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KHRUSHCHEV'S MILITARY AID PROGRAMMES TO
NON-COMMUNIST STATES IN ASIA
(1955 - 1964)

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SYNOPSIS

Khrushchev's military aid policy to non-communist states in Asia had the purpose of weakening western political influence by encouraging Asian "neutralism". Short term political advantages were gained by the USSR in the Asian countries (Afghanistan, Indonesia, India, Laos, and Cambodia) which accepted significant military aid, but the extension of military aid to India in 1960 when it was being withheld from China was also a major element in the deterioration of relations with China.

After 1962 the bases for the continuation of the military aid programmes changed under the conflicting pressures on Khrushchev of Sino-Soviet competition and his desire for a detente with the West. Khrushchev sought to use military aid to Asian states as a demonstration of Soviet support for National Liberation Movements and to counter China's criticisms of his revisionism. Thus his military aid policies tended to frustrate his policy of peaceful co-existence with the West.

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I

THE STAGE-SETTING

Stalin had taken an uncompromising and hostile attitude towards the new leaders of the under-developed countries because of his judgment that in the post-colonial period they were still serving the interests of the capitalists by the surviving political and economic links with their former metropolitan centres. The reviling of Gandhi as an agent of the West is the most incongruous of such estimates, and the most frequently cited, but many other genuinely nationalist leaders received such treatment.

Soviet policy in the post-war period under Stalin has been described as "Neo-Maoist". As enunciated by Liu Shao Chi in 1949 and endorsed by the Soviet Union "the course followed by the Chinese people in defeating imperialism and its lackeys and in founding the People's Republic of China is the course that should be followed by the people's of the various colonial and semi-colonial countries in their fight for national independence and democracy." ¹

The various rebellions embarked on in Asia under these auspices, in addition to failing in their purpose of achieving power, were a severe diplomatic burden on the Soviet Union in its relations with the newly independent nations.

¹ John Kautsky, "Russia, China and Nationalist Movements", Survey, No. 43, August 1962, pp. 120 ff.

In the mid-fifties major political and strategic motives emerged for improving Soviet relations with such countries and at the 20th Party Congress, after the successful Asian tour of Khrushchev and Bulganin, it was agreed that:

"The forces of peace have been considerably augmented by the emergence in the world arena of a group of European and Asian peace-loving states, which have proclaimed non-participation in military blocs as a principle of their foreign policy. Thus a vast 'Zone of Peace' has emerged which includes both socialist and non-socialist peace-loving states"¹

Of particular importance to Khrushchev evidently was the new relationship with India itself: "The People's China and the independent Indian Republic have joined the ranks of the Great Powers."² This particular formulation was not repeated in the Resolutions of the Congress but it was symptomatic of Khrushchev's estimates from an early date.

India was accorded primacy of place in the foreign policy tasks of the CPSU in its relations with non-communist states. The first task of the CPSU arising out of the 20th Congress, was to

".... pursue steadfastly the Leninist policy of peaceful co-existence of countries, irrespective of their social systems;"

the second and third tasks were concerned with fraternal relations with other communist countries and the fourth task was

".... to consolidate the bonds of friendship and co-operation with the Republic of India, Burma, Afghanistan, Egypt, Syria, Indonesia and other countries which stand for peace"³

¹ Resolutions of the 20th Congress of the CPSU, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow 1956, p. 8.

² N.S. Khrushchev, Report of the CC of the CPSU to the Twentieth Party Congress, Press Office, USSR Embassy, Ottawa, 1956, p. 24

³ Resolutions of the 20th Congress, op. cit., pp. 13-14

In the same resolutions homage was paid to the Five Principles of international relations which had been accorded the approval of the Bandung Conference and for which Chou-en-Lai and Nehru had gained much of the initial political credit:

"In the present conditions, these principles constitute the best formula for relations between states with different social systems"

By the state visits of high Chinese political personalities to neutral Asian countries in 1954 and 1955 and by Chou En-lai's performance at the Bandung Conference in 1955 the Chinese Communists had already achieved a considerable impact on the public opinion and even on the foreign policy of the emerging "Third World" of ex-colonial nations. Moreover, Bandung allowed China to appear as the pioneer of the new Soviet policy.

The early proclamation of the "Chinese road" as the appropriate model for the under-developed countries, and the dynamic political activity of China in Asia in these years

".... constituted a potential challenge to the traditional claim of the Soviets for world wide authority."¹

In its wish, therefore, to capitalize on the aura of Panch Sila and to reassert Soviet primacy, the Soviet Union emphasized that similar principles had long governed Soviet policies:

"The general line of the foreign policy of the Soviet Union has always been the Leninist principle of peaceful co-existence of countries with different social systems."

The Panch Sila, denoting mutual respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty, non-aggression, non-interference in each other's domestic

¹ Richard Lowenthal, World Communism, Disintegration of a Secular Faith, Oxford U.P., New York, 1964, p. 129.

affairs, development of inter-state relations based on equality and mutual benefit, peaceful co-existence and economic co-operation, were thereafter treated by Krushchev as equivalent or synonymous to Leninist peaceful co-existence.

The acceptance of the principle that the non-communist states could theoretically base their foreign policies on the same basis as the "general line" of the Soviet Union required major revisions of previous assessments and throughout 1956 the major task of castigating earlier Stalinist assessments was undertaken. The results of this task, though they may have fallen far short of the revisions required by the objective facts, did bring to the Soviet Union a far more accurate assessment of the motives behind the policies of the under-developed world. The fundamental basis for the new assessment was that:

"In contrast to the pre-war period, most Asian countries now act in the world arena as sovereign states or states which are resolutely upholding their right to an independent foreign policy." ¹

At the same time more realistic assessments were made of the means by which these states had attained this independence, with important consequences for Soviet tactics in its new policy of cementing inter-state relations:

"The decomposition of the colonial system is a complex and many sided process. The liberation from the colonial oppression proceeds in various countries in different ways." ²

Thus, contrary to the earlier allocation of primacy to the native communists in the liberation struggle, it was now explicitly recognized that the national

¹ N.S. Krushchev, op. cit., p. 25

² E. Zhukov, "Dispersal of the Imperialist Colonial System" Partiinaya Zhizn, No. 16, August 1956, p. 45.
All translations are by the author unless otherwise indicated.

bourgeoisie "sometimes leads" this struggle and consequently

"its nationalist ideology must not become an impassable barrier between the bourgeoisie and the toiling masses₁ in their co-operation and alliance against imperialism".¹

Under these new policy guidelines the Indonesian and Indian communist parties now were encouraged to give their approval to the foreign policies of their governments.

Since in this thesis it will be noted that the character and timing of Soviet military aid has been tailored to the particular situations of the recipients (and sometimes quite transitory situations at that), the injunction on national sensitivities is worth noting for its impact on Soviet tactics:

"It is necessary to remember Lenin's most important observation that one must treat, with the deepest understanding and caution, the sensitive national feelings₂ of peoples which recently acquired their independence."

Above all, therefore, the new Soviet short-term, tactics had to be very elastic in an environment that was expected to be quite volatile. For the long term, the theoretical expectation was that, while political independence could not mean total independence until full economic independence was also attained, by supporting the under-developed countries to assert their political independence, the Soviet Union would gain from their basic anti-West orientation.

The events of late 1956, stemming from the 20th Congress, confirmed the general calculation that these states were primarily preoccupied with their own post-colonial issues and relatively indifferent to the major issues which stimulated the Cold War in these years. The Soviet Union's relations with Asian states which were enhanced by the de-stalinization campaign and

¹ ibid., p. 45-46.

² ibid., p. 47.

the acceptance of the possibilities of gradualism at the 20th Party Congress did not suffer from the backlash from those events which occurred in East Europe. The events of October 1956 which caused a crisis in western communist and intellectual circles caused no comparable reaction among Asian intellectuals who were far more concerned with the simultaneous events in Egypt and the political role which the Soviet Union played in them.¹

Although the Soviet Union did little to support Egypt in a material way during the Suez crisis, the fact of Soviet military aid to Egypt before and after the crisis, and in particular the retaliation threats against Britain and France on Egypt's behalf, served the Soviet Union well in the establishment of its reputation as a supporter of the independence of the under-developed countries. The Soviet successes in nuclear and rocket technology, and its intensive insistence that these too were forces for peace, contributed to the

"widespread impression throughout these regions that the West was in any case on the decline and this has not failed to impress that sizeable portion of mankind which has more respect for power and success than it has for principle."

This impression was seen to contribute in its turn to the "anti-western animus which would have been there whatever we had done."²

Evidence of western acceptance of the principle of its eventual abandonment of its colonial systems was insufficient to earn the good faith or the patience of the under-developed world and in the resulting misunderstandings and disputes the Soviet Union was frequently able to build "political alliances built on powerful local issues."³

¹ Lowenthal, op. cit., pp. 60-62

² George Kennan, "Russia, the Atom and the West", The Listener, Vol. LVIII, No. 1498, 12 December 1957, p. 968.

³ Marshall D. Shulman, "The Real Nature of the Soviet Challenge," Focus: World Communism, ed. R. Swearingen, Mifflin Co., Boston, 1964; p. 290.

Soviet entrees into the Asian countries were therefore to be accompanied by the spectacular espousal of local issues such as Kashmir in the case of India, West Irian in Indonesia, Pushtunistan in Afghanistan, neutralism in Laos, and South Vietnamese hostilities in Cambodia.

The specific modes and the evolution of the military aid programmes to these countries will be treated in detail in the following chapters but one of the major difficulties of the subject requires some introductory comments. This difficulty resides in the fact that there is no explicit and extended account by the Soviet Union of its military aid policy. The Soviet Union has, particularly up until 1962, been extremely reticent if not secretive, on the subject. This reticence stems from specific ideological sources as well as pragmatic questions of political tactics.

In the first place western arms aid to under-developed countries has been consistently portrayed in its most detrimental potentialities:

"States receiving such 'aid' in the form of weapons, inevitably fall into dependence, they increase their armies, which leads to higher taxes and a decline in living standards."¹

It is presented as bringing colossal profits to arms monopolies in the West while suppressing political and civil liberties in the recipient country. Militarism is therefore consistently condemned in countries receiving western arms. Despite its revised view of the progressive elements in the "national bourgeois" states, the Soviet Union had evident motives for not emphasizing these potential effects in countries receiving Soviet arms. The issue nevertheless has been seized upon by China which challenges in effect that any real differentiation can be made between the effects of Soviet and western military aid programmes on the internal political situation of the recipients.

¹ N.S. Khrushchev, op. cit., p. 27.

Pragmatic questions of tactics which have induced total Soviet silence on its arms aid programmes in individual cases, include the case of India in the period up until 1963. Although military aid to India began in significant quantities in 1960, the main reason for this particular reticence until 1963 was undoubtedly the desire not to exacerbate the quarrel with China by the injection of this relationship with India into the domain of Soviet public policy statements.

Despite the lack of any comprehensive enunciation of policy, the Soviet Union had stated the fundamentals of its future military aid policy in 1955 in the wake of the first major deal with Egypt:

" The Soviet Government holds the view that every state has the legitimate right to provide for its own defence and to purchase arms for its own defence requirements from other states at usual commercial terms, and that no foreign state has the right to intervene and to present any one-sided claim which would infringe the rights or interests of other states." ¹

The emphasis on "usual commercial terms", is accorded importance because

"aggressive blocs like the Baghdad Pact give armaments to certain countries 'free of charge', but in return the states which receive these arms must supply the colonies with cannon fodder." ²

In contrast again to western policies which impose on the recipient

" definite political terms providing for their integration into aggressive military blocs, the conclusion of joint military pacts, and support for American policy , up-to-date equipment can be obtained from the Soviet Union without accepting any political or military commitments" ³

¹ TASS, 2 October 1955.

² Pravda, 30 December 1955.

³ Krushchev, op. cit., p. 25.

The advantages of "commercial terms", as opposed to western "mutual aid", and the lack of Soviet political strings, were endorsed by the first major recipient of Soviet military equipment, Nasser:

"This commercial agreement will mark the end of that foreign influence which dominated us for a long time.

When we manage to arm our forces, without binding ourselves with any conditions or commitments, we shall eradicate the influence of those making the uproar." ¹

In the first period of its active use of military aid programmes as an adjunct to its political policies (1955 - 57) the Soviet Union's agreements were restricted to countries which were adjacent to or had close strategic and political relationships to itself and the Baghdad Pact countries. The regional concentration was therefore in Egypt and Syria in the Middle East with an extension across the Soviet Union's own southern flank afforded by a military aid programme to Afghanistan.

Soviet reactions to the development of the South East Asia Collective Defence Treaty (SEATO) were notably less urgent than to the Baghdad Pact. The area was not only geographically remote from the Soviet Union but remnants of Stalinist thoughts on the merits of a divided China would also have allowed Soviet thought to see some positive geo-political advantages to the Soviet Union in the posing of a military bulwark on China's southern flank which predictably would be a major preoccupation and restraint on its actions. While such thinking would have appeared incongruous at that time, subsequent events allow at least the possibility that such geo-political calculations were a constant part of Soviet policies in the area.

¹ The Egyptian Gazette, 28 September 1955

In late 1954 there was no threat in the SEATO agreement to compel any strong Soviet response, but it presented considerable political opportunity for the widening of neutralist opposition to such pacts and this had value for the Soviet Union in its concern over the Baghdad Pact, and NATO, and the general question of western base-rights in under-developed countries.

There was therefore in the Soviet opposition to SEATO no equivalent of its notes to Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Pakistan complaining of the real threat to Soviet security posed by the Baghdad Pact plans. Instead the Soviet Union concentrated on the political sentiments of Asian powers as in its statement of 14 September 1954 attacking the western powers for signing the treaty "behind the backs of the Asian countries". In what now appears as a disavowal of immediate Soviet concern over SEATO, China was allocated the role of opposing it: "Moreover, these aggressive plans are opposed by the People's Republic of China, which rightly regards the creation of this military grouping as a threat to its security."¹⁷

The secondary importance of S.E. Asia to the Soviet Union had been demonstrated earlier by its willingness to compromise with the West on the Geneva accords of 1954. This Soviet action, which was opposed by China and North Vietnam because they considered a wider military victory to be within their capabilities, was made in order not to cause the downfall of Mendes - France, who had committed himself to resign if he did not achieve a settlement of the Indochina situation. The Soviet Union's primary interest in this

¹ Pravda, 15 September 1954.

Mendes - France commitment and the South - East Asia area at that time, was governed by Mendes - France's equal commitment not to ratify the Paris agreement which entailed the rearming of West Germany. It was in the Soviet interest to help maintain him in power and in opposition therefore to the more optimistic calculations of China and North Vietnam on a military victory in Indo-China the Soviet Union had already shown that South-East Asian situations could be manipulated from the standpoint of Soviet national interest in Europe and its relations with western states.

While its own national interest was not directly threatened the Soviet Union could take political advantage from the fact that when SEATO came into being in September 1954, the only Asian countries to join it were Pakistan, Thailand and the Phillipines, while Indonesia and India, the most populous of the eligible Asian countries by far, refused to join. This did not however mean in Soviet calculations that it should not be considered eligible to provide military aid to these latter countries and there is considerable evidence that Khrushchev and Bulganin in their tour of Asia in 1955 offered Soviet military aid in every country they visited.

Evidence of the military aid relationship is presented later, but given the correlation between both economic and military aid as functional adjuncts to Soviet political policies and since the Soviet Union naturally concentrated its efforts where the aid was likely to prove most effective or most useful from its own standpoint, it is noteworthy that the first large economic aid credit (\$132 million) to be extended to a non-communist country was to India in 1955 providing for the start of a significant development in heavy industry. While there were aid extensions to several other countries

in 1955 by the Soviet Union and East European communist countries, the next big advance came in 1956 with economic aid extensions of a further \$128 million to India and \$100 million each to Afghanistan and Indonesia.

In the same period with the exception of one small credit to Egypt, China confined itself to its own periphery with economic aid credits to Cambodia and Nepal.¹ China thus found itself pre-empted by the more advanced Soviet industrial and economic base and had to content itself with aid programmes which could be counted on as impressive for the minor states of Nepal and Cambodia, but which would be insignificant for the needs of India and Indonesia. The same limitations existed in the realm of military aid.

The effects therefore of the new direction of Soviet policy, was that not only was the "Chinese road" no longer recommended by the Soviet Union, but Soviet relations with the states of Asia were being improved by modes of co-operation in which China could not compete. Furthermore, as China reiterated constantly over the next decade, these Soviet economic and military aid programmes were detrimental to the fulfilment of the still enormous Chinese needs.

The major trend of events therefore from the mid-1950's on was to demonstrate that Soviet aid policies in Asia cut directly across its political relations with China. This is as relevant politically as the opposite stances taken by China and India to the destalinization policies of the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU in 1956 which for Nehru and other Asian leaders had confirmed their opinions of increasing liberalization in the Soviet Union's political life while for the Chinese it was to be used as evidence of incipient revisionism and reduced revolutionary militancy.

¹ Joseph S. Berliner, Soviet Economic Aid, Praeger, New York, 1958, pp. 34 - 39.

II

DEVELOPMENTS IN AFGHANISTAN, INDIA AND

INDONESIA IN 1955-57

While the development of its military aid programmes in the Middle East in the period 1955-57 attracted the greatest attention, the Soviet Union did not neglect this mode of ingratiating itself with states in Asia and it is evident that although the time was not yet propitious for the development of significant military aid programmes to India and Indonesia, these countries were the subject of Soviet offers in this period. In Afghanistan, for reasons partly related to its other successes with non-communist countries bordering on the Baghdad Pact area, the Soviet Union did succeed in establishing itself as virtually the sole supplier of military aid.

Afghanistan's position as a buffer-state has historically required a policy of neutrality but on the occasions where it has been deflected from neutrality one of its key requirements has been for external military support or a military alliance, against British power in India or Russian power from the north. In the mid 50's the Soviet Union had good reason to consider that the Saadabad Pact of 1937 which had linked Turkey, Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan might again be revived. The Saadabad Pact had not developed any effective¹ multilateral defence arrangements and was long defunct but the formidable

¹ John C. Campbell, Defense of the Middle East, Harper & Brothers, New York, 1958, pp. 21-22

new factor of steadily improving U.S. - Afghan relations after World War II, raised the possibilities of its revival under the new aegis of the Baghdad Pact. The main positive factor in the Soviet Union's favour was that the Baghdad Pact included Pakistan, and Afghan - Pakistan relations were in the process of rapidly deteriorating over the Pushtunistan issue. The Soviet Union therefore concentrated its attention on exacerbating this issue while improving its inter-state cooperation with Afghanistan. The Soviet Union had an additional possible motive that if Afghanistan adhered to the Baghdad Pact, on the model of the Basmachi rebellions of the 1920's, it could again¹ be a base for dissident activities in Soviet Central Asia itself.

The importance of Afghanistan, which by 1955 was the only country on the Soviet Union's border (apart from Finland) which was still neutral in the Cold War, was indicated by special features in the Soviet economic aid programme. Afghanistan was the only non-communist country to receive a substantial grant from the Soviet Union and it also received some budgetary support.² These and other modes of cooperation with Afghanistan have contributed to Soviet purposes of maintaining it in its traditional neutrality and the Soviet Union has frequently cited Afghanistan with Finland as a model for demonstrating the benefits of peaceful co-existence and the advantage³ of neutralism.

¹ L. Hasan, "The Foreign Policy of Afghanistan", Pakistan Horizon, 1 December 1964, pp. 48-57.

² U.S. Congress, Joint Economic Committee, Dimensions of Soviet Economic Power, Washington, 1962, p. 467.

³ Walter L. Laqueur, The Soviet Union and the Middle East, Praeger, New York, 1959, p. 179.

