concern him more, especially Tokyo's, but to the extent he cannot sooth them later, he will simply put them down as part of the price which any major shift in policy pays.

In any case, America's reasons for the shift are global, not regional ; its primary concern is the equation with Russia, not relations with Japan, Taiwan or south-east Asia. To the extent that is necessary, these latter relations, more regional than global in character, will be sacrificed, now that they have served their initial purposes. America's primary concern will be to withdraw from Vietnam, cut down its stakes in South-East Asia as a whole, and generally accord the same priority to Chinese essential interests in southern Asia as was earlier accorded to the Russian, and for the same reasons : first, that southern Asia is more important in the context of the Sino-Soviet confrontation than any other, and that if global parallelism is to be maintained with China in respect of Russia, there should be no conflict with essential Chinese interests in southern and South-East Asia so that the super-structure of the new coexistence is not destroyed by subordinate conflicts. In other words, if a conflict were to break out between India and Pakistan, the USA would not mind a new Tashkent in China if China can establish the same equation with India and Pakistan as the Soviet Union had. How China does it will be left to China to work out.

new duet for old—II

The approaching new relationship between the United States and China has two dimensions for each of them—bilateral in terms of their relations with each other and with the Soviet Union, and global in terms of the power balance between Washington. Peking and Moscow, a triangle which overlaps every other power equation in the world. Similarly, it has two dimensions for India—bilateral in terms of her relations with each of these three countries as well as with

Pakistan, and regional in terms of some of her major potentialities which will strongly influence India's role if she has the courage to play one in South and South-East Asia.

Initial Indian reactions to Mr. Nixon's impending visit to Peking have concentrated on the bilateral dimension. This is understandable because of India's acute preoccupation with Indo-Pakistan and Sino-Indian relations, both brought to a searing focus by the challenge of Bangla Desh. But the incongruity between the reactions shows how far India is as yet from a national consensus on foreign policy. All of them are unanimous on one point : that if India or Pakistan were to step up the stakes in East Bengal, they would activate much larger equations than the purely bilateral. But then acute divergence takes over and suggestions for India's response range all the way from asking for the forgiveness of Peking to a crash programme to improve relations with either Moscow or Washington

The most seductive idea remains the old one, that of somehow getting closer to China. The charms of the siren of Peking have proved again that they are ageless, and now they have acquired an added new plausibility. It has always been urged, and now only by latent Maoists, that the root of India's diplomatic problems is its rigidly hostile attitude to China, because of it India is said to have deprived herself of all manoeuvrability while Pakistan's diplomacy dances rings around her because of its cordiality with China. Witness, it is said, Pakistan's ability to carry China on one shoulder and America on the other while yet doing business with Russia too. Now it is argued additionally that like Russia during its now extinguished parallelism with American policies in southern Asia, China has a stake in the stability of this region ; therefore its interests are virtually the same as India's and the two countries should work with instead of against each other.

But this begs the whole multiple question : what kind of stability, in whose interests and on what terms. Russia's ideas

of stability in this area have been different from China's for the past ten years at least—acutely different for the past two or three—and India cannot be a party to promoting both of them at once even if she wishes to be. Ever since Khrushchev and Bulganin came to India, and more especially since the Sino-Indian clash in 1962, Russian policies have always been closer to India's interests than Pakistan's even when they have caused some disappointment here ; China's have always been closer to Pakistan's even when Pakistan has found them to be equivocal, as on the future status of Kashmir.

This is not a temporary by-product of the bilateral tensions between Pakistan and India, India and China and China and Russia It is a permanent consequence of the geopolitics of the area Russia and China are bound to be rivals as the two greatest powers of the Eurasian landmass, just as on a higher plane Russia and Amercia are bound to be as rival global powers and, on a lower plane China and India as the two main powers on the Asian mainland, and it is in the nature of power relationships that the number one power seeks the support of the number three power as a check on number two, an equation often seen in any organisation in which there is rivalry between the No. 1 and No. 2 man for effective command There is a symmetry of motives in the United States moving closer to China in its opposition to Russia. Russia moving closer to India in its opposition to China. and China moving closer to Pakistan in its opposition to India.

