

**V.K. KRISHNA MENON
AND
INDIA'S FOREIGN POLICY**

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UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF
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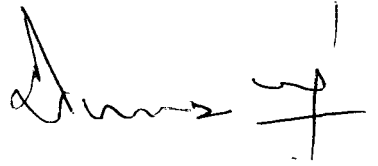
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DECLARATION

I, K.T. Varkey K.C. Thomas, Research Scholar, Dept. of Education.
do hereby declare that this thesis has not previously formed the
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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that this thesis, 'V.K.Krishna Menon and India's Foreign Policy', submitted for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of the University of Calicut, is a record of bonafide research carried out by K.T.Varkey ^{K.C.Thomas} under my supervision. No part of the thesis has been submitted for any degree before.



Dr. C.N.SOMARAJAN
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PREFACE

The present study examines and analyses the foreign policy of India with a view to finding its genesis, justification, philosophic postulates and efficacy. The work further examines the contributions of various statesmen in the formulation of India's foreign policy with special reference to V.K. Krishna Menon. It also throws light on various national and international issues that cropped up during the post-world war period which threatened regional and global peace, and the efforts made by India in general and Krishna Menon in particular for lessening world tension and finding just solutions for many of these issues.

I am very much indebted to many great persons who have been sources of inspiration to me in this endeavour. Most of all I should like to place on record my deep sense of gratitude to Dr. C.N. Somarajan, Reader, Department of Political Science, University College, Trivandrum, who has been my guide and supervisor in this study. I also record my sincere thanks and gratitude to A.K. Damodaran, IFS, former Policy Planning Expert in the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, V.K. Madhavan Kutty, Bureau Chief, Asianet, New Delhi, Dr. Suhash Chakravarty, Professor, Department of History, Delhi University, Dr. Gangadharan Nambiar, Department of History, University of Calicut, Dr. Gopinatha Pillai, Department of Political Science, Government College, Nedumangad, S. Gopal Rao, former Editor, Link, New Delhi

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I also record my gratitude to the Librarian and members of the staff Indian Council of World Affairs Library, Sapru House, new Delhi, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, Teen Murty House, New Delhi, Indian Council for Social Science Research, New Delhi, Jawaharlal Nehru University Library, New Delhi, British Library, Bangalore and Montrix Communications, Bangalore for their whole-hearted co-operation in collecting the data for this work. I owe a special debt of gratitude to Prof. Ravindra Kumar, Director, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, Dr. Hari Dev Sharma, Deputy Director, Dr. Chandra Mohan, Research Officer, Sri. S.A. Abidi, former Librarian, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi, for their advice and guidance in completing this work. More than anything I express my thanks to Sri. C. Ramakrishnan who typed the manuscript in all stages of its development and prepared the final version.

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

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INTRODUCTION

Reason and emotion, logic and passion, sarcasm and affection combined paradoxically in Krishna Menon's life to make him one of the most fascinating personalities of our time. It also made him one of the most misunderstood of our contemporaries.¹ During his long innings in public life Krishna Menon strove hard with courage, vision and perseverance for the cause of India's freedom and subsequently, for building a strong India and placing her among the comity of nations as the torch-bearer of the exploited and marginalised peoples of Asia and Africa. Krishna Menon spent many years in England working with determination and devotion for the cause of India's freedom. He chose India League as the forum for fighting the cause of India. By 1928, when Krishna Menon was elected the Joint Secretary of the Commonwealth of India League, he had been successful in defining its objectives.²

The role of the Commonwealth of India League encompassed a whole range of political activity. It continued to persuade the British public to respond positively to the Indian cause; it developed the most effective Indian lobby in the British parliament; and established a close affinity with a section of

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1. R. Venkitaraman, *Foreword* in V.K. Madhavan Kutty, *V.K. Krishna Menon* (New Delhi, 1988), p. vii.
 2. Suhash Chakravarty, *V.K. Krishna Menon and the India League 1925-47*. Vol. I (New Delhi, 1977), p. 6.

the Labour Party. Under Krishna Menon's leadership it became a movement.³

Passionately devoted to the cause of India's freedom, Krishna Menon set himself at work to transform the Commonwealth of India League from a passive lobby in the British political system into a dynamic organisation and turned its activists into active proponents for India's freedom. Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma, the former President of India observes:

Krishna Menon became the moving spirit and inspiration behind the India League. His speeches, articles, pamphlets, constant and intensive interaction with opinion makers and the forging of contacts between Indian leaders and British politicians contributed to a growing awareness in Britain about the reality of the Indian situation. These efforts strengthened the opinion, especially, among the socialists and the Labour Party that India's freedom was an imperative, which could not be denied or even delayed.⁴

Harold Laski, the eminent Socialist Professor, friend and mentor of Krishna Menon who later became the Chairman of the Labour Party, believed that Krishna Menon had played a very considerable part in the conversion of the Labour Party to a sense of duty that it had to perform.⁵ Suhash Chakravarty testifies to the role played by him in England thus:

3. *idem.*

4. Shankar Dayal Sharma, *Speech at the Fifth Centenary Celebrations of V.K.Krishna Menon* in the Central Hall of Parliament (New Delhi, May 6, 1997), p. 2.