The Soviet military aid programme to Afghanistan was in origin clearly related to its policy of countering the burgeoning western-oriented military alliances in the Middle East while furnishing Afghanistan with the increment of strength it needed, in its own assessment, as a result of the political hostility between itself and Pakistan. The diplomatic notes which the Soviet Union despatched in 1953-55 to the adherents of the new Middle East mutual defence arrangements were also accompanied by press and radio propaganda which stressed the "new menace" to Pakistan's neighbours, Afghanistan¹ and India. Unlike other Middle Eastern states which did not adhere to the Baghdad Pact, Afghanistan did not however make loud protestations or denunciations of it until Pakistan adhered to it in 1955. Even then its attitude remained one of restraint on the question of the pact itself and its concern centred on the bilateral balance of power between itself and Pakistan.

The end of British rule in India in 1947 had removed the pressure on Afghanistan from the south and the successor states of India and Pakistan clearly did not pose anything like the same problems. This meant however a diminution in Afghanistan's external security vis-a-vis the Soviet Union and this was reflected in the good relations which were developed with the US after the war. But the emancipation of the Indian sub-continent was also one of the causes of a dispute over the Durand Line of 1893 which established the Afghanistan - India frontier and now determines the Afghan - Pakistan frontier. Western comment, including a declaration of the SEATO Council in 1956 has been generally to dispute the legal basis of Afghanistan's claims for revision of the border. In addition western comments have generally agreed with a Pakistani White Paper on the subject, that states:

¹ ibid., p. 193.

"if the frontier of a country must be re-determined on a linguistic and ethnic basis, as the Afghans claim, the same principle would lead to the disintegration¹ of Afghanistan itself, with its many ethnic groupings".

From 1947 on Afghanistan has pursued its demands for an independent state of Pushtunistan with frontier incidents causing periodic increases in tension. The area that Pushtunistan would occupy, according to Afghan maps, and the fact that Afghanistan did not envisage a plebiscite of the Pushtu tribes on its side of the border, remained a source of Pakistan's adamant refusal to adjust its position, since it virtually entails the extinction of West Pakistan. The issue again came to a head in 1955 with the mob-destruction of respective embassy and consulate buildings in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

In previous periods of high tension on its borders when it considered itself threatened externally, Afghanistan had sought military support from various sources of which the main ones had been Russia, Czechoslovakia, Germany, and Turkey, and more infrequently Britain. Prior to Pakistan's accession to the Baghdad Pact in 1955, Afghanistan was obtaining some military aid from the west.²

However the requirements of political solidarity with alliance partners precluded the possibility of material support by western countries in the context of the Pushtunistan dispute with Pakistan, and Afghanistan turned to the Soviet Union which was already enjoying the first fruits of its arms deal with Egypt. Pakistan by denying Afghanistan trade transit rights to the port of Karachi further contributed to impelling it towards the Soviet Union.

¹ George Lenczowski, The Middle East in World Affairs, second edition, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1956, p. 225.

² Lenczowski, ibid., pp. 209, 215-216 and 220.

Unlike the other major arms customers which the Soviet Union has developed in the post-1954 period, Afghanistan had a history of arms-trade relations with the Soviet Union since the 1920's which had always had some elements of mutual advantage. The Treaty of Friendship of 1921 had been the basis for a munitions deal, and in 1927 a further agreement was concluded for aircraft and other military equipment.¹

In 1955 the Soviet Union was again a convenient and willing source for arms aid, and there was wide agreement within Afghanistan that such aid should be accepted. In the wake of the general acceptability accorded by the non-aligned states to the military aid agreement between the Soviet Union and Egypt, the Afghan ambassador in Cairo declared that his country too would accept Soviet military aid if its requests were not met by the West.²

Premier Daud, (whose previous career had been Minister of Defence and Interior and army general), initiated a debate in the Big Jirga in November 1955 for the endorsement of his policy on the Pushtunistan issue and means of increasing Afghanistan's power vis-a-vis Pakistan. The debate was followed closely in the Soviet Union. Both policies were endorsed on 20 November 1955 in three resolutions, one of which authorized the government

"to find ways and means of returning to the balance of power that was upset by Pakistan's decision to accept arms aid from the United States".

This was noted with approval in Pravda. The resolution coincided with Pakistan's denunciation of an Afghan campaign of infiltration, sabotage and propaganda among the Pushtu tribes.³

¹ ibid., pp. 211 and 216

² ibid., pp. 228 - 230

³ Pravda, 23 November and New York Times, 22 November 1955

The state visit of Khrushchev and Bulganin to Kabul less than a month after this decision was therefore the probable occasion for the first agreement on the principles of a military aid agreement. In addition the Soviet leaders endorsed the Afghan position on Pushtunistan in their public speeches and in the final communique. Three documents were jointly signed at the end of the visit. These were a protocol extending the 1931 Soviet-Afghan treaty of neutrality and non-aggression, a joint statement supporting the Bandung Principles, peaceful co-existence and the admission of Communist China to the United Nations, while the third document was a Soviet pledge of a \$100 million economic aid credit.

However Daud maintained the focus of Afghanistan's nationalist policy towards its dispute with Pakistan by not condemning the Baghdad Pact itself and reserving his main strictures for Pakistan.¹ Daud did make it clear moreover that military aid would be accepted only if it had no political conditions attached.²

The details of Soviet military aid since the first agreement are more difficult to document in Afghanistan than in any other major recipient, largely due to its remoteness. The early reports which implied that part of the arms was to be handed without controls to the Pushtu tribesmen have not however been substantiated.³

The details that are available suggest a large programme for equipment supply for existing units as well as for an expansion of the army from 50,000 to 80,000 men. The technical backwardness of the Afghan military appears to be

¹ Lenczowski, op. cit., p. 229

² Keesing's Contemporary Archives, Vol. X, 1955-6, p. 14606.

³ New York Times, 11 March 1956.

a prime distinguishing characteristic since it generates a greater dependence on the supply of Soviet technicians and operators.¹

The first agreement for Soviet and some Czech arms purchases concluded in 1956 has been valued at in excess of \$30 million and was largely implemented by 1958. In 1959 Afghanistan was in possession of at least 60 MIG-17 jet fighters and one to two squadrons of IL-28 jet bombers. The army had received equipment for at least an armoured division of T-34 tanks and armoured personnel carriers, two motorized infantry brigades and a full range of artillery, mortars and machine guns.² In addition to a complete dependence on the Soviet Union for the equipment of its air force the whole military structure of Afghanistan since 1955 has become dependent on continuing Soviet support.

Because it has apparently been beyond Afghan capabilities to man all this equipment Soviet personnel have been used extensively for manning the more sophisticated equipment such as the Soviet tanks and jet aircraft.³ The technical deficiencies of the Afghan airman and soldier have therefore required a compensatory greater Soviet presence and a large training programme for Afghan officers and technicians in the Soviet bloc.⁴

The Soviet Union has not limited itself to arms deliveries and training. While remedying a major Afghanistan deficiency, it has also done considerable work via economic aid programmes for the development of Afghanistan land communication systems with the particular object of improving roads across

¹ K. Hasan, "Pakistan - Afghanistan Relations", Asian Survey, Vol. 11, No. 7, September 1962, p. 18.

² U.S. State Department, Status of the Bloc Economic Offensive at the end of 1958, Washington, 1959, pp. 37-8; and Andrew Wilson, "Inside Afghanistan, Russia's Highway to the South", The Observer, 6 December 1959.

³ John Osman, "Afghans Alarmed by Russian Activity", Daily Telegraph, 14 November 1959.

⁴ Major Edgar O'Balance, "Afghanistan", The Army Quarterly, Jan. 1961, pp. 224-31.

the barrier of the Hindu Kush range. Incidentally this has improved its own strategic access to the south but an important and possibly the main motive is believed to be to maintain the Soviet Union as a route for the export of Afghan goods. Improvement of air facilities have had a more military connotation since the Bagram airfield, one of two airfield projects, is¹ essentially a military facility. However, although such facilities in Afghanistan and elsewhere have potential utility as bases for the Soviet Union in time of conflict, there is no indication that base rights have been secured or that the bases are being developed for other than Afghanistan's own purposes.

These military aid developments with Afghanistan have been a major concern to Pakistan since 1956 and as with other Baghdad Pact members, Pakistan was made aware that if it were to abandon its adherence to the Pact, a more friendly Soviet attitude would result. Nor has Pakistan been indifferent to the pressures of Soviet alignment against Pakistan on the Pushtunistan issue. In 1956, when Soviet military aid to Afghanistan was first becoming apparent there was an improvement in Afghan-Pakistan relations with a Joint Communique being issued at the end of the year "recognizing the need for close cooperation between the two countries" and "affirming their intention to promote better relations". This was at least partially due to Pakistan's desire not to provoke Afghanistan into closer military relations with the Soviet Union but Pakistani appeasement did not extend to relinquishing its opposition to the Pushtunistan issue.

¹ U.S. State Department, op. cit., p. 36

There is another element in the situation which has made Soviet policy a cause of serious Pakistani distrust. This is the frequently stated Pakistani suspicion that India also has encouraged Soviet support for the Pushtunistan issue in order to divert Pakistan's interest from Kashmir, and also to prevent a combined "muslim" pressure from the north against India.¹

Afghanistan was the first non-communist Asian country to receive Soviet military aid but it is the only Asian country in which the arms aid programme does not appear to have had a direct impact on Sino-Soviet relations. There is no record of any Chinese offers of military aid to Afghanistan and the primary result of the Soviet programme to that country, as it effects Sino-Soviet relations, has been in the developments in Sino-Pakistan relations. The Pushtunistan issue, which was the main Afghan motive in accepting Soviet military aid, was avoided by China (as it also avoided antagonizing Pakistan by not following the Soviet lead in supporting the Indian position on Kashmir), and it thus became a burden to the Soviet Union's diplomacy in South Asia at a later period when it had less interest in disrupting the sub-continent than in stabilizing it.

The immediate prospects of the Soviet Union developing a military aid programme in India in the mid 50's were remote, despite the conflict between India and Pakistan, since, by the accidents of partition, India had inherited a relatively adequate defence industry in addition to well-trained armed forces.

¹ K. Hasan, op. cit., p. 17.

Indian superiority in infra-structural resources, combined with unassailable military advantages over Pakistan, allowed India to remain aloof from Russian military aid as an element in its non-alignment policy as long as its policy of amity towards China remained unstrained. As long as India calculated that China did not constitute a threat, its military position was sound and although, as subsequently revealed in 1959, important Sino-Indian differences were already apparent to India in 1954, it was not until 1959 that India began to fear that the differences could not be solved by amicable means. In the interim it was considered that India was under no threat from China.

The situation of independent India seemed more favourable even than that of Imperial India since the guarding of the traditional invasion route of the sub-continent was now the responsibility of Pakistan:

"From August 15, 1947 the north-west frontier became the responsibility of Pakistan. Independent India thus had historical reasons for imagining itself without strategic problems other than those presented by the quarrel with Pakistan over Kashmir. India had no doubt where its frontier ran, for these had been drawn with more or less precision by British cartographers and never seriously challenged."¹

It was true that the Chinese occupation of Tibet in 1950-51 had removed a buffer region which had been an important element in Sino-Indian relations in the days of the British Empire, but fears on this ground were dispelled by the trade agreement of April 1954 between India and the "Tibet region of China" which first formulated the Panch Shila.

Soviet interests in India were undoubtedly heightened by this growing Sino-Indian friendship and especially by Nehru's agreement at the Bogor Conference in 1954, (preparatory to the Bandung Conference in 1955), that the Soviet Union, as a European power, was not eligible for an invitation to Bandung.

¹

P.H.M. Jones, "Passes & Impasses", Far Eastern Economic Review, 28 February 1963, p. 443.

This may well have been an echo or an even more direct consequence of Chou-En-lai's sentiments, expressed to Nehru on 22 June 1954 that "the age when¹ outside forces could decide at will the fate of Asia has gone for ever".

The Soviet Union could not have been pleased to be pre-empted politically in Asia by either India or China, and certainly not by both in combination, and these developments gave the Soviet Union additional and important reasons for establishing closer relations with Nehru, one of the acknowledged leaders of the non-aligned "third world", to which Soviet ideology was now allocating an important place.

The Soviet Union's easiest point of entry for closer political relations with India was the Kashmir dispute which ranked as one of the most intractable problems in international affairs, involving the communal and religious differences of the whole sub-continent. For India's leaders, (Gandhi, as well as Nehru) India's position as a secular state would be undermined if it ever accepted Pakistan's theocratic view that Kashmir should belong to Pakistan because it was Muslim. While using this main argument and pronouncing its fears of a massacre of continental proportions if Kashmir should become part of Pakistan, India's arguments in the UN were very legalistic and based themselves on the accession of Kashmir to India by the decision of the Maharajah, Hari Singh, in which the views of the predominantly Moslem population had no legal standing. But if its arguments in the UN were legalistic, they were delivered with a passion which bespoke a total emotional commitment: " ... on this one matter, rational discussion with Nehru was² scarcely possible."

¹ David Floyd, Mao Against Krushchev, Pall Mall Press, London, 1964 p. 219.

² Kingsley Martin, "Reflections on Kashmir," New Statesman, 17 September 1965, p. 385.

Given this emotionalism and Pakistan's untenable economic situation¹ in which its defence financing was a central problem, the selection of a bilateral military aid agreement with the US by Pakistan in 1954 as a means of ensuring its survival as a state, and Pakistan's latter accession to the Baghdad Pact, both had the unfortunate effect of adding an important propaganda ingredient to India's stand on Kashmir. At the same time it created an additional entree for the Soviet Union in the politics of the sub-continent despite its earlier support in the United Nations Security Council for the principle of a plebiscite in Kashmir. Thus when Krushchev went to Kashmir in December 1955 he could inveigh against Pakistan's membership in the Baghdad Pact at the same time as he endorsed India's position on Kashmir.²

Both stances were consistent with the Indian attitude towards the US-Pakistan military aid agreement. In 1954 the US-Pakistan agreement was cited by it, along with Indian investments in Kashmir, as the basis for arguments of de facto as opposed to de jure Indian rights in Kashmir. As expanded by Nehru and Krishna Menon in later years, US military aid to Pakistan had allegedly destroyed the entire basis for a plebiscite in Kashmir. The argument was now made that it was "

"virtually immaterial whether Pakistan withdrew her troops, in view of the increased military potential poised on the borders of Kashmir", since, "the defence of India itself has to be considered."

However these statements were introduced for political effect and there was no real concern reflected in India's defence budget in the following years. When India's defence expenditures did take a quantum leap it was not

¹ O.H.K. Spate, "The Partition of India and the Prospects of Pakistan", Geographical Review, Fourth quarter 1948, pp. 5-29

² Pravda, 11 December 1955

to be in response to the threat from Pakistan but the real threat from China. Nevertheless in the occasional arguments in favour of Soviet military aid used by Krishna Menon as Minister of Defence in this period, it was the Pakistan threat which was presented by him as a reason for accepting Soviet offers. Such offers were made in early 1956, in the wake of the Khrushchev-Bulganin tour, and were said to include offers of 60-100 Soviet jet fighters at favourable prices.¹ They were rejected by Nehru but the possibility of India's acceptance of Soviet military aid had some utility to India since it was probably able to extract more favourable terms for its arms purchases from Britain, its main supplier, by citing the availability of Soviet arms as an important bargaining lever.

This probability was revealed in 1962 when Nehru disclosed that "six or seven" years earlier, India had informed Britain of a wish to obtain more planes as a counter to planes being received by Pakistan. When Britain did not initially give an encouraging reply, Nehru disclosed, he had considered Soviet fighters but he eventually responded to a British plea not to go "out of the traditional market" and Britain finally agreed to supply the planes despite its earlier reluctance. At that same time, Nehru disclosed, he had written to the British Government stating his freedom to buy planes from any source but promising to consult Britain before making any final decisions.²

India by reason of its non-alignment policy, its opposition to western-oriented pacts and its political importance in Asia, was therefore considered eligible for military aid offers by the Soviet Union from 1955 or 1956 onwards. Its exploitation of the Kashmir dispute suggests that this

¹ David J. Dallin, Soviet Foreign Policy After Stalin, J.B. Lipincott Co., New York, 1961, p. 305.

² Ian C.C. Graham, "The Indo-Soviet MIG Deal and its International Repercussions", Asian Survey, Vol. IV, No. 5, May 1964, pp. 826-7.

was the main ingredient in India's external policy which the Soviet Union felt could form a basis for an Indian requirement for Soviet military aid and in the mid-1950's its offer lacked the connotation that it later acquired of being an explicit anti-Chinese policy since it was not initially directed against China but against Pakistan.

India and Afghanistan in the decision making process of initiating or rejecting military aid from the Soviet Union had one major advantage over Indonesia, in the unity and strength of their governments. In Indonesia however the acceptance of Soviet military aid has always been a more delicate political issue due to the rivalry in ambitions and strength between the Moslems and the army on one side and the communist party on the other.

The Soviet Union's rapprochement with Indonesia was slower in developing than with the countries already treated, but Sukarno's emergence at Bandung as a political figure to be cultivated and his staunch opposition to SEATO were important ingredients in Soviet attitudes. That Indonesia was likely to be committed by internal politics to remain aloof from western military pacts, had previously been emphasized by events following the signing of a Mutual Security Agreement with the U.S. in 1952. Indonesian political reaction was strong and led to the repudiation of the MSA pact and also caused the fall of the cabinet which had negotiated it.

¹ Information Office of the Republic of Indonesia, The Eighth Year of a Free Nation, 1952-1953, Washington, p. 21. See also Brian Crozier, The Morning After, Methuen & Co., Ltd., London, 1963, p. 131.

However Indonesia's attachment to neutralism and non-alignment was not to be a source of any limitations on its militant anti-colonial instincts, as Sukarno represented them:

"an independent policy is dynamic ... (It) seeks to draw closer to other countries, with the aim of promoting world peace in harmony with our national interests and Pancha Shila".

The specific issue on which this dynamism was to be expended in the external field was the pursuit of the West Irian claim, "the thorn in the flesh of the Indonesian people".¹ The external and internal importance of the West Irian issue was recognized by the Soviet Union and was skilfully combined with anti-SEATO propaganda.

However the Soviet Union had a major liability in developing better relations with Indonesia as a consequence of the Madiun revolt in 1948. Shortly after returning from the USSR, in August 1948, Musso, the Communist Party (PKI) leader at that time, was faced with a government plan for the demobilization of military units which were suspected of having communist sympathies. Some of these units went into open rebellion and Musso made the error of supporting a short-lived revolt at Madiun.² This incident entrenched the doubts of the Socialist (PSI) and Moslem (Masjumi) parties on the possibilities of cooperating with the communist elements in Indonesia and this has remained a long-term liability for the PKI and the Soviet Union in its relations with the Moslem and army elements in Indonesia. Soviet comments on these internal events had condemned the Madiun affair as an imperialist provocation on the part of the Indonesian government.

¹ Information Office of the Republic of Indonesia, op. cit., p. 2.
Sukarno speech of 17 August 1952.

² Guy J. Pauker, "The Military in Indonesia", The Role of the Military in Under-developed Countries, ed. J.J. Johnson, Princeton, U.P., 1962, pp. 103-4.

The PKI showed a strong recuperative power to these adverse events in 1948, under the new leadership of Aidit. The latter depended initially on the support he found among the Chinese population of Indonesia, but too close identification with the local Chinese had its disadvantages also and the PKI wisely removed many Chinese from key party posts in late 1953 and early 1954. From that point, the PKI rapidly established itself as one of the largest political organisms in Indonesia and laid the foundations of the left-wing mass organizations which were to become a real power factor by the mid-1960's. The strength of the Indonesian communist party was undoubtedly an additional important element in Soviet calculations in the 1950's.