In the period between 1962 and the clashes on the Ussuri between Russia and China in 1969, perhaps India could have done more than it did to normalise relations with China without offending Russia ; it might even have improved thereby its bargaining position with Russia But there was little chance of this left after the Sino-Soviet clashes, and when India tried to equivocate in her position on the Ussuri dispute. Russia was able to cause her some acute embarrassment through the equivocal stetements Marshal Grechko made about Russia's relations with Pakistan. Whatever was left of that chance has been extinguished by the diplomatic coup

China has pulled off at Russia's expense with President Nixon's announcement.

The coup in its turn has extinguished the possibility, or such of it as was left after the long and troubled history of the USA's relations with India and Pakistan during and since the cold war, of any appreciable improvement in Indo-American relations except at the cost of a corresponding chill in Indo-Soviet relations. In purely tactical bargaining in very limited situations a country, just as a person, may be able to afford a marginal tit for tat at the expense of a friend But in the broad strategy of international relationships opposing equations cannot be simultaneously cultivated. India has to choose between Russia and China at one level just as she has to choose between Russia and the USA at another level, and these options have only to be posed to know which are the ones that India has to pick up at the expense of which.

The same conclusion emerges if one simplifies the cyclic picture of international realities : given the geographic proximity and similarity of context, so long as Russia and China are caught in mutual tension on one plane and India and Pakistan on another, the paired antagonists at one level are bound to seek allies among the paired antagonists at the other level, and in this case India's experience in the years of the cold war between Russia and America and in the Sino-Indian conflict of 1962 makes it inevitable that China and Pakistan should become one pair of protagonists and Russia and India the other. India cannot ignore either the legacy of recent history or the dictates of geopolitics and hope to cultivate closer relations with China without accepting a proportionate cooling off in the relations with Russia.

An earlier instalment of this article, published last Friday, explained that an America grown weary of the Asian mainland has decided to leave southern and south-eastern Asia to Chinese hegemony if China can establish it. If China succeeds, future power relations in this area will be stable only to the extent that everyone accepts China's hegemony ; any refusal to accept it will be challenged in full, at the expense of

"stability" if necessary. This is an aspect which is overlooked, possibly deliberately, by those who suggest that China and India have a shared interest in the Asian stability envisaged under the new duet, the Sino-American parallelism which replaces the old duet, the Russian-American parallelism of the second half of the 1960s.

If India decides to refuse to accept subordination to China, it can only refuse it in association with the Soviet Union, the only country which in the first place has a symmetrical motivation with India, in the second place has the means to make its motives effective and yet needs, in the third place, as any power must in handling such a large fact as China, the support of other countries which share the motivation. This means that Mr. Nixon and Mr. Mao have conferred a community of interest upon the Soviet Union and India which they would have found it difficult to develop without this help.

This is bound to influence Russia's relations with the subcontinent. So long as the dominant duet in Asia was the Russo-American one, the two super powers had a shared interest in balancing off Pakistan against India ; the United States did it more crudely and the Soviet Union with more drastic aims, the more subtly and with aims which were less harsh for India, but there was the common factor that India should not become the independent power in the Indian Ocean area which her size, resources and location can enable her to be if she can muster the will. But the new duet firmly places the Soviet Union and India on the same side of the global fence, and now Soviet interest can only be to let and even help India grow as a countervailing influence against China—as the USA intended almost two decades ago !—instead of putting the constraint of Pakistan upon her.

In consequence, it still more firmly places Pakistan and China on the same side of the Asian fence in their relations with India as well as with the Soviet Union. In the Asian picture, as now redrawn by Mr. Nixon, it becomes less important for Russia to wean Pakistan from China than to reinforce India for the role which Russia for its own reasons

(which happen to have the same ends as India's) has in mind for India in its equation with China. This restores a clarity to India's bilateral relations which it had in the later 1950s but altogether lost in the following decade. It also clears the horizon for a regional role which will be discussed in the final part of this article

new duet for old—III

The second article in this series, published last Friday, was already in the post before the Indo-Soviet Treaty was announced. Otherwise it would have been possible to spell out the implications of the article's sub-heading—Bilateral Base For A Regional Role—still more firmly and fully.