In 1956 Sukarno was invited to the Soviet Union and several of the East European communist states. It was in China however that Sukarno apparently received his first offer of substantial military aid from a communist country.

Sukarno in a public statement in 1957 stated that Mao Tse-tung had offered him "unlimited amounts of military equipment" during his visit in October 1956, while nothing was said of any large offers that may have been received from the Soviet Union.¹ Subsequent reports give no major place to Chinese military aid to Indonesia and it is therefore unlikely that any significant quantities were supplied by China. Any Chinese commitment to supply Sukarno would probably have had to be made up of equipment it had itself received from the Soviet Union. The latter might well have had reservations about underwriting such a Chinese aid programme, and this may account for its demise. In the light of China's criticism of Soviet military aid programmes at a later date, the incident does reveal China's own willingness to use the same tactic as a means of improving its relations with countries in South Asia.

¹ Guy J. Pauker, "The Soviet Challenge in Indonesia", Foreign Affairs, Vol. 40, No. 4, July 1962, p. 614.

On his return from this tour of the Communist countries in October 1956, Sukarno gave some indications of the extent to which he had been impressed politically by the experience of his travels, and his disregard for the events in East Europe in that month. In a speech on 31 October he asked the Indonesian parties to bury themselves and suggested that when this had been done it could be decided whether to adopt a single party system, or a limited number of "national" parties in which Soviet model 'cadres'¹ would play a role.

But however much Sukarno may have wished to accelerate new relationships with the communist countries, there was opposition to the implementation of the economic aid agreement which he had concluded during his tour in 1956 and this opposition would have applied a fortiori to any military aid agreement with the Soviet bloc. This came primarily from the Masjumi party in Parliament and was maintained until Indonesia's deteriorating economic situation in late 1957 caused a relaxation of the opposition.

Some indication of the initial opposition to military aid from the Soviet Union was given by the relatively innocuous purchase of Soviet jeeps in early 1957. If this was a trial balloon by both the Indonesia government and the Soviet Union, the results must have been considered of mixed value. Their poor performance in Indonesian tropical conditions raised a lively debate in the Indonesian press on the respective merits and prices of Soviet and US equipment with the left-wing press naturally taking the role of defendant of this Soviet connection. The press debate was inconclusive but Indonesian opinion was evidently not too favourable to the further development of this military aid relationship.²

¹ Keesings, Vol. X, p. 15246.

² U.S. State Department, The Sino-Soviet Economic Offensive in the Less Developed Countries, Washington, May 1958, pp. 78 & 80.

The increasing strength of the PKI during this period as proven in both the parliamentary elections of 1955 where it won 6,000,000 votes and in the district and municipal elections of 1957 where it showed even stronger voting strength, made it appear likely that conditions were developing to the point where a decision favouring the acceptance of Soviet aid offers could soon be made with relative equanimity. The Indonesian military too were becoming increasingly restive for the development of some continuity in their arms supply. A request for the provision of a very large quantity¹ of arms was made to the United States in the spring of 1957 for the purpose of subduing internal revolt and the refusal of this request has frequently been cited as the main cause for Indonesia concluding arrangements for Soviet weapons in 1958. Changes in internal Indonesian attitudes certainly took place when it appeared that the Soviet bloc was the only available source for the much needed arms, because the Indonesian requirement for military aid in 1957 was becoming acute as it faced the possibility of a break-up of the unitary republic by the challenges of provincially based rebellions and also widespread challenges to central authority in Java itself. Marshal Voroshilov had an opportunity to assess the situation at first hand when a major engagement had to be fought to clear the road from Bogor to Bandung² during his visit in 1957. The inability of the army to suppress such rebellious movements was typified by its desire for the negotiation of cease-fire agreements with them on a more or less equal basis throughout 1957.

¹ The Washington Post, 21 August 1958.

² British Information Service, Indonesia, Ottawa, December 1958, p. 15.

However the settlements made with various rebelling army commanders in 1957 did not obscure the seriousness of the problem which had begun in 1956 when army commanders in North and Central Sumatra announced that their districts no longer recognized the authority of the central government.

There was evidence of a direct relationship between these regional revolts and Sukarno's restrictions on the role of the Indonesian political parties, and the rebelling army commanders showed their political affiliations by suppressing the local PKI organizations and aligning themselves with the Masjumi party. Moreover in early 1957 in a series of speeches Sukarno had further alienated these groups by the formal enunciation of his intentions to end the period of "liberal democracy" in Indonesia and reaffirming intentions¹ of borrowing from Communist political models.

As the situation deteriorated martial law was proclaimed on 14 March 1957 and the period of General Nasution's ascendancy began. The methods Nasution used at first were political conferences and discussions between regional military representatives and central government authorities which concluded with a statement that the regional commanders fully realized the importance of maintaining the authority of the central government and creating stability in the armed forces and called for a cooperative effort between Sukarno and Dr. Hatta, the former vice-president (and a strong anti-communist) to solve the crisis. Dr. Hatta's return to a position of power was also a central aim of the Masjumi party and the PSI.

However agreement was not forthcoming from Sukarno for a political

¹ Pauker, op. cit., pp. 212-213.

— solution and he proceeded instead to implement his proposals of February 1957 by the formation of an extra-parliamentary cabinet and the National Advisory Council to which the Masjumi party was opposed because both bodies were unconstitutional.

At the end of 1957 two former prime ministers of Indonesia from the Masjumi party and the former Governor of the Bank of Indonesia fled to Sumatra. The military and economic autonomy of Sumatra thus appeared to be endowed with political figure-heads of international reputation and the break-up of the unitary state of Indonesia appeared likely if not imminent.

In this critical situation internal and external events coincided to produce a pretext for a radical development which would divert the approaching crisis. These were the assassination attempt on Sukarno on 30 November which had rallied sympathy to his person on the same day that the draft resolution in the UN General Assembly for the affirmation of Indonesian sovereignty over West Irian failed again to command a sufficient majority. Sukarno then seized upon the West Irian issue as a rallying point for Indonesian opinion and concentrated on it to the exclusion of Indonesia's internal problems. This led to economic measures against the Netherlands and the seizure by the trade unions of major and minor trade and business enterprises.

At the same time Indonesia was able to exploit these developments as a potential east-west issue by the Netherlands' referral of the deteriorating situation to the NATO Council in December 1957. This Dutch action was seen by many under-developed countries and Indonesia in particular as confirmation of the Soviet claims that the western military alliances were instruments of

colonialism. Feeding Indonesia's suspicions of the western nations and adding fuel to its animosity towards western bases, port facilities at Singapore were extended by normal British practice, for the 2 Dutch warships which immediately sailed to bolster the Dutch position in West Irian. Indonesia's appeal to Britain that such facilities be denied was rejected.

It was at this juncture that the decisions were evidently made in Indonesia to seek substantial military aid from the Soviet Union and the circumstances reflected the general ambivalence in Indonesian motives which was to remain a constant feature in the ensuing years. For the military, and the army in particular, the main-spring of the agreement was the critical internal situation, while for Sukarno, the PKI and Subandrio, Soviet military aid offered the opportunity to divert attention from the internal political chaos by providing a conspicuous rallying factor for the exploitation of the West Irian issue.

In its first ventures and offers in military aid in South and South-East Asia, the Soviet Union exploited local issues in which the potential recipient envisaged the possibility of a military confrontation between itself and its political opponent. A common factor in all three cases, was that the Western nations were most conspicuous for their military aid to the other party in the dispute and were inhibited from supplying military aid to the Soviet targets. This added considerable force to Soviet arguments to

the potential recipients that western military pacts were a new form of 'colonialism' and this served to increase their apprehension and political concern about western base-rights. The potential recipients were so placed that for political and military reasons they supported the Soviet case against western pacts because it furthered their national and irredentist policies to do so.

The Soviet Union thus conveniently derived dual advantages from the opposition it engendered to western military pacts and the appreciation which were of Soviet offers of aid/accompanied by frequent political support in the United Nations and other political forums on the local issues with which the arms recipients were concerned to the exclusion of other considerations.

The Soviet Union could therefore have derived some optimism from the first beginnings of its military aid programme and the potential that existed in India. In the bi-polar world of 1955-57, it did not consider the longer term possibilities of what appeared as excellent short-term advantages and yet some of the main ingredients in the situation, such as the Pushtunistan and Kashmir issues, and the positive factor of communist party strength in Indonesia were all eventually to prove to be liabilities when the Sino-Soviet rift developed.

The high priority attached by the Soviet Union to cultivating Indian and Afghan goodwill in 1955-56, and the extremes that this priority induced, ran counter to Chinese policies. Following Bandung, China had sought to improve its relations with Pakistan and despite the deterioration in Soviet-Pakistan relations, China continued its demonstrations of amity¹ towards Pakistan.

¹ R.G. Boyd, Communist China's Foreign Policy, Praeger, New York, 1961, pp. 28-29.

III

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF MILITARY AID TO INDIA, LAOS AND INDONESIA
(1958 - 1961)

The period 1958-1961 saw the first implementation of Soviet military aid programmes for three more non-communist countries in Asia - India, Indonesia and Laos. In the case of India the event was of sufficient political magnitude to constitute a further important element in the growing Sino-Soviet national differences. In Indonesia the military aid programme was to become inextricably involved with the fortunes of the communist party (PKI) in its continuing rivalry with the army. The alienation of the PKI which the Soviet Union was prepared to accept for the sake of its overall relations with Indonesia was also to become a nexus for Sino-Soviet differences as the PKI orientated itself increasingly towards China after 1960.

Only in Laos was there any community of interests with China in the first effects of the Soviet military aid programme, which was utilized for the support of the neutralist forces of Souvanna Phouma, in the period when he was pursuing a policy of reconciliation with the Pathet Lao.

The circumstances and effects of these programmes illustrate the growing complexity of Soviet relations with these countries in China's sphere of interest. While the programmes represented the growing acceptability of the Soviet Union to these countries as an important source of military aid each programme was also to involve it in obligations to the recipient which were incompatible with its relations with China.

The essence of the situation was that:

"In the Soviet scheme of things, communist parties in under-developed countries, ... occupy a far less important role than in the Chinese one,"¹

and while China placed more and more emphasis in the post-1958 period on the vacillating and untrustworthy character of the 'bourgeois capitalists', the Soviet Union, further dignified the 'national bourgeoisie' by inventing a new term 'national democracy' whose first and most important characteristic was non-alignment and anti-Western orientation. China was at best indifferent to the new formula which provided an ideological framework for continued and even increasing Soviet support for non-communist regimes, since the national democratic state was regarded as a possible means of transition to the attainment of socialism.²

The Soviet Union did occasionally refer to the adverse factors in its relationships with under-developed countries, and sometimes warned that the suppression of the progressive elements (i.e. the communists) in these countries should be met "by a narrowing of the social base of the struggle"³

¹ John H. Kautsky, "Russia, China and Nationalist Movements", Survey, No. 43, August 1962, p. 129.

² William T. Shinn, "The National Democratic State", World Politics, Vol. XV, No. 3, April 1963, pp. 377-389.

³ B. Ponomarev, "O gosudarstve natsionalnoi demokratii" (On the National Democratic State), Kommunist, No. 8, 1961, p. 45.

but the main direction of their ideology and practice was that

"an arrogant slighting of anti-imperialist actions when in certain historical conditions non-proletarian elements appear at the front of the stage, is a most dangerous form of sectarianism that leads to self-isolation." ¹

The latter criticism was clearly directed at China and according to the New Programme of the CPSU of 1961,

"objectively this (national-bourgeois) force is, in the main, a progressive revolutionary and anti-imperialist force". ²

Apart from these evident differences in approach between China and the Soviet Union there was increasing evidence of Soviet failure to consult or even to ignore those Chinese interests which did not coincide with its own interests or the interests of its military aid client-states. Soviet proposals, for example, on an atom-free zone in Asia, which received Nehru's prompt support, were met by marked Chinese reluctance to endorse the Soviet position in toto, as well as by evidence that the Soviet proposals had not been discussed in advance with China. ³ This and several other developments in the period 1958-1961 made it quite apparent to China that not only were its interests not being consulted but in suitable circumstances the Soviet Union would seek to enhance its own status to the detriment of China's interests.

¹ E. Zhukov, Pravda, 26 August 1960, cited by Kautsky, op. cit., p. 124.

² Programme of the CPSU, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 1961, p. 48.

³ Alice Langley Hsieh, Communist China's Strategy in the Nuclear Era, Prentice - Hall Corp., New Jersey, pp. 154 - 166.

While the Sino-Indian border disputes did not become a major public issue until 1959, there had been several incidents beginning in 1954 which were subsequently revealed to have contributed to the steady decline in Sino-Indian relations. These incidents were concerned with the strategic Aksai Chin road in Ladakh connecting Sinkiang province and Tibet, and other disputed areas. When the Tibetan revolt broke out in March 1959 Indian policies towards Tibet became a live issue in internal debates, which quickly spread to the broader questions of Sino-Indian relations as well as the specific border issues. Chinese sensitivity was also heightened by the utility of the Aksai Chin road for the movement of its armed forces to complete the suppression of the Tibetan revolt.¹ Thus the border issues impinged directly on internal as well as external political affairs for both of the disputants.

Whatever the wisdom of Nehru's silence on these problems in earlier years, the public debate and the tabling, in September 1959, of his lengthy correspondence with Chou En-lai, elevated the issues to a major open dispute which could no longer be contained by Nehru as a private matter.

As Nehru wrote in his letter of 26 September to Chou En-lai:

"We did not release to the public the information which we had about the various border intrusions into our territory by Chinese personnel since 1954, ... in the hope that peaceful solutions of the disputes could be found by agreement by the two countries without public excitement on both sides. In fact our failure to do so has now resulted in sharp but legitimate criticism of the Government both in Parliament and in the press of our country."²

¹ Margaret W. Fisher, "Ladakh and the Sino-Indian Border Crisis", Asian Survey, Vol. II, No. 8, October 1962, pp. 28-29.

² P.H.M. Jones, op. cit., p. 446.

When these matters became a matter for public debate they created a requirement for India to gather international support also. Support came in varying degrees from some non-aligned nations as well as the West but more importantly for India, the Soviet Union remained neutral. Indeed, China considered that the Soviet Union had not in fact been neutral but had adopted a pro-Indian attitude. The TASS statement of 9 September while accusing "western right-wing circles" of using the incidents to sabotage the pending visit of Khrushchev to the United States said that:

"In Soviet ruling circles the assurance is being expressed that the government of the CPR and the government of the Republic of India will not permit this incident to give comfort to those forces who do not want an improvement of the international situation".¹

In his speech to the Supreme Soviet on 31 October 1959, after his visit to Peking, Khrushchev remained unmoved by any arguments made to him on the issue by China:

"We would be glad if incidents on the Chinese-Indian frontier were not to be repeated" if they "were to be settled by friendly negotiations to the mutual satisfaction of both sides."²

The moment was a historic one in China's view and when it was later accused of having first brought the Sino-Soviet dispute into the realm of public utterances in the summer of 1960, it countered that the TASS statement of 9 September 1959 was the true date for the disclosing of their differences:

"Making no distinction between right and wrong, the statement expressed regret over the border clash and in reality condemned China's correct stand, ... they publicly abused the CPC as attempting to test by force the stability of the capitalist system."³

¹ David Floyd, Mao against Khrushchev, Pall Mall Press, London, 1964, pp. 261-2

² N.S. Khrushchev, Report to Third Session of the USSR Supreme Soviet, USSR Embassy, Canada, 1959, p. 31

³ Floyd, op. cit., p. 378.

China's inability to obtain Soviet support against India in 1959 was as important as other events which were not yet made known, for this year was the turning point for both Chinese and Indian military aid relations with the Soviet Union. In 1959 China was shown its limits with the abrogation of the Sino-Soviet agreement of 1957 on "new technology for national defence" (including atomic aid) at the same time that India was compelled to give renewed consideration to receiving Soviet military aid for its political and military value in the new context of the Sino-Indian dispute.

To give substance to Nehru's threat of 12 October 1959 to throw out the Chinese "by force of arms" some major changes in its defence policy were required, the first of which was the need to show that it had effective access to the disputed border areas. In addition, the residual responsibility that India retained for the defence of Sikkim and Bhutan, and its treaty relations with Nepal, were invoked by the latter countries in various ways in the wake of increasing Chinese activity in 1959 along the Himalayan border with India, but there was wide and valid doubt expressed in India that its responsibilities in these remote areas could be implemented.¹

As seen by the Hindustan Times, in an attempt to rouse India out of what it called "the cloud-cuckoo land of Panch Shila", the problem was urgent:

"If we want to carry real conviction to these people that we mean business, we shall have to demonstrate to them that we have the will and where-withal to honour our pledges.

This is something we cannot do at once. The northern border has never figured as a possible source of danger in our defence thinking."¹

¹ Daily Telegraph, London, 28 Aug. 1959, (contains the following quotation from a Hindustan Times editorial also.)

The increment in Soviet military aid after the Sino-Indian border incidents in September was therefore much greater than was envisaged by Krishna Menon at the time of the less serious incidents of March 1959. On 10 March 1959 he announced that purchases from the Soviet Union in the previous year were valued at only \$8,190 while probable military purchases for the following year were valued at a still insignificant \$36,120. The events of late 1959 however had a catalytic effect for both supplier and recipient and 1960 was the year in which Indo-Soviet military aid relations started to develop to significant proportions. While Nehru's threat of the use of force in October 1959 was therefore an empty one it was of cardinal importance that the Soviet Union permitted itself to cooperate in giving the threat some substance by the first Soviet military aid agreement to be concluded with India in November 1960.

It was accomplished without fanfare and the actual scale of the aid committed in 1960 remains unclear. Following vague and speculative press reports in March 1960 that military aid was being discussed with the Soviet Union, an Indian military mission went to Moscow in November 1960 and it was unofficially stated that their purpose was "to buy Soviet helicopters and transport aircraft to help road development schemes" along the Sino-¹ Indian border.

Beyond this first and unofficial statement (and in contrast to the publicity given to Soviet military aid in the post-1962 period), India was very reticent in 1960 to give any further details or even subsequently to confirm the purpose served by the transaction. Since China has claimed

¹ The Times, London, 15 November 1960.

persistently that India has committed the provocations and aggressions along the border it was perhaps too delicate a matter for the Soviet Union to stand accused at this early date as a supporter of Indian "aggression". Furthermore, the aircraft to be supplied were as useful for troop-carrying purposes as for other logistic purposes and India had publicly been requesting¹ troop-carriers from western suppliers for some time. Consequently it was probably at Soviet urging that the official statement in the Lok Sabha in late 1960, in answer to a written question was very subdued and was delivered not by the publicity attracting Krishna Menon but by his Deputy. "In the public interest", the latter declined to give the purposes or details of the transaction beyond confirming that a contract had recently been signed² to buy Russian aircraft.

The quantity of aircraft ordered is not clear but early in 1962 when orders for 16 more MI-4 helicopters and 8 more AN-12 heavy transport planes were reported, it was stated that previous orders had consisted of 10 helicopters, 24 IL-14 medium transport planes, and at least 8 AN-12³ heavy transport planes. It is likely therefore that these earlier orders had stemmed from the first agreement in November 1960.

The conclusions to be drawn from these developments were self-evident, as China has made clear in its remarks to the Soviet Union, China has persistently linked the provision of military aid to India, with the Soviet abrogation of its agreements with China in 1959:

¹ News Chronicle, London, 3 November 1959.

² The Times, 8 December 1960.

³ New York Times, 1 February 1962.