But it is important to remember that the Treaty has only strengthened and hastened what had been going on even before, just as the drama accompanying the announcement of President Nixon's visit to Peking has only strengthened and hastened a process which ante-dates the announcement. China and the United States had been gradually lowering their mutual barriers even earlier ; with the announcement, the barriers came down with a bang. Similarly a community of interest had been growing between Russia and India with regard to southern Asia ; the Treaty formalises this fact and makes it clearer for everyone to see.

As explained last Friday, there is a geopolitical inevitability about a rivalry between Russia and China as the two leading power factors in Asia. This is not contradicted by the fact that after the founding of communist power in China, Sino-Soviet relations were cordial for more years than they were hostile They were cordial, from the late 40s to the early 60s, mainly during the time when Chinese communist power was still in its infancy. The rivalry displayed its inevitability as soon as Chinese communism came of age, and in the foreseeable future their relations will range from acutely competitive co-existence to actual or nearly actual hostilities.

This fact impinges acutely upon the countries of southern and eastern Asia because the whole region is more important in the Sino-Soviet context than in any other ; the United States

recognised this twice over, first by acknowledging the superiority of Russian interests over American and now the superiority of Chinese interests over American in this part of the world. While in the global context, the balance between the Soviet Union and China may be tilted by the United States, in the Asian context it may be tilted by India or Japan or the South-East Asian cluster which is bound to grow up around the power of Hanoi once American troops go home.

India can overlook the consequences of this fact in any one of four situations : First, if Sino-Soviet relations improve to such an extent that India can improve her own relations with each of them without any damage to her relations with the other. But Sino-Soviet rivalry is not going to abate to such an extent in the foreseeable future. Second, if India is free to maintain equally cordial or equally formal relations with both of them ; in that case, she can play off one against the other and make sure that neither becomes inimical to her for fear of driving her into the arms of the other. But given the geopolitics of the area, this cannot happen either, because with the establishment of Chinese power (its communism has little to do with this) India can either live in placid subordination to China or in uneasy co-existence with it, never in a state of cordial parity which China would accept. This is known equally to China and Russia, and India cannot play them off one against the other by pretending that she does not know it. Hence the increasingly sharp clarity noticed in the first article in this series, published Friday before last, in India's bilateral relations with Russia. Third, if she develops her own resources and strength to such an extent that she does not need any one's assistance in coping with Chinese hostility. This is a very desirable goal but still some distance in the future, and it would be folly to base India's foreign policy on the assumption that the goal has been reached already. Fourth, by building up a concert of other Asian countries which can be equally independent of Moscow and Peking and does not need the assistance of either capital against the designs of the other. This also is a very attractive objective, but it assumes that India has already achieved, which she has not yet, the

status she needs for bringing about a regional concert of this nature.

But it is possible for India to move towards some of these objectives even from her present position. Each step will make the next more easy. She cannot ignore the new Asian configuration which has been etched out so sharply by the Sino-American "detente' and the Indo Soviet Treaty. But she can use it to move closer towards the third and fourth objectives. Russia has a stake now in India's countervailing position in southern Asia to check the consequences of the new Sino-American relationship in the Indian Ocean area. At the same time, there are countries in southern and south-eastern Asia which are as interested as India is in preventing China from gaining unchecked hegemony over the whole of the region. If India plays her cards well, she can use the opportunity both for strengthening her own power possibilities and for building up a regional concert in cooperation with the two other main capitals of Asia, Hanoi and Tokyo .

At first sight, it may seem a strange exercise to club Hanoi and Tokyo together in any regional association. But it will cease to be strange as the new configuration develops ; while it sharpens the differences between India's various bilateral relations, such as with Russia, China and the United States, it will make the suggested regional association more viable.

For the past few years, Japan has been torn between two schools of thought : first, that its destiny lies in close relationes with the United States, and second that it lies in closer relations with China. But President Nixon has, unwittingly, brought these two schools together behind a third opinion. The pro-American group is seriously annoyed that President Nixon did not extend to it the courtesy of prior consultation before announcing the visit to Peking ; the pro-China group suspects that Japan is being squeezed out of the Chinese market by a pre-emptive American call. This will make Japan turn its attention more to southern and south-eastern Asia, where it will join hands with others in ensuring that a growing Chinese hegemony does not pre-empt this region too.

Hanoi's reaction to the Nixon visit also shows that its position may now be different from what it was in 1969 when it was equally cold towards Mrs. Gandhi's suggestion about international guarantees for security of frontiers in South-East Asia and the call for collective security given by Mr. Brezhnev a few months later. At that time the Vietnam war was still going strong and Hanoi still needed China as its hinterland. Therefore anything which smacked of an association aimed at counter-balancing China was an unacceptable anti-revolutionary thought. But with China getting cosy with the United States, the reactions in Hanoi could be very different, especially when the Vietnam war comes to an end and Hanoi steps out to establish a new relationship with the rest of this region It will need to discover a guard against the Sino-American duet under which China will try to establish the same kind of dominant power in South-East Asia as Russia under the old Russia-American duet failed to establish in southern Asia with the Tashkent conference

Therefore it is time for India to think its thoughts afresh about the initiative she tried to take in 1969, and to do so in consultation and cooperation with Tokyo and Hanoi. Success here will mean favourable reaction by other South-East Asian capitals when the time comes to sound them Some will be drawn by the presence of Tokyo, some by the presence of Hanoi, but many more in reaction against the prospect created by Mr. Nixon that China may loom even larger on the South-East Asian horizon than it has done so far. Two years ago, Mrs. Gandhi played her diplomatic cards very well by visiting Australia before going to Japan ; the enthusiastic response she received in Australia made Japan more warmly receptive to her than it might have been otherwise. She should next think of the rest of South-East Asia with the same shrewdness and finesse.

It is not necessary for India to pluge into this regional diplomacy straightaway. The East Bengal crisis will not allow that in any case ; a great deal will depend upon how that problem goes and not much can be seen beyond it as yet But even otherwise, it would be well to see how China's relations develop further with the Soviet Union and the USA. While these

develop, India should not miss any chance there may be of easing the present tensions in India's relations with China. The Indo-Soviet Treaty could have the interesting consequences of making China more interested in normal relations with India. But since the likely parameters of all these bilateral relations are clearly visible now, it is important for India to think out in advance as to what diplomatic opportunities and problems lie beyond that and at least to begin to decide what irons it will lay in which fire

Indo-Soviet Treaty

It is difficult to exaggerate the importance of the Treaty of Friendship which has been signed between the Soviet Union and India, and in the timing and manner of signing it the two countries have shown a dramatic sense of opportunity. The Governments of the Soviet Union and India deserve the greatest praise for the resilience and promptness with which they have taken the opportunity to bring to a climax an effort which is said to have begun two years ago It would be unfortunate if the meaning of this action and of its timing were lost upon anyone The recent developments which have taken place in this part or the world are of far reaching consequence, and the agreement matches them in its own importance and consequences.

The Soviet Union has a 20-year history of relations with India because of which such a treaty would have been significant in any case ; it would have marked an important new stage in the development of the bilateral equation between them. For almost two decades, Indo-Soviet relations have had a dimension about them which has been lacking in any comparable relationship between India and any other country. On specific issues of political policy, like Kashmir and Goa, as well of economic policy such as the development of industry in the public sector, the Soviet Union has supported Indian aspirations as no other country has. On more general issues as well, such as opposition to racialism, colonialism and military pacts, the Soviet Union has shown a better and more durable understanding than any other major power. China showed an understanding for a few years, or at least claimed it did But in 1962 it became the greatest

single threat to everything that India stood for. including non-alignment. Therefore a treaty which binds the Soviet Union and India in friendship and cooperation for twenty years more would have been a document of historic importance to both.