"As for drawing conclusions, have you not already done that long ago? Not only have you perfidiously and unilaterally scrapped the agreement on providing China with nuclear technical data but you have blantly given more and more military aid to the Indian reactionaries, who are hostile to China and have made incessant armed provocations against it. What is this if it is not drawing our 'own conclusions'?" ¹

Apart from the political value of Soviet support in this already unequivocal form, there were financial inducements for India too in the form of payment in commodities, which western suppliers were reluctant to accept but which helped India to conserve its limited foreign exchange for other purposes. ² On the other hand the details of the financial terms of the November 1960 and other agreements tend to remove Soviet military deliveries to India from the category of "aid" pure and simple since they also contained the ingredients of Soviet commercial gain from a business deal with a highly political content in which the customer was in a weak political bargaining position, quite different from the 1956-58 period when India was being offered jet aircraft at very low prices.

There was one other noteworthy development in Soviet military relations with India in the period prior to 1962 when the first tentative steps were made towards a Soviet contribution to Indian defence production. It had been a constant feature of Indian defence policy since independence to prefer the development of its own defence production capacity to the procurement of end-items. In its relations with western suppliers such as Britain and France it has therefore secured licensing rights, when possible, for the assembly or production of a wide range of military goods.

¹ Peking Review, No. 36, 6 September 1963.

² New York Times, 1 February 1962.

The Soviet Union has not been noted for its contributions to the defence production capacity of its arms recipients since it has a greater interest in providing end-items. This policy simultaneously places the recipient in a continuing state of dependency, while the sale of end-items helps to offset the capital cost of the Soviet Union's own defence expenditures. Soviet aid to Indian defence production is therefore another special feature of India's status in Soviet calculations. The first elements of this policy, seen in 1961, consisted of negotiations for the furnishing of a Soviet jet engine for the Indian project to develop its own HF-24¹ (Maruta) fighter. While little apparently came of this venture it was nevertheless an important first step towards the later MIG-21 production agreement with India.

November 1960, although it passed unheralded, was the first critical point in Soviet military aid policy to India and it is probable that the anticipated value to India of this first agreement accounts in large measure for Nehru's glowing praise of Khrushchev and the Soviet leadership following his return from the UN in October 1960 when he contrasted the attitude of Khrushchev to him personally with the relative lack of attention² paid to him by Eisenhower and MacMillan. On the other hand it is not surprising that in November 1960 China renewed its attacks on Soviet neutrality on the border dispute and on Soviet support for the national bourgeoisie of the under-developed world. The recently concluded Soviet-Indian military aid agreement must also have contributed to the embitterment of the deliberations of the 81 communist parties in November-December 1960.

¹ New York Times, 3 September 1961.

² The Hindu, 19 October 1960.

As Floyd comments:

"This must have seemed to the Chinese an almost perfect issue through which to expose Krushchev's 'revisionism' in practice. For he was giving military aid to a country which did not pretend to be Communist ..."

However while Floyd directs these comments to the 1962 announcements on MIG-21 factory aid to India, they are all the more relevant to the situation in November 1960 when China and the Soviet Union were headed for a major confrontation within the forum of the 81 communist parties meetings.¹

It is noteworthy also that it was in this period that China placed increased insistence on the argument that the bourgeoisie would "never and nowhere" abandon power without resorting to violence. Military aid to India and to Indonesia as well would therefore conflict with the inevitable recourse to violence by "democratic" elements in these countries.²

It is in the context of a Soviet desire to improve its image in the field of practical support for national liberation movements, that its actions in Laos in 1960 and 1961 can be interpreted. Shortly after the first major arms agreement with India, the Soviet Union was able to exploit for its purposes Souvanna Phouma's willingness to conclude an agreement for "all kinds of aid including military aid" with the Soviet Union.³

¹ Floyd, op. cit., p. 159. Floyd likemost other major sources accepts the 1962 agreement as the first significant military aid agreement between India and the Soviet Union.

² Lowenthal, op. cit., p. 186-7.

³ British Information Service, Laos, Central Office of Information, R5489, February 1963, p. 22.

While support of Souvanna Phouma was open to the same ideological criticisms attached to Nehru as a representative of the national bourgeoisie, tactically it was not possible or desirable for China to make such a criticism because at this juncture in late 1960 and for some time to come, Souvanna's main political attribute was his vehement opposition to the US-supported General Phoumi, and his demonstrated willingness to cooperate and compromise with the Pathet Lao forces. While China could therefore criticize western support for India and by inference attack the Soviet Union simultaneously, by its actions in Laos the Soviet Union clearly lined itself against US policies, even perhaps further than it would have wanted to do in the politically sensitive period of Kennedy's first months in power:

"a cool calculation of (Soviet) diplomatic expediency would hardly have led them to commit themselves ... to the point to which they went over ... Laos ... By depriving them of the power automatically to subordinate all revolutionary movements everywhere to Soviet diplomatic needs, the Chinese had forced Stalin's successors to compete for authority over these movements by playing up to them" ¹

The prospects of Soviet economic aid to the neutralist forces were generally considered favourably in the West:

"In accepting Russian aid, Prince Souvanna Phouma may feel he is giving his neutralist regime a firmer stand, politically as well as economically Now that American aid is being resumed, Russia may seem to provide a balance It is the communists of North Vietnam who have been the most active political supporters of the Pathet Lao and it is the Chinese who look with the deepest suspicion on any American activity in Laos... The Russians too want neutralism in Laos and they are far enough away not to be involved with the leading strings of the left. They have their own ends, no doubt, but one of these may well be a settlement in Laos lest development here should get worse and excite the Chinese ... if it is a test of co-existence it seems better that the Russians should have a stake in its success." ²

¹ Lowenthal, op. cit., p. 195.

² The Times, 28 October 1960.

However this prospect was less clear when Soviet military aid to the neutralist forces of Kong Le, and the communist-associated forces of the Pathet Lao, overshadowed anything intended in the form of economic aid. A heavy and sustained airlift of military aid to Laos began in December 1960. This was the first demonstration of the ability of the Soviet Union to support a continuing airlift operation in order to intervene directly on behalf of friendly forces operating outside the borders of the communist bloc and attracted more attention as the military tide started to turn in 1961 in favour of Kong Le and the Pathet Lao. It involved not only a heavy flow of aircraft from Hanoi into Laos but also a major airlift over China from the Soviet Union.¹ Unlike the later political problems surrounding the delivery of Soviet military aid to North Vietnam in 1965, there is no hint of any Chinese opposition to the Laos airlift of 1960-61, and the airlift may well have been used by the Soviet Union to blunt China's criticisms of Soviet aid to India at the November-December 1960 meeting. On 15 December 1960, China itself was forced to concede that the situation in Laos was "very grave". While China suggested the possibility of imminent action in its note of 28 December to the British and Soviet co-chairman of the 1954 Conference by stating that "it was forced to consider taking measures to safeguard its own security",² the Soviet Union was already engaged in its conspicuous airlift activity.

¹ Aviation Week, 9 January 1961, p. 26.

² Brian Crozier, "Peking and the Laotian Crisis", The China Quarterly, No. 7, July - Sept. 1961, pp. 129-130.

The first deliveries reported were to Vientiane itself, probably as a reassurance for the Neutralists that their interests were being preserved even while the major part of the airlift is believed to have gone to the Pathet Lao. The airlift was impressive in itself as a demonstration of Soviet intent and was described as "on a scale to guarantee impregnability of the areas held by the pro-communists". Evidence of Russia military backing was abundant including heavy guns, armoured cars and a wide variety of other arms,¹ and, in the three month period from December to March 1961, according to President Kennedy, over 1,000 sorties were made by these Soviet aircraft from North Vietnam.²

The increased military strength of the Pathet Lao and Neutralist forces was effectively exploited by them to force the right-wing forces to negotiate with them. Typically, interruptions in negotiations were promptly followed by renewed offensives against the right-wing forces supported by a measureable step-up in Soviet airlift operations which induced a resumption of negotiations.³ The confidence of the Pathet Lao in their negotiating strength was therefore clearly related to its newly found and Soviet-supplied military strength and its expanded territorial control, while SEATO's response was characterized by controversy and indecisions as it faced its gravest test to date. Further encouragement was doubtless also derived from the changed attitude of Britain and the United States on the desirability of a 14-nation conference on Laos which the Communists powers had been advocating for some time.⁴

¹ The Daily Telegraph, 3 March 1961.

² British Information Service, Laos-Political Developments in 1961, Central Office of Information, R. 4935/1, April 1961, p. 3.

³ Sunday Telegraph, 21 May 1961.

⁴ Roger M. Smith, "Laos in Perspective", Asian Survey, Vol. III, No. 1, January 1963, p. 65.

Military defeat for the forces of General Phoumi now seemed an imminent possibility and a "neutralist" solution had more attractions as the military situation changed in the wake of the Soviet Union's airlift operations. The Kennedy declaration of 24 March 1961 that

"we strongly and unreservedly support the goal of a neutral and independent Laos, tied to no outside Power or group of powers, threatening no one, and free from any domination",

clearly indicated to the Soviet Union that the United States was prepared to accept a major political and military defeat in Laos.¹

The Soviet willingness to act for the neutralization of Laos was evident also soon after Kennedy's statement when Pravda said that "concrete possibilities existed for a peaceful settlement in Laos".² The Soviet Union was also willing to bring some leverage to bear to bring the Laotians to an agreement:

"the Soviet Government does not rule out that the conference, as moved also by the Government of Great Britain, will assume, as one of its tasks, the rendering of assistance to the Laotians in reaching agreement."³

From the time of the Khrushchev - Kennedy meeting in Vienna in June 1961 where they "reaffirmed their support of a neutral and independent Laos", it remained for the Laotians themselves to determine the form their government would take. However this was not to be an easy task. General Phoumi who was holding out for advantageous portfolios in the new government held firm against renewed Soviet airlift operations in December 1961, and the United States economic sanctions of early 1962 both of which appeared to be calculated⁴

¹ Bernard B. Fall, Street Without Joy, Pall Mall Press, London, 1964, p. 381.fn.

² Pravda, 27 March 1961.

³ UKIS, Laos, Political Developments in 1961, p. 7

⁴ Sunday Telegraph, 3 December 1961.

to force him to make concessions to the other Laotian factions. The Soviet measure appears to have been the most effective and it was after the military defeat exacted by the Pathet Lao at Nam Tha in May 1962, that General Phoumi, "resigned himself to a coalition government" thus permitting the agreement¹ on Laotian neutrality to be completed in July 1962.

While a decision to seek Soviet military aid, primarily in order to restore internal order, had evidently been made by Indonesia by January 1958, by its subsequent action it showed that it was aware of the wide implications that military aid from a communist source would have for both its internal as well as external policies. The first agreement that was announced therefore was an agreement with Yugoslavia in January 1958. By its abstention from the Moscow Declaration of November 1957 which called for unity against "imperialism" abroad and "revisionism" within the camp of socialism, Yugoslavia had retained a position in the non-aligned camp and this neutralized to some extent the political issue in Indonesia of receiving arms from this communist source. A communique was issued in Belgrade on 19 January 1958 announcing measures for economic and trade cooperation, "including the sale of certain military equipment by Yugoslavia to meet the needs of the Indonesian forces".²

¹ Roger M. Smith, op. cit., p. 65.

² Keesings, Vol. X, p. 16084.

Simultaneously Indonesian military missions were negotiating in Czechoslovakia and Poland, but while arms purchases were completed on credit¹ terms no announcements were made for some time and then only after press disclosures made further denials unconvincing. It was reported on 3 April that the purchases included 50-60 MIG-15 and MIG-17 jet fighters, 30 IL-28 jet bombers and 10 IL-14 transport aircraft. Although Subandrio conceded on 3 April in vague terms that a military aid agreement had been agreed upon² with Yugoslavia or Czechoslovakia he professed to know no details.

The Governor of the Bank of Indonesia who had recently fled to join the Sumatran rebellion stated that the aid was in reality from the Soviet Union. The relevance of this issue for the internal Indonesian political situation was posed in his open letter to Sukarno in the following terms. There were only two ways to restore de facto authority over the whole of Indonesia - either by establishing

"a national government which is not only strong but has authority and has been formed according to the constitution, or by asking for Soviet aid."

He made it clear that the latter alternative was unacceptable and appealed to all patriots to "safeguard Indonesia from becoming a Soviet satellite."³

— The foreign policy implications for Indonesia were indicated by the US statement regretting that Indonesia was

"turning to the communist bloc to buy arms for possible use in killing Indonesians who openly oppose the growing influence of communism in Indonesia".

¹ US State Department, The Sino-Soviet Economic Offensive, May 1958, p. 79

² The Times, 3 April 1958.

³ Keesings, Vol. XI, p. 16081.

However this statement, contrary to its purpose, probably removed some of the Indonesian internal opposition for it was widely condemned by the Indonesian press as interference in Indonesian affairs and further "evidence" of US support for the rebel Sumatran regime. The Soviet Union encouraged these sentiments on 8 March by accusing the SEATO powers of aiding the Sumatran regime with arms and money, and this alleged SEATO intervention (which found a ready acceptance in Indonesia) was also useful for the political accept-¹ability of a Soviet agreement to supply arms to Indonesia. On the other hand, the United States remained at best neutral to the problems facing the central government and again declined on 8 April 1958 to provide it with arms since the situation did not meet the criterion of a threat of outside aggression. The Soviet Union therefore established itself in these critical days for Indonesia as the prime source of arms supply for the central government in its campaigns against the widespread rebellions.

The prospect of Indonesian dependence on Soviet arms, and the past anti-communist record of the Indonesian army soon led to a change of US policy and, over strenuous Dutch objections, in May and August 1958, successively larger agreements were completed by the US for the provision of small arms and other equipment for the army and the police. All these US agreements were subject to the condition that they would be used solely for internal security. Indonesia had no desire to inject its already precarious situation further into a Cold War conflict and promptly responded to these acts of US policy with various tokens of improvement in its relations with the US.

¹ Keesing's, Vol. XI., p. 16131.

In the wake of the August agreement with the US, an Indonesian army spokesman indicated that the agreements recently concluded with Czechoslovakia, Poland, Yugoslavia, Egypt and India as well as the US, did not include heavy weapons and consisted mostly of small arms and other less sensitive items. While this may have been descriptive only of army procurement plans it may have indicated US influence to curtail the purchases of Soviet aircraft. But if this was intended by the US, it had no such effect and a squadron of MIG-15, and some IL-14 transports were delivered promptly in October 1958 and the future deliveries of IL-28 bombers was also confirmed at that time.¹

For the relative influence that military aid might purchase on the inter-state level the Soviet Union was thus already ahead of the US in terms of financial value of equipment to be supplied. Up to the end of 1958, total Soviet military aid commitments were valued at \$170 million while US military aid supplied in 1958 was valued at about \$12 million and average commitments by the US from 1959-1963 are calculated to have been only about \$20 million per year,² but significantly it was the army which retained a willingness for some dependence on the US for its weapons supply.³

As the problems of the rebellion diminished in 1960, the army turned its activities increasingly towards eliminating the PKI. While this anti-communist activity was being pressed by the army, the PKI at its Sixth Congress in September 1959 had adopted a policy of uniting with the national bourgeoisie (Sukarno) while opposing its "reactionary tendencies" on the main ground that he was better than a military dictatorship. At the same

¹ Keessing's, Vol. XII, p. 16611.

² US State Department, Status of the Bloc Economic Offensive at the end of 1958, 13 August 1959, p. 2.

³ Trager, op. cit., p. 74.

time probably with its mind on the increasing Soviet arms deliveries to Indonesia, it started to agitate for the arming of the mass organizations of the workers and peasants where it had a high degree of control. After Sukarno established the "National Front" in January 1960 with triple aims of completing the National Revolution, achieving a "just" and prosperous society", and bringing West Irian into the Indonesian Republic, the PKI increased its agitation for arms on the basis of the West Irian issue. But while Sukarno also used the West Irian issue as a new basis for further military aid from the Soviet Union, the PKI was not to be a beneficiary of these agreements.¹

The West Irian issue was exploited by Khrushchev in February 1960 during his visit to Indonesia in his expression of support for the Indonesian people in their "just struggle for the reunification of West Irian with Indonesia". Khrushchev's speeches in Indonesia on the dangers stemming from SEATO and other "imperialist" instruments were greeted indifferently by his audiences and the one issue which aroused them was his support for the reunification of West Irian. The evident basis for a further reinforcement of Soviet - Indonesian relations therefore lay in this issue. It would be consistent with Khrushchev's earlier personal identification with Soviet military aid offers that the decision for another major expansion of the military aid programme to Indonesia date^s from about this time.

It is evident that a military aid agreement was concluded in the last six months of 1960 which at the time was estimated to be valued at \$300 million. This new agreement more than doubled the previous Soviet

¹ W.A.C. Adie, "China, Russia, and the Third World", The China Quarterly, No. 11, July-Sept. 1962, pp. 204-5, and Keessings, Vol. XI, p. 17245.

² Lowenthal, op. cit., p. 179.

military aid commitments by raising the total to about \$506 million.¹

This evident improvement in Soviet-Indonesia understanding and cooperation while the PKI was facing increasingly militant army action against its power bases, led it to accuse Sukarno's government of being under the sway of the West and the PKI then reversed its Sixth Congress decision by suggesting that only a government including "progressive and left persons" would be acceptable to it. The Seventh Congress (in the wake of the Moscow Conference of 1960) also adopted a national-communist position² "nearer Maoism than Krushchevism".

Thus while Krushchev during his 1960 visit, had exploited the current depression in Sino-Indonesia relations for his own prestige purposes and the final Krushchev-Sukarno communique made no mention of several Asian questions of major concern to China, in 1961 it was the turn of the PKI to emphasize that Indonesian conditions were compatible with a Maoist orientation. Simultaneously in 1961, the Chen Yi visit to Indonesia resulted in a better over-all Chinese image in Indonesia. In 1959 Indonesia had drawn attention to Chinese and Dutch parallel statements on the value of their presence in Indonesia. The comparison of its policies with the Dutch was symptomatic of the deterioration in Sino-Indonesian relations in the period 1959-1961. By its proposals for the settlement of the Chinese settler issue in 1960 and the Chen Yi visit in 1961 a new basis for improvements in relations was established, which benefited China until the events of late 1965. The long

¹ US State Department, Developments in the Sino-Soviet Bloc Economic Offensive to June 30, 1960, August 22, 1960, p.5; and The Sino-Soviet Economic Offensive through 1960, March 21, 1961, p. 9.

² W.A.C. Adie, op. cit., pp. 204-5.

standing Chinese pledges of support for Indonesia on the West Irian issue, (frequently compared to the Formosa problem), were also an important basis¹ for the new cordiality in Sino-Indonesian relations.

While the advantages to Indonesia in the economic and technical field which accrued from US - Soviet competition for influence were symbolized by the June agreement with the US for economic and nuclear research aid to counterbalance the recent Soviet economic aid offers, no major western counterpart developed to offset the Soviet military aid extensions, which by 1960 already included deliveries of large numbers of jet fighters, several squadrons of IL-28 light jet bombers, submarines, destroyers and other² naval craft. Moreover, the Soviet Union extended another military agreement to Indonesia in the period January - June 1961, which was to be in excess of the agreement concluded as recently as late 1960. In this new agreement there were some reflections of Soviet concern for its diminishing influence with the PKI and the improvement in Sino-Indonesian relations. These factors supplied considerable motives for the Soviet Union to influence the Indonesian government to cease or curtail the anti-PKI activities of the army. The new agreement to be concluded in the period January - June 1961 gave some evidence of how Sukarno and the Soviet Union sought to achieve this aim.

According to one authority, Nasution was opposed to a new agreement but Sukarno's directions gave him no choice but to sign another agreement³ valued by Indonesian statements at \$400 million. The evident divergences

¹ Lea. E. Williams, "Sino-Indonesian Diplomacy", The China Quarterly, No. 11, July, Sept. 1962, p. 190.

² Russel H. Fifield, Southeast Asia in United States Policy, Praeger, New York, 1963, pp. 77-78.

³ Pauker, "The Soviet Challenge in Indonesia", op. cit., p. 615.

between Sukarno's intentions and Nasution's appeared in conflicting ideas of the agreement that was announced in January 1961. The Soviet Union, and probably Sukarno also, seems to have intended to use the new agreement to wean the army away from its supply of arms from the United States. Nasution appears to have successfully resisted this effort.

The TASS announcement of the agreement on 8 January 1961 described it in the following terms:

"The Soviet Union has met the request of the Indonesian mission in line with measures for building up the ground forces mainly over the special situation in Dutch New Guinea". (emphasis added)

However Nasution gave a quite different interpretation of the contents of the agreement:

"After five days, Deputy Premier Mikoyan and I, were able to sign an agreement on the purchase of arms equipment - an agreement primarily for the Air Force and the Navy, and including also supplementary equipment for the Army".¹

When in June 1961 Nasution returned to Moscow, probably for the purpose of signing the detailed agreement he pointedly continued his trip to Yugoslavia, France, Britain, W. Germany and the UAR in an effort to obtain some arms aid for the army from these sources also.²

The implications of the new Soviet-Indonesian agreement were studied as a matter of urgency in the United States under the new Kennedy regime and by February 1961, a month after the TASS announcement, two important developments occurred which assured Indonesia a political victory in West New Guinea while obviating the requirement for the military campaign which the Soviet Union, China and the PKI were supporting. The prime indications in February were the delivery of military transport aircraft to Indonesia by the US, and the announcement by the Dutch of their acceptance of the

² Christian Science Monitor, 7 June 1961, and The Times, 4 July 1961.

¹ BEC, SWB, Part III, Far East, 18 Jan. 1961.

principle of self-determination for West New Guinea and independence as soon as possible. The timing of the Dutch announcement reflected the simultaneous effects of military pressure as represented by the large new aid agreement with the Soviet Union, and the political pressures by the US. Of the two forces there is not much question which was the more potent in making the Netherlands change its course:

"Historians will almost certainly find that the determining factor was Senator John F. Kennedy's victory in the American Presidential elections in 1960 ...".¹

However neither the Indonesian political leadership (Sukarno and Subandrio in particular), the Soviet ^{Union} nor the PKI, were anxious to see Indonesian sovereignty established over West Irian as a result of American political influence, since it negated their arguments on the "collective colonialism" of SEATO. As late as January 1962, when the likelihood of Indonesia obtaining West Irian by peaceful means was very strong, to say the least, Kommunist described the basic situation as follows:

"... The Soviet Union has granted and is now granting substantial material, moral, and political support to Indonesia, which is preparing to liberate West Irian, an integral part of its territory, from the colonial yoke."²

While US pressure on the Netherlands increased in 1961, Indonesia, with Soviet cooperation in the rapid delivery of an impressive armory of modern instruments of war (which the Indonesians were themselves largely incapable of operating), engaged in an array of symbolic acts designed to

¹ Crozier, op. cit., p. 162.

² Editorial, "The National Liberation Movement is an Integral Part of the World Revolutionary Process", Kommunist, No. 2, January 1962, pp. 15-16.

prove that it had won a military victory. The policy of emphasizing the military campaign began in earnest after Sukarno's return from the Soviet Union and China in June. The addition of TU-16 medium jet bombers to the Indonesian inventory began in July 1961 and between 1 July and mid-October 14 of these bombers were delivered to Indonesia, and by the end of December 1961 the total was 25. At the same time jet fighter nominal strength was increased from 50 to 95 in the last ten weeks of 1961, although only a small fraction of these aircraft could be flown by Indonesian personnel. Simultaneously agreements for the supply of 2 cruisers had been announced and offensive vessels were supplied to the Navy which also depended heavily on Soviet manning - this applied to the six submarines delivered by January 1962 as well as to less sophisticated vessels such as the landing and assault vessels which, to add credibility to the military threat, were based¹ on the island of Amboina close to West Irian.

The net effect of the Indonesian actions to exploit these military goods was to tend to alienate US political support as well as making the Dutch very reluctant to cede to coercive threats. However a settlement was at last achieved and at immense expense, Indonesia acquired West New Guinea under conditions for a future plebiscite which have long since been repudiated. Indonesia's military actions may have in fact delayed the solution in its favour, as Crozier argues,² but the expensive Soviet military aid programme was treated by Indonesia as the deciding factor. The Soviet Union could therefore justifiably calculate that the military aid it had provided to Indonesia in 1958-1961 had established a firm base for further favourable developments in Soviet-Indonesian relations.

¹ Sunday Telegraph, 24 December 1961 and Daily Telegraph, 19 Jan 1962.

² Crozier, op. cit., p. 169.

The same considerations applied to the effects of its agreements with India and Laos in November and December 1960 even though they had the different primary characteristics of being anti-Chinese and anti-US moves respectively. These dual anti-Chinese and anti-US characteristics may even have had the advantage of complementing each other in the eyes of the recipients and it is quite possible that the declaration of Soviet neutrality on the Sino-Indian border issue had an effect on Souvanna Phouma's decision to seek Soviet aid to forestall Chinese or North Vietnamese intervention in Laos as well as to hasten the defeat of General Phoumi.

It was in such multiple motives of the recipients that Soviet policy was to encounter its gravest problems in the period 1962-1964, in the continuation of the programmes for military aid it established in the period 1958-1961.

IV

REPERCUSSIONS OF SUPPORT FOR NATIONAL LIBERATION

MOVEMENTS

1962 - 1964

By the last year of Khrushchev's rule, the Soviet Union was claiming that one of the main services that it had performed for the under-developed world consisted of wiping out the monopoly of the "imperialists" in the sale of equipment, contemporary technology and armaments.¹ This achievement was more notable in the last of the three items than in the others and in the developments of the last two years of Khrushchev's rule the political effects of its arms aid overshadowed its other activities in economic and technical aid in which its accomplishments remained less spectacular. It was not therefore inconsistent that when Kommunist sought to emphasize that the distinguishing feature of Soviet aid was above all the degree to which it was tailored to the requirements of the recipients, that it should select a Khrushchev statement which emphasized Soviet military aid:

"Our people help not only with words but also support the national liberation struggle of the people by our actions, including arms aid".²

Another form of Soviet support for the independence of the new nations is said to consist in the existence of Soviet nuclear-missile power which prevents the "imperialists" from using their nuclear technology against

¹ Kommunist, "Soiuz Sil Sotsializma u Natsionalno-Osvobodutelnovo Dvizheniya", (Union of the Socialist Forces and the National Liberation Movement), No. 8, May 1964, p. 4.

² ibid., p. 4.

them. Thus the new nations are allowed to take up the offensive and

"the leaders of the national liberation movement prize the favourable influence of this factor on the conditions of their struggle." ¹

The freedom of action of its arms recipients has however been one of the main causes of the growing political and strategic complexities of the Soviet military aid programme. Soviet national interest is best served if its clients do not put their arms into use. This is supported in Soviet doctrine, political as well as military, which has long recognized the dangers of escalation from limited war, but in the period of the 1960's and particularly 1962-4 several of its arms recipients in Asia became involved in various types of clashes which by Soviet definition might very rapidly have escalated into the involvement of many other states.

However this has not meant in practice that the Soviet Union has always been able to use its influence enough to curtail the military activities of its arms recipients even though its support for them has been less than enthusiastic. When, for a variety of political considerations, support for direct military activities has been continued, justification has been sought in various ideological arguments ranging from support for "just" wars of liberation against colonialism to the requirement to oppose new forms of imperialist activities such as the "neo-colonialism" which Malaysia was said to represent.

¹ ibid., p. 6.

But in all this, Soviet arguments appear to have been primarily defensive measures against Chinese criticisms that the Soviet Union has not only abandoned support of the progressive elements in the under-developed countries (i.e. the communist parties) but even more openly in 1962-64 was also supporting the "imperialism" of India. The Soviet Union has therefore been at great pains to explain in its ideological arguments that peaceful co-existence in no way impairs its support of the national liberation movement:

"Some people claim that the Soviet Union, supporting the policy of peaceful co-existence, advocates conciliation between imperialism and the oppressed peoples. This is a fabrication which has nothing in common with reality.... Our country adheres to and pursues in practice a Leninist course of active support of the national liberation movement. It is well known that the Soviet Union helps many young sovereign states to strengthen their defence potential." ¹

But even while denying the Chinese thesis on its "revisionist" policies, the Soviet Union in large part substantiates it by its predominant expression of support, as in the above statement, for states as opposed to classes within a state, and Soviet statements of support for the national liberation movement merge persistently into expressions of its support for sovereign states:

"The national liberation movement is creating entirely new problems of peaceful development. These countries"² etc..

¹ B.G. Gafurov, Director of the Institute of Asian Peoples, Moscow Radio, BBC, SWB, Part I, 5 March 1964.

² B.N. Ponomarev, "Proletarian Internationalism", Pravda, 29 September 1964.

In the period 1962-1964 therefore the Soviet Union sought to continue the development of its military aid relations with the clients previously established as part of its proclaimed support for the national liberation movement and it also established arms aid relations with Cambodia for the first time.

Before the end of the period however it ceased its military aid relations with Laos and apparently the same thing occurred with its most recently acquired client, Cambodia. While these two latter countries served to demonstrate the vulnerability of the policies of the Soviet Union in these country cases they also illustrate the increased complexity of all the Soviet military aid programmes under the pressure of the Chinese challenge to Soviet policies. Under this and other pressures, the bases for its military aid programmes shifted to some extent in each case.

By 1962, utilizing the aid received from both western and Soviet sources after the clashes of 1959, the Indian government had improved its communications system into the Ladakh area, established 15 more military posts on territory claimed by China in its 1960 map. Of greater military significance, the Indian ability to supply these outposts was now also improved thus removing some of the local advantages that China had earlier enjoyed in the winter period.¹

¹ Fisher, op. cit., pp. 32-33.

This policy of slowly building up India's defences continued while Nehru sought a peaceful settlement with China, but after a period of renewed private correspondence and a reduction in border incidents in 1961, there was a renewal of public polemics after Nehru's speech in November 1961 in which he stated that the Chinese

"are still in areas which they occupied ... but progressively the situation has been changing from the military point of view ... and we shall continue to take steps to build up these things so that ultimately we may be in a position to ¹ take action to recover such territory as is in their possession."

China reacted to the tone of Nehru's statement with a new escalation in its own propaganda battle. Chinese claims that Nehru had extracted promises of military aid from the US during his recent visit there, and that he was ² now Kennedy's "front-man" in Asia, had however a peculiarly Chinese anti-Khrushchev barb since in China's eyes the charge may well have been made against the Soviet Union which was reported to be negotiating a new agreement with India in January 1962 for the supply of 8 AN-12 large transport planes and 16 more helicopters. Twelve of the same type of aircraft were the subject of another agreement in August 1962, which made a total of at least 30 of these large and useful transport aircraft to be ordered by India up ³ to that time.

But China reserved its greatest displeasure for the first signs in May 1962 that negotiations for MIG-21 jet fighters were at an advanced stage.

- ¹ Indiagram, No. 49, Dec. 8, 1961, Information Service of India, Washington D.C.
- ² Peking Review, "The Truth about the Nehru-instigated Anti-Chinese Campaign in India", No. 50, (1961) pp. 11 and 14.
- ³ New York Times, 1 February 1962, 22 August 1962, and 13 May 1964.

Indian statements on the subject were carefully noted in the Peking Press,¹ and in its propaganda directed at Burma and Pakistan. It was with the latter country in particular that past relations and current pressures combined to allow an important counter to the Soviet-Indian military aid cooperation, and the Indian statements on its MIG-21 negotiations with the Soviet Union were matched by the Sino-Pakistan announcement in the same month, of negotiations for a "provisional agreement" on their Kashmir borders.² The incubus of the Indo-Pakistan conflict situation of 1965, and the potential Chinese intervention, was also hinted at on 8 May 1962 by the President of the Azad Kashmir, when he announced that "a fight on the Algerian pattern"³ would be conducted and that Chinese assistance would be requested.

The MIG-21 factory project initiated in 1962 therefore cannot be separated from Indo-Pakistan relations even though its most evident political effects were on Sino-Soviet relations. For Pakistan the threat posed by the MIG-21 project was far more direct and urgent than for China. The deal confirmed China's views on the enmity of Soviet policies but militarily it did not affect it in any significant way.

India at first connected its intention to purchase 2 squadrons of MIG-21 jet fighters with the promise of two squadrons of US F-104 jet fighters for Pakistan in 1961,⁴ and what Nehru may have preferred in order

¹ New York Times, 5 May 1962; and Floyd, op. cit., p. 324.

² Klaus S. Pringsheim, "China, India and their Himalayan Border", Asian Survey, Vol. III, No. 10, Oct. 1963, p. 481.

³ Indian News, 4 June 1962.

⁴ New York Times, 5 May 1962.

to pose a credible deterrent to China was something much more potent militarily and politically. In a speech in the Indian Parliament in June 1962 he said that some countries had moved forward to the stage of unmanned missiles and he concluded: "I would rather like to have unmanned missiles".¹ There is however no evidence that strategic missiles have been seriously considered by the Soviet Union for India, although the subject may well have been reflected in Indian requests to the Soviet Union.

As things developed however the intention to provide India with MIG-21 aircraft proved a sufficient burden to the Soviet Union at the time of the Cuban crisis when it wanted to present the image of a united front to the US challenge. The Soviet Union may at least have considered abandoning its commitments to India on the MIG-21 project for the sake of Chinese support for its actions in withdrawing its missiles from Cuba. The Pravda editorial on the critical October 25th, went a long way to appeasing China on the Sino-Indian dispute by supporting the terms of China's cease-fire proposal of the previous day, and it was only after the Cuban crisis was over that the Soviet Union returned on 5 November to a position of neutrality on the issue with its call for a cease-fire on the Sino-Indian border with no mention of the Chinese terms.

That China was itself contemplating some major political quid pro quo, is also indicated by the Soviet statement in a confidential letter that:

¹ Statesman Overseas Weekly (Calcutta), 30 June 1962.

"China was aware of the USSR's relationship with India ... and inter alia that it was the USSR which was supplying India with the means of self-defence ... Then that same China requested from the USSR aid in the invasion which it had itself provoked." ¹

Withdrawal from the agreement would have posed severe difficulties with India since formal agreement, in principle, for the MIG-21 factory project was concluded in early October. ² This places the agreement before the actual Chinese attack but after the developments of September which had led Nehru to the judgement that the border dispute could develop suddenly into a conflict. ³ However no formal announcement was made by either side that an agreement had been reached until early 1963. It was moreover evident that the Soviet Union was not willing at the time of the actual fighting to make its commitment clear and Duncan Sandys stated in the British House of Commons that:

"As I understand it, the Russian government has informed the Indian government that ... they do not feel able, in present circumstances, to deliver these aircraft."

It is at least certain that the usual Soviet speed in delivering its arms aid was not observed in this instance since the aircraft did not arrive in December as Indian sources expected, and the Soviet Union certainly did risk destroying Indian confidence which it had built up over a long period. No MIG-21's were delivered before February 1963 ⁴ and it was not until much later, in 1965, that the entire first squadron of 12 aircraft were reported ⁵ as having arrived.

¹ Floyd, op. cit., p. 366.

² Ian C.C. Graham, op. cit., p. 828.

³ Klaus H. Pringsheim, op. cit., p. 485.

⁴ The Times, 21 Feb 1963.

⁵ The Patriot, (New Delhi), 9 March 1965.

In its first and only public statement on the MIG-21 project, the Soviet Union repudiated the suggestion that it was delivering any large quantity of military aid to India. On 23 February 1963, TASS issued a statement that:

"Lately some western newspapers have begun writing about the alleged shipment from the Soviet Union to India of a big quantity of military equipment and various arms. Many concoctions that have nothing in common with the real state of affairs are being spread.

Actually, under an agreement on technical cooperation signed earlier the Soviet Union will help India in designing and building an aircraft plant to manufacture fighter planes. The same agreement also envisages the shipment to India of 12 MIG-21 planes, six of which are to be sent in the beginning of 1963, and the rest in 1964. Thus, the concoctions of the above mentioned press organs apparently pursue the aim of aggravating relations between States and of hindering the efforts to ease international tensions."

After the unilateral Chinese withdrawal there was certainly less urgency for immediate military support but in the period of its greatest concern India did not obtain substantive military support from the Soviet Union while western aid was immediately forthcoming, despite the difficulties this caused in the relations between western states and Pakistan.

After the Nassau talks of October 1962 between Kennedy and MacMillan at which the guidelines of a shared programme of military aid for India were established, US and British aid was forthcoming in large quantities including¹ substantial immediate deliveries and a joint pledge of \$120 million. This was in marked contrast to earlier US and UK attitudes. The first suggestions of the MIG-21 deal in mid-1962 were viewed as a cause of a deterioration in Indian relations with the West. Britain was reported to be concerned with

¹ New York Times, 13 May 1964.

the access of Soviet personnel to classified military equipment that it had supplied to India,¹ and the US administration was concerned at the reaction of Congress and the possibility of cuts by the Senate in foreign aid allocations to India.² However all this had been before the Chinese invasion of October 1962.

To add to the dimensions of the Sino-Soviet aspects of these military aid developments, Yugoslavia came forth with a short-term credit for the supply of mountain guns to India in early 1963 also, at a time when it was under heavy criticism from China for its support of the Soviet withdrawal from Cuba and other "revisionist" tendencies.

Given the fact of the newly committed western support for India the symbolic act of the Soviet agreement could not disguise the basic alignment of its policies with the West even though by its February 1963 statement the Soviet Union sought to minimize the political effects of the MIG-21 agreement.

Indian spokesmen continued to talk of the MIG deal as if all their expectations would be met since India's requirement for Soviet military and political support vis-a-vis China even transcended the level of the political support it had required from the Soviet Union on the Kashmir issue, and India now introduced a new argument for accepting military aid from the Soviet Union, namely, that the arms aid it had already received from the West, required it to seek military aid from the Soviet Union in order to maintain its non-alignment. That this Indian dilemma placed the Soviet Union in an advantageous bargaining position was indicated by reports in December 1963

¹ The Times, 1 June 1962.

² New York Times, 16 June 1962.

that the cost estimates for the MIG-21 factory plan had "jumped from \$143 million at its inception in August 1962, to a current working figure of \$336 million."¹

That cost now became an important inhibiting factor was indicated by the mission to Moscow headed by India's Finance Minister Desai to continue negotiations on the MIG-21 project shortly after these unfavourable reports.² Until 1962, in its public statements of policy, India had maintained that its non-alignment required it to pay cash for its military purchases since credit arrangements were regarded as possible political levers which would impair its non-alignment. It had not in fact adhered to this policy for some time and had previously accepted Soviet short-term loans repayable over 5 years and bearing 2 to 3 per cent interest, but it was not until after 1962 that it was forced to accept the long-term credits which other Soviet arms recipients found expedient. The high-cost of the MIG-21 factory project and its other arms requirements forced a change in policy in arms purchases from the Soviet Union and now there were frequent public references to the acceptance of such long-term credit arrangements after the Desai mission to Moscow in 1964, but there still remained some doubt about the MIG-21 project.³

There had been other significant military aid developments with the Soviet Union in the course of the previous year most of which were probably to come under such long-term credit arrangements. As early as

¹ Washington Post, 18 December 1963.

² Globe and Mail, 22 January 1964.