Its importance would also have extended beyond the bilateral Indo-Soviet equation in any other circumstances A global power like the Soviet-Union, one of the two great contemporary powers and one of the greatest in history, cannot react with a country of the size and regional importance of India without producing repercussions which are of consequence to other countries too. Therefore developments in Indio-Soviet relations have always reacted upon Indo-American, Indo-Pakistan and Sino-Indian relations and generally on the situation in South and South-east Asia This would have been so now as well, and in any circumstances

But in the circumstances as they are the document is of far greater importance, and India's Foreign Minister did well to underscore this fact when he reminded the Lok Sabha today that a change is taking place in · the configuration of various world forces". He did not specify the world forces or the configurations he had in mind, but, given the context, he did not have to. The circumstances and configurations have been clearly highlighted by two major developments which have taken place in the past few weeks : the threats to India which have been held out by Pakistan and China, and the dramatic shift promoted by President Nixon in Sino-American relations, which the Soviet Union must watch with great care, if not concern as well.

No one needs to spell out for anybody's benefit where or how an Indo-Soviet treaty, unprecedented in itself and brought about at such a significant juncture and with dramatic timing, should be fitted in with the changing configurations of world forces. But two aspects of it deserve special attention. The Treaty says that "if either country is subjected to an attack or threatened with an attack, the two countries will immediately enter into consultation 'to remove the threat'." The threats to India are very clear : the President of Pakistan, taking considerable encouragement from recent statements by China, has twice threatened a general war upon India ; China has held out

its threat with less obvious but nonetheless unambiguous phraseology and directly in its statements as well as through Pakistan. The Soviet Union has had an armed conflict on its border with China Therefore, there can be little ambiguity about what the Soviet Union and India mean when they talk of a threat to either of them, and pledge to consult with each other in order "to remove the threat" —the first time ever that India has given such a pledge to any country, and the second time ever that the Soviet Union has given it to any country not ruled by a Communist Party. Therefore, unless the threats which Indian and the Soviet Union perceive recede very quickly, what are at present only emerging as "new configurations" will become more conspicuous.

The second aspect of the threat is more immediately relevant. India's relations with China and the Soviet Union's with Pakistan will now develop, in so far as they do, only in the light of Article IX and Article X. By Article X India and the Soviet Union undertake to abstain from "providing any assistance" to any third party that engages in armed conflict with the other party. Soviet assistance to Pakistan can therefore be treated as having come to an end. By Article X India and the Soviet Union declare that they will not enter into any obligation with any other country which is incompatible with this Treaty, which means that so long as China continues its hostile policies towards the Soviet Union and India, both countries accept a restraint on the nature of relations they may have with it. The implications do not need elaboration. They are obvious.

There may be a tendency in some quarters—within India as well as outside—to wonder whether India should accept the limitations and obligations—perhaps even more the obligations than the limitations—which are implicit in this Treaty. The short answer to such doubts and misgivings is, first, that a country of the size, importance and strategic location such as India cannot for ever escape the obligations which go with this privilege, and second that when such circumstances arise, as have arisen for India without her asking for them, choices arise with them, and it is more dangerous and unwise to run away from the choices than to face them.

India cannot seek or expect the support of other countries in the situation which may well arise for her in the near future without accepting the obligation to give assistance when others feel that they are confronted with a threat. In fact this mutuality of obligation is more to be welcomed than feared ; the more India feels able to give assistance where needed, the more rapidly a diplomatic phrase will begin to reflect a desirable reality.

It is, therefore, to be welcomed that in announcing the Indo-Soviet Treaty to the Lok Sabha today, Mr. Swaran Singh, far from shirking obligations, expressed the hope that the Treaty would provide a pattern for similar treaties between India and other countries in this region If they were made, such treaties would, as he said, "stabilise peace" in this region. Of course, they would add to the obligations of mutual assistance. But India has only to make the effort to look beyond the war in Vietnam to realise that these or similar obligations cannot be avoided by a country which is situated as India is. If the expectation comes true, that the war clouds in Vietnam will begin to lift in the near future, a whole series of questions will face the countries of this region, including India, as to how a recurrence of these conflicts is to be avoided. The greater part of the responsibility will, of course, fall upon the countries of South-East Asia, especially upon the government in Hanoi, which will emerge from the conflict as a far more important centre in this area than it has ever been, but as the country constituting the eastern abutment of the region, it will be necessary for India to discover what she can contribute to the stability of the region. The Indo-Soviet Treaty will then provide a precedent to be followed, not an example to run away from. South-East Asia also faces some of the circumstances which have convinced New Delhi of the importance of the Treaty with Moscow.