³ New York Times, 13 May 1964; and Far East Economic Review, 25 April 1963, p. 207.

December 1962, India had taken up the question of surface-to-air missiles with the Soviet Union, when the latter reportedly promised to give "positive¹ consideration" to the question and an agreement to supply guided surface-to-air missiles, radar equipment, and more transport planes was concluded in mid-1963 according to the Indian press. The first military purchases for the army, hitherto exclusively dependent on western supply, were reported to include long and medium range artillery as well as tanks, and the army mission which visited Czechoslovakia in 1963 provided the first indications that that country was also to participate in India's defence build-up.²

The fact that these missions to Soviet bloc countries had immediately followed similar successful purchasing missions to Washington and other western capitals were clear enough evidence that both the Soviet Union and the United States were resolved to assist India in its difficulties. This was in marked contrast to previous cases in which each side had vied for exclusive positions as military aid suppliers. That the mutual interests of both super-powers were engaged in tacitly compatible containment policies of China was indicated by the report that India was keeping the United States and Britain informed of its purchases of Soviet arms and was prepared to cooperate in ensuring that the respective western and communist aid programmes would be kept in distinctly separate fields. The net effect of this was to remove the competitive aspects of their programmes and to enhance their common purposes for the containment of China.³

¹ The Times, 21 February, 1963.

² K. Krishna Moorthy, "Mission to Moscow and Prague". Far East Review, 18 July 1963, p. 158; and Patriot, 11 August 1963.

³ The Guardian, 7 August 1963.

However the magnitude of aid supplied from both sources did not meet Indian expectations. In March 1964 Defence Minister Chavan disclosed the scope of India's 5 year Defence Plan. The plan included an increase of ground forces strength from 700,000 to 825,000 and the formation of 5 new brigades and the re-equipment of 11 existing brigades which were inadequately equipped. While no immediate plans were announced for the navy, the air force was to be expanded to a force of 45 squadrons.

It was against this background that officially inspired reports were heard in New Delhi in May 1964 that the Soviet Union had given India more arms aid than the United States. These reports were purely political with no basis in fact and prefaced another round of talks in Washington and Moscow. The situation as presented by Indian sources was that the Soviet Union had supplied \$131 million in military aid since October 1962. But this was in the form of commercial credits rather than "aid" and the US had made outright grants of \$120 million in the same period.¹

Despite the elements of political blackmail in these reports, on 6 June 1964 the communique issued in Washington after the talks between US Secretary of Defence McNamara and Indian Defence Minister Chavan, indicated only one item of major disagreement, and that was in the field of air-defence. Despite the US reluctance to see India turn to the Soviet Union for its air defence aircraft needs, the US was reportedly unwilling to sell India F-104 jet fighters of the type it had previously supplied to Pakistan, for two major reasons. The US was both afraid of unfavourable repercussions in Pakistan and was still sceptical of India's requirements for such an aircraft

¹ New York Times, 13 May 1964 and 22 May 1964.

given the limited bomber capability of China. The total programme for other forms of military aid was valued at \$550 million over the next 5 years to be provided at an annual rate of \$60 million grant aid and \$50 million in sales credits subject to the annual approval of Congress. While there had earlier been some reports that the US might help the Indian HF-24 jet fighter production project as a means of pre-empting the still troubled MIG-21 programme, no US help was forthcoming and India had to seek help elsewhere for these two aircraft production projects which, it was calculated, would cost India over \$1 billion in the following 5 years.¹

A conspicuous place was therefore left for the Soviet Union to fill in the air defence field which it might have found embarrassing to refuse in view of its public statement in early 1963 that it would provide India with the means of producing the MIG-21. Additional incentives to save face vis-a-vis the generous US aid, as well as Indian art in arranging the mission of Chavan to Washington prior to his Moscow mission probably contributed to the Soviet decision to fully commit itself to the Indian MIG-21 project. The "basic purpose" of his visit Chavan said, was to expedite this project.² In the event, he obtained much more in what was described in Indian circles as a Soviet move to check the "drift towards the West" which the Communist Party of India had charged was a feature of the new Shastri regime, and a betrayal of Nehru's principles. The new agreement concluded by Chavan included a credit of \$142 million for the MIG-21 project as well as a pledge to speed up the construction of the factory.³ In addition

¹ New York Times, 7 June 1964; and 11 May 1964.

² New York Times, 29 August 1964.

³ New York Times, 29 August 1964; and 22 September 1964.

there was an agreement to provide 3 more MIG-21 squadrons and 70 light
¹tanks. More importantly, in point of principle, was the claim by two
 responsible Indian papers that the Soviet Union had pledged itself to
²match the value of the US promise of \$110 million a year.

Defence Minister Chavan delivered a comprehensive and frank
 report in the Indian Parliament on 21 September on his missions to Washington
 and Moscow, carefully balancing his appreciation for both US and Soviet
 military commitments and their support for India's policy of non-alignment:

"Our policy in meeting the requirements of our defence is
 necessarily guided by our foreign policy of non-alignment
 which will continue to govern our actions in the field
 of defence procurement. In both the US and the USSR there
 was a complete recognition of the policy ... in both the
 countries that I visited I found that they did not want
 to compete with each other; they had made that amply clear."

Chavan's statement cannot be taken entirely at face value but
 there were sufficient essential ingredients of concurrence in the US and
 Soviet positions on military aid to India, that de facto cooperation could
 be said to exist. Soviet military aid policy to India had therefore
 changed from its first purposes of opposing Pakistan and its relationships
 with the US, to the point where the alienation of Pakistan was now an un-
 desirable ingredient in the policy of strengthening India for the containment
 of China.

¹ The Economist, "Multilateral Indian Arms", 26 Sept. 1964, p 1207.

² Times of India and The Statesman of India, 13 Sept. 1964.

In Afghanistan in the later years of the Krushchev period there was a gradual diminution of intensity in Soviet support for the Pushtunistan issue. Lip-service was paid to Afghanistan's claims but these appear to have originated from Afghan urging after specific Soviet approaches to Pakistan raised the prospect that Soviet support was diminishing. For example, after the Soviet Union renewed an offer of economic and technical aid agreement to Pakistan in March 1961 (which unlike previous offers was accepted), this apparently occasioned concern in Afghanistan and Premier Daud's visit to Moscow in April was the occasion for reassurances that Soviet support on the Pushtunistan issue remained undiminished.¹ The reemergence of the issue was enough once again to contribute to a rapid decline in Afghan-Pakistan relations and fresh border clashes took place in 1961 which led to Pakistan militia units taking punitive action against frontier posts. The scale of Afghanistan actions is not known but countermeasures reportedly also involved the use of Pakistani air force strikes and the probable use of army units also. The use of these elements of Pakistan's regular forces which was the basis for Pravda's accusations that Pakistan was trying to settle the Pushtu problem by force while denying the "lawful and just desires" of the tribesmen involved.² However, while giving this propaganda support to Afghanistan the Soviet Union was also restraining them from any rash actions against the better armed and trained Pakistani army which would have inflicted a loss of prestige on Afghanistan and the Soviet Union's military aid programme.³

¹ Pravda, 25 March 1961 and 3 April 1961.

² Pravda, 3 April 1961, and George L. Montagno, op. cit., p. 620-21.

³ Eugene Hinterhoff, "The Pattern of Soviet Military Aid", The Tablet, 1 December 1962, p. 1155.

Nevertheless, a suspension of transit facilities for Afghan goods as well as diplomatic and other relations again occurred between September 1961 and June 1963, but this time the main initiative for the disruptions in trade facilities came from Afghanistan.

At this point, Afghanistan appears to have started to take a more comprehensive view of its interests in the Pushtunistan issue and it was the renewed disruption of Afghanistan's trade, in particular, which contributed to the King's dismissal of Premier Daud in early 1963. His Pushtunistan policy ran counter to the aims of the successor regime of Dr. Yusuf which stated that economic and social development were the main Afghan¹ requirements and the goals of the new leaders. The new regime has not explicitly repudiated the Pushtunistan issue but the improvement which has subsequently developed in Afghan-Pakistan relations has been made possible² by a reduction of the intensity with which Afghanistan espouses the cause.

At the same time, the group in the Afghan cabinet which feels that Afghan has incurred too large a debt with the Soviet Union (a major³ part of which is for arms) was reportedly gaining the ascendancy.

The original bases for the Soviet military aid programme to Afghanistan are therefore no longer paramount in the latter's foreign policies and to some extent, during the last year's of Krushchev's regime, this helped to offset the pressure which the military aid programme for India continued to place on Soviet-Pakistani relations.

¹ Asian Recorder, April 1963, p. 5157.

² New York Times, 17 September, 1964.

³ "Kabul's New Men", The Economist, 6 Feb. 1965, p. 523.

By early 1962 with the West Irian settlement proceeding to a favourable conclusion for Indonesia, the main western hope was that Indonesia would now concentrate on internal economic and social reform as the prime means of reducing the influence of the PKI since:

"... a major explanation of the Communist Party's strength (in Indonesia) lies in its identification with nationalist forces on the one remaining "colonialist" issue in Indonesian politics, the question of West New Guinea. If that issue can be resolved peacefully, and an intensified effort is made to achieve economic development, the present strength of Indonesian Communism may be expected to decline."¹

The new agreement of May 1962 for further arms purchases from the Soviet Union and the first deliveries of MIG-21 jet aircraft and other large increases in the flow of arms shortly afterwards, were among the first indications that the critical economic position of the country and its difficulties in servicing its debts for essential requirements,² were not to be reflected in any curtailment of Indonesia's arms procurement from the Soviet Union, which was credited by Indonesia as being the main reason for the Netherlands submission on the West Irian issue. The Soviet Union also had grounds for optimism on its position in Indonesia by the granting of minister without portfolio rank to two of the three leading Indonesian communists - Aidit and Lukman - in 1962. Since 1962 can be regarded as the high point in Soviet-Indonesian relations, these appointments are attributed to Soviet influence in that period.

¹ Chester Bowles, "Is Communist Ideology Becoming Irrelevant", Foreign Affairs, Vol. 40, No. 4, July 1962, p. 563.

² New York Herald Tribune, 9 May 1962; and Sunday Telegraph, 3 June 1962.

A further reason for Soviet optimism was probably derived from the fact that in the process of acquiring West Irian, the army's prestige had suffered considerably while the PKI and the Air Force advanced to positions of increased prestige. There is no doubt that Nasution himself shared and fully supported, within the limitations of the army itself, the desire to assert Indonesian sovereignty over West Irian, but his own emphasis was on using Indonesia resources:

"Again, I like to emphasize that the struggle for West Irian lies in Indonesia.¹ The struggle for West Irian lies in Indonesia itself."

For Nasution the West Irian campaign was an opportunity to strengthen Indonesia's internal cohesion in a way which could be turned to effect in external fields and he exploited the Indonesian patriotism aroused by the West Irian Confrontasi to assert greater control over regional and territorial commanders and to exert his influence by political acts such as the general amnesty offered to all rebels who surrendered by 5 October 1961, Armed Forces Day. While these moves did create a new cohesion in the Indonesia army establishments, Nasution also saw them as an important means of increasing the civic action role of the army in the villages and elsewhere in order to counter the PKI. But despite these measures the short term ascendancy of the PKI had been enhanced by the diversion of the National Front from its original first purpose of creating cadres for Indonesia's eight-year development plan, to the role of a mass organizational militancy in support of the West Irian campaign.²

¹ BBC, SWB, Part III, Far East, 18 January 1961.

² Far Eastern Economic Review, 1962 Yearbook, p. 101.

While Nasution's policies therefore appeared sound for the restoration of central authority, he committed the same political error that the PSI party had committed in the pre-independence period by emphasizing political rather than militant methods in the West Irian campaign. By allowing the PKI and the air force to assume the greater militancy, he compromised himself politically with the Indonesian leadership. The air force in particular had been eager to assume the vanguard and the first air drop of Indonesian "liberators" in West Irian in September 1961 had admitted being trained at an air force "liberation school".¹

The Soviet Union was therefore probably encouraged by the political results to date and with the isolation of the army and by the new agreement of May 1962, it indicated its continuing confidence in the medium of military aid as an adjunct to its political policies. Explanations for new arms purchases were forthcoming in Sukarno's speech on Armed Forces Day 1962, for the new agreements when he declared:

"We are still struggling against colonialism and imperialism. Even though West Irian will return to Indonesia we still need armed forces. I even command continuation of strengthening of units so we can defend the Indonesian people's honour at all times."²

Although at the end of 1962 Indonesia had already amassed a Sverdlov class cruiser, 12 submarines, destroyers, frigates, motor torpedo boats and various other naval craft, it was stressed by the Navy's Commander Rear-Admiral Martadinata that this force was "only forty per cent of that needed for the security of its waters". The air force was already equipped with impressive

¹ Sunday Telegraph, 24 December 1961.

² Far Eastern Economic Review, "Indonesia's Armoury", 1 Nov 1962, pp. 283-4.

quantities of MIG-17s as well as some MIG-19 and MIG-21 jet fighters and IL-28 and TU-16 jet bombers which it was beyond Indonesia's capabilities to service, but this did not seem likely to deter further acquisitions either. The army alone had taken little from the Soviet Union and although several elite battalions were equipped with Soviet weapons, the army was¹ still basically US-equipped.

However difficult it was to reconcile it with the commitments for maintaining and operating this array of equipment, General Nasution announced early in 1963 that in the next year's budget the services' share of the budget would be reduced from 80% to 47%, while various demobilization measures were to be introduced once again. However this was prior to the eruption of the Malaysian "confrontasi" in mid-1963 which repeated the patterns of the West Irian campaign all over again. If anything however the Malaysian campaign put an even more intolerable burden on the armed services of Indonesia since they now had a vast array of modern equipment which they were required to wield even if only symbolically.

If the maintenance of its armoury was already a serious problem, Indonesia now desired more as a demonstration of its resolve, and it was reported for example that Indonesia's TU-16 jet bomber strength was to be² doubled or tripled to a strength of twenty to thirty.

¹ Far Eastern Economic Review, "Indonesia's Armoury", 1 Nov 1962, pp. 283-4.

² Aviation Week and Space Technology, 22 April 1963, p. 25.

Nasution's decision to cut defence expenditure had been based on some basic realities and this new surge in military expenditure had to be funded by some external means and immediately after the militarization of the anti-Malaysia campaign there were reports that Indonesia was seeking a moratorium on its arms debts with the Soviet Union. Of the approximately \$700 million extended in economic aid by the Soviet Union and the East European communist countries, less than \$180 million had been actually¹ delivered, and it was consequently the vast military debts of the approximate order of \$1 billion which were the prime Indonesian concern.

The Soviet Union had evidently had the thought that with the end of the West Irian campaign it could start to collect some financial returns on the equipment it had already delivered and one of the main purposes of Malinovsky's visit to Indonesia prior to the eruption of the Malaysian dispute had been to demand speedier payment of the arms debt which² was running to \$60 million annually. Reports of Indonesian interest in deferring its debt payments were not matched by any indicating Soviet willingness to comply. Nevertheless the Soviet Union did allow Indonesia to increase its indebtedness in a new agreement and by an increase in the arms delivery rate which was first reported in June 1963 when the Malaysian campaign was³ barely underway. The Soviet Union was thus evidently willing to support the new external venture by further arms deliveries but not yet to the extent of underwriting its costs. The pressure of internal developments in Indonesia was soon to change this position.

¹ Sunday Times, 9 June 1963.

² New York Times, 4 April 1963.

³ The Financial Times, 13 June 1963.

In mid-1964, when the influence of the PKI was being increasingly felt, Mikoyan paid a visit to Indonesia. At this time the Soviet Union was interested in obtaining Indonesia's endorsement of the right of the Soviet Union to attend the "Second Bandung Conference". It was in this context and this period that the Soviet Union finally agreed to postpone payments on the Indonesian arms debt which in 1964-65 alone was said to save Indonesia¹ \$70 million in much needed foreign currency.

Mikoyan placed more emphasis on Soviet military aid than any other facet of Soviet aid to Indonesia during his visit. He evoked parallels between current Indonesian and earlier Soviet situations and hence the relevancy of Soviet experience, by dealing extensively with the period of "encirclement" of the Soviet Union after the 1917 revolution when Soviet difficulties, he said, had been even greater than those now facing Indonesia. According to Mikoyan the main reasons for Indonesia's lesser difficulties lay in the armaments supplied to it by the Soviet Union, and the protective umbrella of Soviet power which inhibited the actions of the imperialists. But in case Indonesia was preparing to put Soviet support to a more severe test by directly attacking Malaysia, Mikoyan was equally careful to point out that despite the superiority of the socialist forces,

"... this does not mean that capitalism today is so weak that it is toppling off its feet, that it suffices to nudge it and it will fall".

On the contrary, capitalism was strengthening and arming itself and "when it sees the opportunities for itself it goes over to the offensive."²

¹ New York Times, 30 July 1964.

² Izvestiya, 26 June 1964.

This would appear to have been a warning to Indonesia that the Soviet Union was unwilling to commit itself to support extreme adventures and that there was a clear distinction to be made between the possibilities of military action against West Irian and Malaysia. Possibly due to the limits the Soviet Union may have put on Indonesian actions against Malaysia, but more certainly due to the assertion of the PKI's influence, the question of Soviet attendance at the "Second Bandung" conference was still "not clearly defined" during Mikoyan's visit and an Indonesian official stated that "... the Soviet Union does not expect Indonesia to lobby for an invitation for her".¹ Given the evident concern of the Soviet Union on this question it would appear to be nearer the truth that the Soviet Union tried to obtain Indonesian support but failed, despite its financial concessions and the latter's dependence on continuing Soviet military aid. Given this evident lack of Soviet influence, it was ironic that at this time a PKI nominee was finally given a formal Cabinet position so that for the first time the PKI had a formal connection with Sukarno's executive body, the Cabinet Praesidium. While the Soviet Union had been urging such a move for several years, the fulfillment of its requests at this time was probably disconcerting, since the PKI member appointed to the Cabinet was Njoto, a party theoretician² known for his sympathy with Chinese rather than Soviet positions.

Despite the obvious ineffectiveness of its military aid for the development of political leverage the Soviet Union still had evident illusions about its efficacy, which disregarded the increasing advocacy by

¹ New York Times, 30 July, 1964.

² New York Times, 27 August 1964.

the PKI and by the Air Force Commander, General Dani, of the Chinese policy of self-reliance as opposed to dependence on external support such as was provided by Soviet arms.

There were hints in Mikoyan's speeches in Indonesia of even more military aid and a new agreement was indeed reported after Sukarno visited Khrushchev on his way to the Non-Aligned Conference in Cairo in September 1964.¹ But again, by an extremism at the Cairo conference which alienated even this "non-aligned" group, Sukarno demonstrated that such sops were not to be met with commensurate political support from Indonesia and at Cairo he pursued a line which differed in few essentials from current Chinese positions.

In 1964 the Soviet Union thus experienced the same confusing images which Indonesia presented in succession to the West. Subandrio's statement on 6 April, designed to allay British concern, emphasized the common role of Britain and Indonesia in the containment of China but this was followed in a few days by a statement that:

"... as for China, we seem to have more or less the same adversaries, the intrigues of foreign powers in the region."²

The distrust which the West had long held towards Subandrio's conduct of affairs was being increasingly shared by the Soviet Union.

By the end of 1964 Soviet advice on the moderation of the 'Crush-Malaysia' campaign was being blatantly ignored. In early September, Foreign Minister Subandrio declared that "... unlike the past, we are now on the offensive to wipe out the enemy bases".³

¹ New York Times, 10 Oct. 1964, Le Monde, 3 Oct 1964, The Times, 6 Oct. 1964.

² The Times, 6 April 1964 and Le Monde, 8 April 1964.

³ New York Times, 7 Sept. 1964.

In the same period also the Chen-Yi surprise visit to Indonesia in November 1964 was also credited with influencing the new Indonesia militancy and was the occasion for ¹promises of Chinese military aid.

The armed forces were more cautious than these statements on stepping up the campaign indicated but even so there was a marked escalation in late 1964. The direct attacks on Australian naval vessels at the entrance to Singapore harbour and the Malaysian threats to retaliate directly against Indonesia if such attacks continued, were the very developments Mikoyan had warned about in his speeches earlier in the year. Since Malaysia disposed of a considerable British force under its defence treaties with Britain, there was a distinct possibility that Indonesia's provocations could result in the destruction of the inefficiently manned equipment which the Soviet Union had supplied at considerable expense with little or no commercial return and diminishing prospects of any political returns.

The Soviet Union by its new military aid agreements after 1962 whetted the ambitions of Indonesia for victory over Malaysia but these Indonesian ambitions and Soviet purposes were simultaneously frustrated by the caution it advocated. The short-term advantages which the Soviet Union had hoped to gain by its reluctant support of the confrontation with Malaysia, by the time of Krushchev's demise, had already been seen to contain far more political liabilities than advantages by its direct contribution to the increasing militancy of the PKI and its growing orientation towards Chinese policies. As the frustrations of the campaign and his growing isolation

¹ New York Times, 15 and 25 Dec. 1964.

amongst the "non-aligned" nations took their toll on Sukarno, it was natural for him to associate himself with the PKI's anti-Soviet attitude since it was indeed obvious that the Soviet Union was not prepared to give total support to the Indonesian military campaign, while China at least gave promise of such support as it was in its power to give. To this challenge Khrushchev developed no adequate counter and the policy of committing more and more military equipment to Indonesia had tended, if anything, to aggravate the situation to the further detriment of Soviet interests.

After the conclusion of the Agreement on Laos in July 1962, the ritualistic refusal of the Pathet Lao to cede its sole rights over its territory to the coalition government continued, while they also sought to eradicate the forces of the Neutralist military leader, Kong Le, which were now evidently judged to have served their purpose. This was manifested by the division of the neutralists into left and right wing factions and the actions of the left wing group under Colonel Deuane, with Pathet Lao assistance, to prevent the resupply of Kong Le's forces by the U.S.. While the public indications of these actions were the destruction of US aircraft supplying Kong Le's forces, it would be consistent that equal measures were being taken¹ by the Pathet Lao to prevent the supply of Kong Le from Soviet sources.

¹ Far Eastern Economic Review, "End to Laotian Neutralism",
25 April 1963, p. 210.

In the confusion that attended these events it was apparent that the Soviet Union was anxious to preserve the Geneva Agreement and despite ineffectual efforts the Soviet ambassador in Laos combined with Souvanna Phouma and the British ambassador in attempts to arrange a cease-fire between the Pathet Lao and the Kong Le at a time when all the military advantages appeared to be with the former. Furthermore the Pathet Lao claimed that the Soviet Union terminated the supply flights to them on 31 October 1962,¹ shortly after the Soviet Union had made its first offers of military aid to the new Coalition Government itself. Thus while Pathet Lao - Neutralist military relations were deteriorating the Soviet Union made a gift of 10 aircraft (with the use of Russian crews) to the Laotian government, which could be expected to employ them to supply the Kong Le forces. The destruction of the U.S. aircraft, on a supply mission to Kong Le, occurred shortly after these events and this was a possible warning by the Pathet Lao that the Soviet aircraft might suffer the same fate.

In early 1963 the Pathet Lao moved in strength to eject Kong Le from the Plaine des Jarres and other points held jointly with the Pathet Lao, and both Kong Le and Souvanna Phouma, now inveighed against the Pathet Lao and North Vietnam in terms that General Phoumi could have used a year previously.² The Soviet Union's actions, up until this point were at least compatible with the purposes of U.S. policy under Kennedy. It nevertheless persisted in the allegations that the renewed hostilities stemmed from U.S. provocations

¹ Roger M. Smith, "Laos in Perspective", Asian Survey, Vol. III, No. 1, January 1963, p. 66.

² Far Eastern Economic Review, 25 April 1963, p. 211.

but whereas in 1960-1962 these statements were accompanied by material support for the Pathet Lao, the evidence suggests that they were now seeking to place restraints on them. The Soviet Union joined Britain on 28 May 1963 in a joint message to Souvanna Phouma which appealed to all parties in Laos to come together without delay to settle matters in dispute and the expressed hope that "all parties" would cooperate with the International Control Commission was a criticism of the Pathet Lao for its refusal to allow inspection of its territory and activities.

However, the Soviet Union found itself unable to give direct expression to the loud complaints of the Neutralists against the Pathet Lao, and the aircrew so recently supplied to the Laotian government to fly the aircraft donated by the Soviet Union, were suddenly withdrawn.² The renewed fighting of April-May 1963 was presented by the Soviet Union as a struggle between General Phoumi and the Pathet Lao and the only references to the Neutralist forces were to the effect that they had now been infiltrated by right wing forces:

In May 1964, the Laotian government again requested Soviet arms aid, (such as shells and ammunition for the weapons it had previously received) and also asked the Soviet Union to repair the aircraft it had previously supplied and to provide aircrew once again. Simultaneously it requested reconnaissance planes from the United States,

"to observe the activities and movements of the forces which are invading, attacking, and fighting in Laos".³

¹ BIS, Russia and the West, Central Office of Information, R.F.P. 5585, June 1963, p. 46.

² New York Times, 21 May 1963.

³ New York Herald Tribune, 29 May 1964, and BBC SWB, Part III, Far East, 29 May 1964.

The request put the Soviet Union in an intolerable position since the phrasing of the request suggested directly that it cooperate with the US in counter-acting the Pathet Lao's periodic offensives. The request furthermore came from Souvanna Phouma himself who had initially requested Soviet military aid to oppose US-supported actions.

It was the misfortune of Laos that it was contending not only with the Pathet Lao but also with North Vietnam which the Soviet Union was most anxious to appease for purposes of Communist bloc unity. It had gone as far as it could by curtailing aid to the Pathet Lao, and it could not afford to affront North Vietnam and the Pathet Lao by furnishing aid to the Neutralist government in these new circumstances. After some delay the Soviet Union replied to the Laotian request:

"The USSR government acknowledges receipt of your letter dated 25 May 1964 containing a request for ammunition and for spare parts for the LI-2 aircraft which were handed over to the Laotian Coalition Government. You have also informed our ambassador that you have forwarded a demand for military aid to the US, British and French governments and that you desire to use this aid against the Pathet Lao.

The USSR government maintains that the request for foreign military aid and the authorization for reconnaissance flights by US aircraft over Laotian territory do not conform to the statement on the neutrality of Laos ...

In view of the foregoing, the USSR government wants to confirm that it is categorically against the granting of any military aid at the request of a single political group of the country"

The Laotian government may appreciate the delicate problems that its requests posed for the Soviet Union, but in practical terms the Soviet

refusal appeared as a de facto abandonment of its positive support for Laotian integrity. By the end of 1964 Souvanna Phouma was preparing to cooperate with the U.S. in order to allow direct action against the Ho Chi Minh trails which as well as feeding the Viet Cong via Laos, (another violation of the 1962 agreement) were also maintaining the flow of supplies¹ from North Vietnam to the Pathet Lao.

Given the initial support that the Soviet Union had given to the principle of neutrality in Laos, the pressures that the Laotian situation placed on Krushchev in late 1964 led him to suggest that the Soviet Union might withdraw from the co-chairmanship of the supervisory commission for Laos because the bases on which the Geneva Conference had been convened no longer existed. While this suggestion was not implemented it did reveal the difficult diplomatic position of the Soviet Union and the pessimism that Krushchev felt about the possibility of the Soviet Union exerting any influence on developments in Laos and the S.E. Asia region in general, despite the efforts, including military aid which it had originally intended to develop such influence.

Its first grant of military aid to Cambodia in 1963 was to involve the Soviet Union in a competitive situation with China for a position of

¹ New York Times, 22 December 1964.

primacy in supplying Cambodia's defence needs. Prince Sihanouk, Chief of State, ably encouraged this competition, after renouncing U.S. military aid, by designating China or Russia as its main supporter according to the current status of the competition.

This defence support has therefore been used by Sihanouk as a prime gauge of external political support for both Cambodian integrity and for his territorial claims. At issue are lines of territorial division with all Cambodia's neighbours which have been in dispute for centuries and which are poorly if at all demarcated. The unstable circumstances of S.E. Asia in the 1960's have led Sihanouk to believe that the value of his political alignment on the fractious Vietnam issue, would contribute to the gathering of the necessary political support from the Great Powers for a territorial settlement in his favour. The fluctuations in his political alignment therefore have borne a direct relationship to his calculations on the outcome of the struggle in Vietnam, but they also foredoomed the purposes of the Soviet military aid programme to failure, since Sihanouk himself has seen this primarily as a Sino-U.S. contest in which China would be the ultimate victor.

The "strict neutrality" policy of Prince Sihanouk had been maintained with relatively minor oscillations but until 1963 the neutrality of Cambodia did not prevent it from frequently condemning the abuses of the 1954 Geneva Agreement by Pathet Lao activities in Laos or Viet Cong activities in South Vietnam. In September 1961 Royal Khmer troops for the first time had also launched an offensive against Viet Cong forces near the Vietnamese border.¹

¹ Far Eastern Economic Review, "Cambodia", 1962 Yearbook, p. 45.

At the same time disturbances in internal Cambodian politics were attributed in the main to communist activities.

The type of guarantees accorded to Laotian integrity and neutrality by the 1962 agreement therefore had attractions also as protective measures for Cambodia. After a neutralist coalition government for Laos had been formed in Vientiane, in August 1962 Sihanouk called for a new international conference to guarantee Cambodian neutrality and Sihanouk hoped that such a conference would also guarantee Cambodia's borders. However this presented a major difficulty since none of its three neighbours, Thailand, Vietnam or Laos could agree with Cambodian border claims.

Cambodian-Thai relations had also been rapidly deteriorating and diplomatic relations were broken off in October 1961 with Sihanouk stating that his government had decided to take "all necessary steps to resist an eventual Thai aggression" and "in case of conflict to call for the aid of friendly powers, natural adversaries to our ¹agressors". It is probable that Sihanouk was thinking in the same terms as Souvanna Phouma in that period and that one of the solutions that the latter sought ~~in~~ Soviet military aid was also in Sihanouk's mind.

Sihanouk's frequent threats from 1961 on that he would renounce US military aid and accept Communist military aid were in origin probably political threats intended to elicit above all stronger US support for formal recognition and guarantee of its borders. His main claim was against South Vietnam on the status of Phu Quoc Island and Sihanouk treated this

¹ ibid.,

matter more and more obdurately as the South Vietnamese government's authority weakened, and as a result of Sihanouk's expectations that the US could apply influence on Cambodia's behalf, from August 1962 on, the state of US - Cambodian relations also became more and more tortuous. Relations with the Soviet Union, China and neutralist states who supported "in principle" the guarantees that Sihanouk sought, simultaneously provided a basis for a future rapprochement with them and a reorientation of Cambodian foreign policy.

The trend of its relations with South Vietnam were therefore further emphasized by developments in the Soviet military aid relationships. On 31 August 1963, four days after he finally broke-off diplomatic relations with South Vietnam, Sihanouk announced that the Soviet government had made him a personal gift of four MIG fighter planes and 24 radar-controlled anti-aircraft batteries. The personal nature of the gift was stressed rather than its inter-state character because Sihanouk was still anxious not to force a cut-off of US military aid which took the form of direct budgetary revenue support.¹

The final decision to accept this Soviet military aid had been precipitated by a rapid deterioration in relations with South Vietnam as a result of the alleged mistreatment of a Cambodian minority in South Vietnam but more importantly due to the "hot pursuit" policies of Vietnamese forces acting against the Viet Cong. Vietnamese incursions into Cambodian territory and increasing instances of the bombing of Cambodian border hamlets

¹ Far Eastern Economic Review, "Cambodia", 1964 Yearbook, p. 106.

were therefore a prime factor in the acceptance of Soviet military aid and the first aid delivered had the main character of air defence equipment.

The Soviet Union exploited Cambodian anger over these incidents by refusing to accept that these border violations were limited by any military or political considerations in Saigon or Washington:

"These are not localized frontier incidents, they are inspired by SEATO and in particular by the United States. Since the US imperialists ... are hostile to Cambodian neutrality, the strengthening of the country's defence capacity is a prime necessity. With Soviet aid, Cambodia is solving this problem. This shows once more that the USSR proceeds from the Leninist principles of aid to National Liberation Movements and the defence of independent nations against imperialist aggression ..."¹

Meanwhile China had also taken a live interest in the Cambodian disenchantment with the US. Visits in May 1963 by Liu Shao-Chi, Chairman of the Republic of China, and Chen-Yi, China's Foreign Minister, were evidence of the growing Sino-Cambodian rapprochement and military aid was probably first offered by China during these high level visits.

Encouraged by these various demonstrations of support, Sihanouk announced on 5 November 1963 that he would renounce US aid. It appeared that France was to share the same banishment after Sihanouk on 10 November questioned the utility of French military instructors now that he had taken the decision to equip with Soviet and Chinese weapons. However after the Cambodian Special Congress unanimously endorsed the rejection of US military and economic aid and committed Sihanouk to cut the most important link he had with a non-communist country Sihanouk realized his potential future isolation and changed his position on French military aid:

¹ Moscow Radio, 10 March 1964.

"the communist powers are erasing themselves (from Cambodia) because they do not want us as associates ... It could be the time for France."¹

The statement was quite inconsistent with the general direction of Chinese and Soviet policies but such inconsistencies have not been uncommon in Sihanouk's statements and it served the purpose of retaining important links with France.

The French Defence Minister Mr. Messmer visited Cambodia in January 1964 and promised a significant military aid programme and although the listing of this aid in a Sihanouk speech the next day took third place to Chinese and Soviet military aid respectively, it was evidently the best offer that Cambodia had so far received. Nevertheless, China was given pride of place because it was the "first country to raise its voice in support of the proposal for a conference to guarantee our neutrality."²

The Soviet Union's military aid to Cambodia had other purposes than merely supplanting the U.S. presence and its second place ranking to China did not accord with them. In Cambodia as elsewhere in S.E. Asia it was reluctant to accept second place to China in any activities which showed its militancy vis-a-vis the U.S., as long as it fell short of provoking a direct Soviet - U.S. confrontation. In pursuit of this policy, further offers of military aid including MIG-19 fighters, and equipment for a paratroop battalion were soon made and Sihanouk dutifully reported that "Russia takes the lead in giving us aid."³ The quantitative jump also served the point of underlining the qualitative one of the Soviet Union's

¹ Far Eastern Economic Review, 5 Dec. 1963, p. 510.

² BBC, SWB, Part III, Far East, 14 January 1964.

³ BBC, SWB, Part III, Far East, 9 March 1964 and 13 March 1964.

ability to preempt China because of the latter's inability to provide heavy weapons and aircraft due to its own limited defence production capacity.

This preemption allowed the Soviet Union to sit through ceremonies celebrating the arrival of Chinese small arms and trucks on 14 March, 13 May, but the situation saw some change after Sihanouk returned from the elaborate reception prepared for him at the National Day celebrations in Peking on 1 October. The announcement on 6 October that China had given "new and most important military aid" in the form of a promise to give heavy weapons, in addition to light weapons, and was now "our number one friend" was enhanced even further by the communique signed at the end of his visit which included the statement that

"in the event that Cambodia should meet with foreign armed aggression, the 650 million Chinese people will give it all-out support".¹

To those versed in Chinese verbal escalation this was far from being a firm commitment, but the Soviet Union and, for the first time, Czechoslovakia sought to redress the political balance with new offers which were acknowledged publicly by Sihanouk on 10 October, and on 2 November a ceremony was arranged for the reception of a further large consignment from the Soviet Union.²

The Soviet Union's advantages in the field of diplomacy were also brought into the contest at this time and Cambodia was one of the first concrete issues discussed with the U.S. by the new Soviet leadership after the fall of Krushchev. On 28 October Cambodia addressed a letter to the

¹ New York Times, 7 October 1964.

² New York Times, 3 November 1964.

Security Council blaming the United States and South Vietnam for recent border incidents and it simultaneously appealed to China to help resist the "criminal aggression". While China could not respond beyond the expression of "firm support" without tripping the delicate regional balance the Soviet Union could respond diplomatically and a short meeting took place between Dobrinin and Rusk on 3 November with Dobrinin expressing his concern over the deteriorating situation of the border incidents. The incidents and US and South Vietnam involvement, were not denied by Rusk who pointed to the use of Cambodian territory by the Viet Cong as the prime¹ cause of the incidents, but these charges added further impetus to the deterioration in US - Cambodian relations.

Nevertheless, US - Cambodian discussions were commenced in New Delhi shortly afterwards which again highlighted the pre-eminence of the Cambodian territorial claims, a matter on which the Soviet Union had no real influence. Cambodia told the US in New Delhi that it would forego a Geneva type conference if South Vietnam gave up Phu Quoc Island, while it simultaneously was negotiating in Hanoi and Peking for a commitment by the National Liberation Front and the North Vietnam governments to recognize its claims and the recognition of a special status for the Cambodian minority in South Vietnam. That Cambodia hoped to gain in a process of competitive bidding and that it was not a question of maintaining the status quo was indicated by Sihanouk's statement that negotiations with the Viet Cong and Viet Minh had been broken off because "it would be useless to sign an accord² recognizing the frontiers already guaranteed by the 1954 Geneva Conference".

¹ New York Times, 4 November 1964.

² New York Times, 19 November 1964, 27 November 1964, January 6, 1965.

The new Soviet leadership would also by this time have had the opportunity to ponder Sihanouk's words on 16 October when he gave details of the new military aid agreement with China: "We need Chinese help so that the Vietnamese will recognize our frontier".¹

These and other tokens of Cambodian calculations served to prove to the Soviet Union that Cambodia was an unstable medium for Soviet policies in S.E. Asia. Its military aid was an inconsequential factor in affecting Cambodian policies given the overriding Cambodian calculation that China was the Great Power with the most influence on the future determination of its territorial claims and integrity. No new extensions of Soviet military aid can be documented since the shipment which was officially received on 2 November 1964 and which was probably shipped under the aegis of the Krushchev leadership. The role of Soviet military aid in Cambodia therefore appears to have reached at least a temporary halt.

Chinese military aid to Cambodia was also clearly related to its interests in eradicating the U.S. presence from S.E. Asia and showed that when its own national interests warranted it, China too could compromise with such "national bourgeoisie" as Sihanouk who maintained his strong anti-communist posture in internal politics.

This was symptomatic of all the policy dilemmas which the Soviet Union was now facing in its relations with China and the ideological quarrel now being waged between them, was a sublimation of their national differences in which Soviet military aid policy was an important component.

¹ BBC, SWB, Part III, Far East, 16 October 1964.

V

CONCLUSIONS

At the end of Khrushchev's rule, his military aid policy reflected his two major political aspirations - peaceful co-existence and the undisputed leadership of the communist states - but he also failed to find a solution to the difficult conflict of interests which the two aspirations imposed:

"On the one hand, Mr. Krushchev, with his eyes on co-existence, might be willing to go quite far in the interests of safety. On the other, the revolutionary heritage of his country acts as a serious brake on new departures. Even if the Americans were to allow Mr. Krushchev, the Fabian, to find his middle road, the Chinese will do everything in their power to prevent him from sticking to it."¹

By the medium of his military aid policies Khrushchev had sought to serve Soviet global interests and especially its political posture vis-a-vis the United States and China by exploiting opportunities as they occurred in the non-communist states of Asia. Initially the programmes were based on the combination of a general anti-western animus and the specific irredentist aspirations of the recipients but as Sino-Soviet relations deteriorated, the bases for the continuation of the programmes became more complex. The programmes themselves became in fact a contributing factor to a further

¹ The Economist, "Krushchev: a Fabian in Asia", 3 October 1964, p.34.

deterioration in Sino-Soviet relations and a sharpening of the Chinese challenge to his supremacy and at the same time impeded the possibilities of a detente with the US.