APPENDIX I

Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Co-operation Between the Republic of India and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, signed on August 9, 1971.

DESIROUS of expanding and consolidating the existing relations of sincere friendship between them,

BELIEVING that the further development of friendship and co-operation meets the basic national interests of both the States as well as the interests of lasting peace in Asia and the world,

DETERMINED to promote the consolidation of universal peace and security and to make steadfast efforts for the relaxation of international tensions and the final elimination of the remnants of colonialism,

UPHOLDING their firm faith in the principles of peaceful co-existence and co-operation between States with different political and social systems,

CONVINCED that in the world today international problems can only be solved by co-operation and not by conflict

REAFFIRMING their determination to abide by the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter,

The Republic of India on the one side, and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the other side,

HAVE decided to conclude the present Treaty, for which purpose the following Plenipotentiaries have been appointed :

On behalf of the Republic of India :

Sardar Swaran Singh,
Minister of External Affairs.

On behalf of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics :
Mr. A.A. Gromyko,
Minister of Foreign Affairs

who, having each presented their Credentials, which are found to be in proper form and due order,

HAVE AGREED as follows :

ARTICLE I

The High Contracting Parties solemnly declare that enduring peace and friendship shall prevail between the two countries and their peoples. Each Party shall respect the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the other Party and refrain from interfering in the other's internal affairs. The High Contracting Parties shall continue to develop and consolidate the relations of sincere friendship, good neighbourliness and comprehensive co-operation existing between them on the basis of the aforesaid principles as well as those of equality and mutual benefit.

ARTICLE II

Guided by the desire to contribute in every possible way to ensure enduring peace and security of their people, the High Contracting Parties declare their determination to continue their efforts to preserve and to strengthen peace in Asia and throughout the world, to halt the arms race and to achieve general and complete disarmament, including both nuclear and conventional, under effective international control.

ARTICLE III

Guided by their loyalty to the lofty ideal of equality of all peoples and Nations, irrespective of race or creed, the High Contracting Parties condemn colonialism and racialism in all forms and manifestations, and reaffirm their determination to strive for their final and complete elimination.

The High Contracting Parties shall co-operate with other States to achieve these aims and to support the just aspirations of the peoples in their struggle against colonialism and racial domination.

ARTICLE IV

The Republic of India respects the peace loving policy of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics aimed at strengthening friendship and co-operation with all nations.

The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics respects India's policy of non-alignment 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.

ARTICLE V

Deeply interested in ensuring universal peace and security, attaching great importance to their mutual co-operation in the international field for achieving those aims, the High Contracting Parties will maintain regular contacts with each other on major international problems affecting the interests of both the States by means of meetings and exchanges of views between their leading statesmen, visits by official delegations and special envoys of the two Governments, and through diplomatic channels.

ARTICLE VI

Attaching great importance to economic, scientific and technological co-operation between them, the High Contracting Parties will continue to consolidate and expand mutually advantageous and comprehensive co-operation in these fields as well as expand trade, transport and communications between them on the basis of the principles of equality, mutual benefit and most-favoured-nation treatment, subject to the existing agreements and the special arrangements with contiguous countries as specified in the Indo-Soviet Trade Agreement of December 26, 1970.

ARTICLE VII

The High Contracting Parties shall promote further development of ties and contacts between them in the fields of science, art, literature, education, public health, press, radio, television, cinema, tourism and sports.

ARTICLE VIII

In accordance with the traditional friendship established between the two countries, each of the High Contracting Parties solemnly declares that it shall not enter into or participate in any military alliance directed against the other party.

Each High Contracting party undertakes to abstain from any aggression against the other Party and to prevent the use of its territory for the commission of any act which might inflict military damage on the other High Contracting Party.

ARTICLE IX

Each High Contracting Party undertakes to abstain from providing any assistance to any third party that engages in armed conflict with the other Party. In the event of either Party being subjected to an attack or a threat thereof, the High Contracting Parties shall immediately enter into mutual consultations in order to remove such threat and to take appropriate effective measures to ensure peace and the security of their countries.