The countries which, by accepting Soviet military aid, became potential political media for the expression of Soviet interests had in turn revealed complexities in their internal and external policies which made the military aid programmes as much of a liability as an asset to Soviet interests. In all of the countries concerned, the bases for the continuation of the programmes at the time of Khrushchev's demise were different, to an important degree, from those which predominated at the time the Soviet Union made its initial offers in the mid-1950's.

To a large extent the policy dilemmas which the Soviet Union incurred reflected the opportunistic manner in which the military aid programmes had been established. This opportunism reflected the bold personal style of Khrushchev and above all

"his willingness to experiment and strike out in new directions without necessarily calculating or anticipating costs and consequences".¹

Khrushchev was perhaps no more prone to error in his policies than his western counterparts who also suffered from the erratic courses pursued by Asian countries under the political and economic strains of the post-independence period. The Soviet Union was able to play heavily on the animosity of the under-developed countries towards the west but its initial

¹ Merle Fainsod, "Khrushchevism", Marxism in the Modern World, ed. Milorad M. Drachkovitch, Stanford U.P., 1965, p. 114.

advantages were short-term rather than long-term. One of its basic short-term advantages was that, contrary to most western expectations, the nationalism of the new countries was

"even more of a motive force among these new leaders than the drive to escape poverty. And often it is a nationalism that is only one part patriotism for every two parts an obsession that their poverty and discontent stem solely from having been held in tutelage by the strong".¹

As its own economic and trade ties developed with the under-developed world, and in particular when it sought to obtain payment for its arms shipments, the Soviet Union incurred some liabilities with its aid recipients which corresponded to western experiences:

"The Russians have frayed Indonesian tempers by insisting on business-like procedures in accounting and in terms of payment. Like any capitalist lender, the Russians want good management as a collateral".²

The Soviet Union remained immune to the graver political charge of colonialist exploitation and this was its major asset in its political aims.

Its initial arms aid programmes in Asia appear to have been directed at the political embarrassment of the West and particularly the U.S., by the espousal of local interests to which the NATO and SEATO powers were either opposed, or inhibited from similar support, by their alliance relationships. The United States appears to have been especially vulnerable to this form of political attrition in the Eisenhower-Dulles era when neutralism was judged to be immoral but President Kennedy was able to develop some effective

¹ Eugene R. Black, The Diplomacy of Economic Development, Clayton Lectures 1960, Harvard U.P., Cambridge Mass., 1960, p. 14.

² K. Krishna Moorthy, "Russians Harsh to Sukarno", Far Eastern Economic Review, 25 April 1963, p. 225.

responses by his willingness to take political counteraction which did not stop short of offending alliance partners, as in the case of the West-Irian issue and Laotian neutrality. Dutch and Thai sensitivities were relegated to secondary importance in the period 1961-1962 to the primary U.S. aim of maintaining its influence in the countries which were the main targets of Soviet political and military aid activities.

After 1962 and the quickening of the Sino-Soviet dispute after the Cuban episode, Khrushchev showed a major interest in improving his relations with the U.S., by his renewed emphasis on peaceful co-existence and such agreements as the Test-Ban Treaty, but the implementation of the policy of detente was much weaker in Soviet Asian policies. Soviet vulnerability to Chinese charges that it was pursuing revisionist policies, did not allow it to be indifferent to such charges since

"Failure to respond effectively to these criticisms raised the danger of a growing loss of Soviet influence in the more militant circles of the international Communist movement and more especially in the Asian parties, which looked to the Chinese revolution as their model."¹

Soviet vulnerability was most clearly demonstrated in its unenthusiastic support for the Indonesian confrontation with Malaysia. The PKI had denounced the proposed Malaysian federation as a "neo-colonialist scheme" over two years before Sukarno and was the main instigator of the confrontation.² The degree of support which Khrushchev was prepared to give to the confrontation therefore became a factor in maintaining PKI allegiance to the Soviet Union in its dispute with China. Aidit who was earlier noted

¹ Fainsod, op. cit., p. 124.

² Neil Sheehan, "A Single Man in Pursuit of Power", (article on D.N. Aidit) New York Times Magazine, 15 August 1965, p. 13.

for his basically pro-Soviet alignment, as a result of internal manoeuvring in the PKI, increased his power by moving closer to a pro-Chinese policy in mid-1963¹ at the time the Malaysian campaign assumed military forms.

With the increasing identity between Sukarno's policies and the PKI, the farther large extensions of Soviet military aid from mid-1963 on were inevitably tailored by Sukarno for the purposes of a Peking-orientated party. Khrushchev developed no really effective counter to this situation and the military aid which was committed to Indonesia contributed to the ascendancy of the PKI by creating further strains on an already overburdened economy. The army with its administrative responsibilities throughout the economy was the inevitable sufferer from this new external venture since it was subjected to accusations of inefficiency and graft and was the PKI's scapegoat for the deteriorating economic situation. It is assessed that the calculated aim of Sukarno and the PKI was to destroy the power of the army by means of the Malaysian confrontation campaign. Although the diminution of the army's power may once have been a part of Khrushchev's aims in Indonesia it was no longer consistent with his own interests in 1963-64, since the erosion of the army's power could well have resulted in the emergence of another communist state in Asia which opposed his "revisionism".

The Soviet Union lost much goodwill in the under-developed world by its support of Indonesian overt aggression against Malaysia so that its military aid policy was counter-productive in the area of policy where it was supposed to gain maximum political benefits. In addition it strained further the incipient detente with the U.S., as the escalating Malaysian campaign led to a rapid deterioration in U.S. - Indonesian relations.

¹ Howard Feith, "President Sukarno, the Army and the Communists: the Triangle Changes Shape", Asian Survey, Vol. IV, No. 4, August 1964, p. 977.

Ironically, the Soviet Union found itself supporting Sukarno's dichotomy of old Forces (OFOS) and New Established Forces (NEFOS) which bore a direct resemblance to the Zhdanov and Stalinist Two-Camp thesis which Khrushchev had specifically rejected when he set Soviet policy in the new direction of co-existence with different social systems and acceptance of a Third World which in conjunction with the socialist states formed the "Zone of Peace".

Much of the blame for the deteriorating Indonesian situation has been placed at Sukarno's door but while there is merit in Crozier's conclusion that

"If the sin of neglect can be laid at the door of the colonialists, the deadlier sin of political irresponsibility and economic lunacy can be blamed on the architect of Indonesia's independence,"¹

the charge of political irresponsibility can also be levelled at Khrushchev.

Polyansky could well aim his remarks at China after the events of October 1965 when he branded as "fools or provocateurs" any communists who thought they could start or control a local revolutionary movement from a foreign capital, but the criticism has validity also for the irresponsibility of Khrushchev's policies in his last years when he helped to create the conditions which the PKI sought to exploit.

The Soviet Union itself has minimal interest in furthering the expansionist aims of any of its arms recipients and despite the evidence of de facto support for external adventures such as those that Indonesia has engaged in, there is little evidence in the later years of Khrushchev's

¹ Crozier, op. cit., p. 89.

reign that he wished to encourage them. There are accounts that at different times, in Afghanistan, Laos and Indonesia, he sought at least to moderate the form that military action would take and although the Soviet Union was loud in its expressions of support it seldom recommended the initiation of militant action. The emphasis fell increasingly on the repelling of "imperialist actions" rather than the initiation of anti-imperialist ones:

"The peoples who have already liberated themselves can also protect their independence only in struggle, only if they are armed in order to repel the armed-to-the-teeth colonialists and imperialists".¹

This is consistent with other discussions in Soviet military doctrine which reveals much more concern over possible western initiation of limited wars² than that the Soviet Union might itself profit from them, and they have an evident interest in curtailing activities which could escalate into direct East - West conflict because of the risks involved to themselves:

"No single problem of our time, including the most important problems of the national liberation movement can be regarded out of the context of the threat of a thermo-nuclear catastrophe."³

There was a propaganda advantage for the Soviet Union in Mikoyan's statement in Indonesia that

"Not only are these Soviet weapons in your revolutionary armed forces, but there are also Soviet officers who ... are training your officers and soldiers,"⁴

¹ Krushchev, Pravda, 17 March 1962, and Izvestiya, 28 June 1964.

² Raymond Gorthoff, "Military Power in Soviet Policy," Studies on the Soviet Union, Vol. IV, No. 2, p.8.

³ B.G. Gafurov, Moscow Radio, BBC, SWB, Part I, USSR, 5 March 1964.

⁴ Izvestiya, 28 June 1964.

but the direct association of Soviet personnel with current Indonesian military activities was also a political liability and a source of danger to the Soviet Union in its relations with the West.

Considerations of its own ideological supremacy in the communist world have therefore robbed the Soviet Union of the benefits that it would gain from an abandonment of its support for aggressive and militant policies. But by the same token its restraints on militancy have endangered not only its relations with communist allies such as North Vietnam and China, but also some of its non-Communist arms recipients. Afghanistan in the time of Premier Daud's rule and Indonesia in its campaign against Malaysia illustrate the point.

Undoubtedly Soviet interests in stabilizing the situation were reflected in Khrushchev's letter to the Heads of States in December 1963, in which he proposed an international agreement on the renunciation of force for the settlement of territorial disputes, even though the usual subjective and ideological obfuscation of a special category of "just" wars was maintained. The letter also pointed to the interests of the Asian countries themselves in accepting conciliations of their differences:

" ... is it not dangerous for the peoples of Asia to use force for the purpose of altering the State borders existing in that part of the world? They have no need to do that. Indeed the border disputes between some Asian countries are even now having a very adverse effect on their lives.... When border disputes ... assume aggravated forms those states are compelled to maintain and even increase their armed forces, thus using their resources in an unproductive manner. Who gains from this? Certainly not the peoples of those countries which have freed themselves from colonial oppression."¹

¹ United Nations General Assembly, Nineteenth Session, Doc. A/5740, 9 October 1964, p. 9.

Western Heads of State who replied to the letter reacted positively to most of the issues raised by Khrushchev but several criticized his advocacy of "just" disputes as a category apart from the others. Yet Khrushchev's letter was a very moderate document in this respect even on the contentious issue of Vietnam and the examples he cited were of interest.

China's claim to Taiwan was of course included as "just", but in his examples of other disputes he cited the less contentious West Irian issue (on which the Soviet Union had been aligned de facto with the U.S.) rather than the Malaysian confrontation.

The main provisions for the proposed international agreement are of interest also for their potential effect on many limited wars being waged in 1963 and 1964:

"FIRST, a solemn pledge by the States parties to the agreement not to resort to force to alter existing State frontiers;

SECOND, recognition that the territory of States should not, even temporarily, be the object of any invasion, attack, military occupation or other measure of force directly or indirectly undertaken by other States for political, economic, strategic, frontier or other reasons or whatsoever kind;

THIRD, a firm declaration that neither differences in social or political systems, nor denial of recognition or the absence of diplomatic relations, nor any other pretext may serve to justify the violation by one State of the territorial integrity of another;

FOURTH, an undertaking to settle all territorial disputes exclusively by peaceful means, such as negotiation, mediation, conciliation and also other peaceful means at the choice of the parties concerned in accordance with the Charter of the United States,

Needless to say, such an international agreement should cover all territorial disputes concerning the existing borders between States." ¹

¹ ibid. p. 12

It is not suggested that a major opportunity for agreement with Khrushchev was missed by not treating his letter more urgently in late 1963. It was however strongly indicative of Khrushchev's growing concern and disillusionment with the trend of events in S.E. Asia and his own inability to develop effective restraints on the escalating situation in Laos and Indonesia quite apart from the Vietnam problem. At the time his letter was officially inscribed as a United Nations document on 7 October 1964, Khrushchev's opportunity to take any concrete steps to give force to his own recommendations (for example by curtailing arms deliveries to Indonesia) had almost run out and the Security Council had just witnessed another Soviet veto in the previous month, preventing a mild condemnation of Indonesia's acts against Malaysia which the Indonesian delegate did not even deign to deny because they were justified by the "neo-colonialist" nature of the Malaysian Federation. But even while accepting the diplomatic burden of administering this veto on Indonesia's behalf, with no other Security Council member except Czechoslovakia supporting the Soviet position, Khrushchev himself in the same month had concluded a further arms agreement with Sukarno.

Similarly Soviet unwillingness to continue its military aid to the Laotian government in 1963 and 1964 had a deleterious effect on its relations with the U.S. since Kennedy at the time of the Laos agreement of 1962 had made it clear that the agreement was regarded as a test of good faith. The Soviet position that a request for military aid required the unanimous consent of the three Laotian factions had validity but in other cases such as Cyprus where there were similar constitutional provisions safeguarding the minority rights of the Turkish Cypriots, Khrushchev ignored them and

concluded an arms agreement with Makarios. It was not therefore the constitutional or other niceties of the Laotian situation which led to Khrushchev's refusal of Souvanna Phouma's requests but the Soviet Union's own political interests in maintaining its position with North Vietnam and the Pathet Lao.

Both the Indonesian and the Laotian cases tend to demonstrate that when faced with a choice between furthering the detente with the U.S. and aligning itself with the policies of the communist parties of S.E. Asia the Soviet Union chose the latter path.

But its own fears of an escalation in the conflict situations in S.E. Asia led the Soviet Union to put some restraints on the advocates of militancy (as typified by Mikoyan's warnings to Indonesia in 1964) with the result that the latter were not satisfied with the level of Soviet support that was forthcoming. The result was that Soviet policy in Khrushchev's last years served neither the purposes of a detente with the West nor a consolidation of its position with the PKI, Pathet Lao and North Vietnamese.

In India, Soviet military aid was more compatible with a policy of detente with the West, as the main brunt of Soviet policy, despite delays in implementation, was to strengthen Indian defences against China. Given Khrushchev's willingness to provide military aid to India in 1960, the delays in implementing the MIG-21 factory project in the wake of the Sino-Indian clash of October-November 1962, caused India some concern as was evident from the several missions which were sent to Moscow in 1963 and 1964 and

to accelerate the final agreement in detail. Cost was a main factor by press accounts and the usual reports of large discounts being applied to Soviet military aid, have been lacking in the Indian case. The evidence of Indonesian inability to pay its arms debts and the reports that military aid to Laos, Cambodia and Afghanistan have been largely grant aid, would indicate that India is the sole non-communist arms recipient in Asia whose procurement programme from the Soviet Union is on the basis of commercial advantage to the Soviet Union. Soviet support for India against China has not therefore extended itself to any furnishing of grant aid, which indicates that India has remained (and probably will remain) in an unfavourable bargaining position for Soviet military aid as far as payment terms are concerned. By the implementation of other forms of military aid such as additional transport aircraft, surface-to-air missiles and army equipment in the period 1962-64, India was assured of some continuing Soviet military aid support, although this fell far short of what India was supplied from the West. After the U.S.-India agreement of mid-1964, the difficulties in the way of the MIG-21 project were also overcome leading to direct charges by China that:

"whether coming from the U.S. or the Soviet Union, arms obtained by expansionist India constitute the same threat to her neighbours."¹

As the military aid programme to India expanded the Soviet Union was forced also to consider means of conciliating Pakistan. The change of regime in Afghanistan and the toning-down of the Pushtunistan issue

¹ New York Times, 11 October 1964.

had already been useful in this regard and now the Indian requirements for Soviet support vis-a-vis China diminished the Soviet political liability to support India on Kashmir. These developments led, in Krushchev's time, to some changes in Soviet expression of support on this issue. Even though the Security Council debate on Kashmir in May 1964 did not renew the earlier resolutions on a plebiscite because of Soviet resistance, the Soviet delegate did not repeat the earlier categorical Soviet position that Kashmir formed an integral part of India. In September 1964 at the high point of the new major arms aid agreement the joint communique at the end of President Radhakrishnan's visit to Moscow made no mention of Kashmir either. These were preludes to even greater detachment shown by the Soviet Union on the Rahn of Kutch issue in 1965 and to a further move towards neutrality on Kashmir when a solution of the latter problem was described as "urgently necessary". In a major shift from the Khrushchev and Bulganin positions of 1955 an "Observer" article in Pravda said: Let not the imperialists distract the peoples of India and Pakistan from the task of building up¹ their national economies and their struggle for real independence. The awareness of the Soviet Union that Indian requirements for external aid in the defence and development fields are going to be enormous for many years to come, have led it to encourage some understanding between India and Pakistan on the Kashmir issue in the basic calculation that it is senseless from the Soviet point of view for India's defence efforts to be unnecessarily burdened

¹ Pravda, 24 August 1965.

by the front facing Pakistan. It is also in the Soviet Union's interest to de-escalate the Indian requirement for foreign aid, for which India must rely in the main on western donors.

By 1965, Pakistan saw at least sufficient change in Moscow's attitude, to threaten that unless it received a fairly prompt decision from the U.S. on the replacement of its 100 F-86 fighters, it would seek replacements from the Soviet Union.¹

It is not clear how far the Soviet Union could go towards meeting Pakistan's military aid requests without jeopardizing its relations with India but given its interests in stabilizing the sub-continent and preventing the development of a too cordial Sino-Pakistan axis, it is now tasked with the same delicate political situation that the U.S. has been faced with since the Kashmir dispute was aggravated by Khrushchev and Bulganin in 1955, when Soviet motives in Asia were radically different to those it possesses today.

There are signs that the Soviet Union under Khrushchev and more particularly under the new leadership, are prepared to exercise more responsibility in their relations with the under-developed countries and while preserving the image of the Soviet Union as a supporter of national liberation movements, it may be prepared to relegate this activity, with some exaggerations, to a heroic past which may no longer be relevant to current Soviet interests:

¹ Winnipeg Free Press, 12 August 1965.

"During the earlier stage of the national liberation revolution, when its chief goal was the overthrow of the colonial regimes, the socialist states rendered great moral, political, and material support, including weapons, to the peoples who had risen in battle for freedom. In the countries where colonial rule was smashed by military means - Algeria, for example - the patriots gained victory with the help of weapons supplied by the states of socialism."¹

The enhancement of political and peaceful means as opposed to violence is now supported by the Soviet Union in its ideology out of humanitarian considerations as well as its own interests in creating greater stability in the under-developed world.

"Those people who permit themselves contemptuously to criticize the peaceful forms of the national liberation struggle forget that victory gained by this means corresponds most of all to the vital interests of the peoples. The way of peaceful struggle saves millions of human lives, has saved from destruction millions of hectares of fertile fields and gardens, and has prevented the destruction of irrigation installations, roads, power stations, industrial enterprises, cultural and public service establishments. In a word, the peaceful way of gaining political independence, which has become possible, of course, only because of the existence of the socialist comity of nations, has saved from destruction or spoilage vast human and material resources which can immediately be put at the service of the peoples who have liberated themselves from colonialist oppression."²

If the Soviet Union is able to impress these sentiments on the policies of the under-developed countries by political means including particularly its military aid policy, Khrushchev's aspirations for a detente with the West will be served but the problem of reconciling this policy with the Chinese challenge to its authority in the communist states, remains as difficult for his successors as it was for Khrushchev himself.

¹ Pravda, 7 August 1963.

² B.F. Gafurov, Moscow Radio, BBC, SWB, Part I, USSR, 5 March 1964.

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