ARTICLE X

Each High Contracting Party solemnly declares that it shall not enter into any obligation, secret or public, with one or more States : which is incompatible with this Treaty. Each High Contracting Party further declares that no obligation exists, nor shall any obligation be entered into, between itself and any other State or States, which might cause military damage to the other Party.

ARTICLE XI

This Treaty is concluded for the duration of twenty years and will be automatically extended for each successive period of five years unless either High Contracting Party declares its desire to terminate it by giving notice to the other High Contracting Party twelve months prior to the expiration of the Treaty. The Treaty will be subject to ratification and will come into force on the date of the exchange of Instruments of

Ratification which will take place in Moscow within one month of the signing of this Treaty.

ARTICLE XII

Any difference of interpretation of any Article or Articles of this Treaty which may arise between the High Contracting Parties will be settled bilaterally by peaceful means in a spirit of mutual respect and understanding.

The said Plenipotentiaries have signed the present Treaty in Hindi, Russian and English, all texts being equally authentic and have affixed thereto their seals.

Done in New Delhi on the ninth day of August in the year one thousand nine hundred and seventy one.

On behalf of the
Republic of India

(Sd.) Swaran Singh
Minister of External Affairs

On behalf of the
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
(Sd.) A.A. Gromyko
Minister of Foreign Affairs

APPENDIX II

Indo-Soviet Joint Statement

The text of the joint statement issued in New Delhi on August 11, 1971, at the conclusion of the talks between Soviet Foreign Minister, Mr. Andrei Gromyko and the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Swaran Singh.

"On the invitation of the Government of India, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR, His Excellency Mr. A.A. Gromyko, paid an official visit to India from August 8 to 12, 1971.

"During his stay in New Delhi the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR called on the President Mr. V.V. Giri and was received by the Prime Minister of India, Smt. Indira Gandhi. He also met the Food and Agriculture Minister, Mr. Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed, the Finance Minister, Mr. Y. B. Chavan and the Defence Minister, Mr. Jagjivan Ram. He had several meetings and talks with Mr. Swaran Singh, Minister of External Affairs of India.

"The meetings and talks were held in an atmosphere of warm friendship and cordiality. It was noted with deed satisfaction that the friendly relations and fruitful co-operation between the Soviet Union and India in the political, economic, cultural, technical and scientific fields are developing successfully and hold great promise for further expansion. The political and legal basis for this co-operation is further strengthened by the Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Co-operation between the USSR and India, which was signed in New Delhi by Mr. Swaran Singh, Minister of External Affairs of India and Mr. A.A. Gromyko, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR.

"Both sides consider that the conclusion of the Treaty is an outstanding historic event for their two countries. The

Treaty is a logical outcome of the relations of sincere friendship, respect, mutual trust and the varied ties which have been established between the Soviet Union and India in the course of many years and have stood the test of time. It corresponds to the basic interests of the Indian and Soviet peoples and opens up wide prospects for raising the fruitful co-operation between the USSR and India to a higher level. Alongside other provisions concerning bilateral Soviet-India relations, the Treaty provides for the two sides maintaining regular contacts with each other on major international problems and holding mutual consultations with a view to taking appropriate effective measures to safeguard the peace and security of their countries.

"The Treaty between the USSR and India is a real act of peace expressing the community of policy and aspirations of the USSR and India in the struggle to strengthen peace in Asia and throughout the world and for safeguarding international security. All provisions of the treaty serve these purposes. "The treaty is not directed against anyone. It is meant to be a factor in developing friendship and good-neighbourliness, in keeping with the principles of the U.N. Charter.

"The Governments of India and the USSR are confident that the conclusion of the Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Co-operation will meet with complete approval on the part of all those who are really interested in the preservation of peace in Asia and throughout the world and on the part of the Governments of all peace-loving States.

"In the course of the meetings and talks, both sides noted with satisfaction that their positions on various problems discussed were identical or very close. The Minister of External Affairs of India explained the heavy burden placed on India's resources due to over 7 million refugees who had entered India. Both sides, after a detailed discussion, reiterated their firm conviction that there can be no military solution and considered it necessary that urgent steps be taken in East Pakistan for the achievement of a political solution and for the creation of conditions of safety for the return of the refugees to their homes, which alone would answer the interests of the entire people of Pakistan and the cause of the preservation of peace in the area.

"Both sides held the view that outside interference in the affairs of Indo-China should immediately cease. They consider that it will be futile to attempt to impose any setlement not acceptable to the people of the area. They welcomed the recent seven-point proposal of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam as a concrete step forward which could form the basis of a peaceful political settlement.

west asia

"On West Asia, both sides were convinced of the urgent need for the implementation of the resolution of the Security Council of November 22, 1967, so that the consequences of aggression are liquidated.

"Both sides considered that all international problems, including border disputes, must be settled by peaceful negotiations and that the use of force or the threat of use of force is impermissible for their settlement.

"Both sides declare that they are strongly in favour of an early agreement on general and complete disarmament, including both nuclear and conventional weapons, under effective international control.

"The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR expressed his gratitude for the cordial reception given to him by the Government of India."

APPENDIX III

Joint Indo-Soviet Statement of September 29, 1971

The following is the text of the Soviet-Indian joint statement on Mrs. Gandhi's talks with the Soviet leaders, issued on September 29, 1971.

At the invitation of the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister of the Republic of India, paid a visit to the USSR from September 27 to 29.

The Head of the Government of friendly India and her party were accorded a warm welcome testifying to the profound feelings of sincere friendship and respect of the Soviet people towards the great Indian people and India's leaders.

During her stay in Moscow, the Prime Minister laid wreaths at the Mausoleum of V. I. Lenin and the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

At a solemn meeting of Indo-Soviet Friendship, the Soviet public warmly greeted the Head of the Indian Government. The Lomonosov State University of Moscow conferred on Mrs. Indira Gandhi the degree of Doctor of Science, *honoris causa*.

The Prime Minister of India, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, had talks and discussions with the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Mr. L. I. Brezhnev, the Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., Mr. N. V. Podgorny, and the Chairman of the Council of Ministers, Mr. A N. Kosygin.

Taking part in the talks were : On the Soviet side : N. S. Patolichev, S. A. Skatchkov, V. V. Kuznetsov, N. P. Firyubin, N. M. Pegov, and A. A. Fomin ; and

On the Indian side: D. P. Dhar, T. N. Kaul, K. S. Shelvankar, R. D. Sathe, K. P. S. Menon, A. P. Venkateswaran, A. K. Damodaran, K. K. Bhargava, S.V. Purushottam and M. M. Malhotra.

The talks, which were held in an atmosphere of cordiality and mutual understanding, covered a wide range of subjects of Soviet-India bilateral relations as well as important current international problems of mutual interest.

Both sides expressed their profound satisfaction at the successful development of relations of friendship and fruitful co-operation between the Soviet Union and India in the political, economic, trade, scientific, technical, cultural and other fields.

They declared their conviction that this co-operation acquires still more firm political and legal basis in the Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Co-operation between the U.S.S.R. and India, signed in New Delhi on August 9, 1971.

The two sides fully agreed that the conclusion of the Treaty is an event of outstanding and historic importance for both countries and has further strengthened the relations of sincere friendship, respect, mutual confidence and good-neighbourly co-operation existing between the Soviet Union and India.

The conclusion of the Treaty reaffirms that Soviet Union-Indian friendship is based not on any transient factor, but on long-term vital interests of the peoples of both countries and their desire to develop to the utmost many-sided co-operation with each other for the purpose of economic and social progress, for safeguarding peace as well as the security of both countries.

Both sides declared their firm determination to be guided by the letter and spirit of the Treaty in regard to the further development of Soviet-Indian relations.

They expressed their satisfaction at the fact that the Treaty has met with the full and unreserved support of the peoples of the Soviet Union and India and has been widely welcomed throughout the world.

They noted with satisfaction the successful development of mutually beneficial, economic and technical co-operation between the two countries and emphasised the fact that there are