5. *Idem.*

Krishna Menon and the India League were ever active with public meetings, discussions, symposiums and special courses on India. The key figure of the movement was Krishna Menon himself who showed remarkable flexibility in interacting with organisations and individuals of different persuasions. Thus, the Quakers, Christian Free Church, labour organisations, women's movements, various social organisations, the League of Nations, the Union of Democratic Control, the Fabians, the Liberals, the Independent Labour Party, the organisations for the Self-determination of nations,... the Pacifists, intellectuals, and the Indian student organisations in Britain were nursed and brought as far as possible under a single sympathetic umbrella and were provided with a programme.⁶

Krishna Menon's extraordinary abilities and his singleness of purpose were realised by Mahatma Gandhi during his visit to England in 1931 for the Round Table Conference. Addressing India League, which was campaigning for India's cause and whose moving spirit was Krishna Menon, Gandhiji complimented the League for its hurricane propaganda on the danger to world peace of a rebellious India in bondage. Krishna Menon impinged on British consciousness as the irrepressible embodiment of the will of India to be free. In 1940, Krishna Menon went to the United States of America to seek support for India's freedom movement. Nehru wrote introducing Krishna Menon to America:

Of all countries in the world USA has a vital part to play in the terrible crisis that envelops all of us... We in India value American opinion and the idealism and democracy that underline it. I trust that our countrymen in

6. Suhash Chakravarty, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

America, as well as American friends and sympathisers with our cause, will help V.K. Krishna Menon and that this visit of his will lead to a closer understanding between the two countries.⁷

Krishna Menon was appointed the High Commissioner to Great Britain by the Government of India in 1947. Being India's first High Commissioner to Britain he successfully laid a firm foundation for Indo-British relations.

The skill of debate, discussion, negotiation, forceful persuasion and conciliation honed in the boroughs of London and in the forums of Labour Party, were put to effective use by Krishna Menon, first as independent India's High Commissioner to the United Kingdom and later at the United Nations.⁸

Krishna Menon's association with the United Nations had begun in 1946 as a member of the Indian delegation, working as Nehru's personal envoy. K.R. Narayanan, the President of India, writes on the performance of Krishna Menon in the United Nations thus:

For a little more than a decade Krishna Menon was India's voice in the United Nations. With lucidity and force of logic and conviction he articulated in the world forum Jawaharlal Nehru's ideas and approaches in foreign policy as well as vision of a new and equitable world order.⁹

7. V.K. Madhavan Kutty, *Builders of Modern* (New Delhi, 1988), p. 87.

8. Shankar Dayal Sharma, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

9. K.R. Narayanan, *Foreword* in E.S. Reddy and A.K. Damodaran (Eds.), *Krishna Menon on Kashmir* (New Delhi, 1992), p. vi.

Nehru appreciated fully the work done by Menon in U.N.O. He, thus, wrote to the Chief Ministers on December 30, 1955, praising the work of Indian delegation led by Krishna Menon in the United Nations:

India's delegation has received praise for its work from a variety of countries. Everyone recognised the outstanding part of India during this session and the extra-ordinary resourcefulness that our delegation showed in finding solutions to difficult problems... The leader of our delegation, Shri. V.K. Krishna Menon, was largely responsible for the great success of our delegation's work. Indeed, he was the outstanding figure during this session of the U.N. General Assembly. Apart from many expressions of appreciation of our work, I have received special messages commending the work of our delegation and its leader from the Government of France and Canada. India played a notable part also in the admission of the sixteen new member-states.¹⁰

Krishna Menon's contributions in the United Nations to resolve complex issues that confronted the world threatening to plunge it into yet another world disaster were lauded by leaders the world over. R. Venkitaraman observes:

Krishna Menon was like a Seismograph in the United Nations, vibrating to every fluctuation in world affairs and registering India's reactions to each one of them. There was such a thing as a Menon scale which, like Richter's recorded vibrations of different intensity depending on the gravity of the

10. Jawaharlal Nehru, *Letters to Chief Ministers, December 30, 1955*, V. 4, pp. 327-328.

tremor. And so Krishna Menon at the UN was capable of cautioning, warning and exposing every specious move on the part of the big powers.¹¹

Menon viewed his role in the United Nations as a series of assignments where he had popularised India's foreign policy. But, it was his triumph in this area, especially the Kashmir debate, that catapulted him into active politics. Krishna Menon was elected to Rajya Sabha in 1953. In 1957 he was elected to the Lok Sabha from Bombay City North Constituency defeating his nearest rival Peter Alvares, by a margin of 47741 votes.¹² In April 1957, Nehru inducted Krishna Menon into the Union Cabinet as the Defence Minister. The appointment of this able confidant of Nehru was hailed as a harbinger of greater defence awareness in the Cabinet. It was hoped that the stalemate in the functioning of the Ministry of Defence and of Finance would be broken.¹³ He strove hard to lay a firm foundation for making our armed forces strong and self-reliant. His role and contributions in the regard are widely recognised:

It is an acknowledged fact that Krishna Menon was instrumental in laying solid foundations for self-reliance in the sphere of defence production crucial for safeguarding and defending our freedom. If today we have developed a well diversified net-work of ordinance factories and have made commendable strides towards our goal of self-reliance in the requirements of

11. R. Venkataraman, *Foreword* in E.S. Reddy and A.K. Damodaran (Eds.), *Krishna Menon at the United Nations* (New Delhi, 1994), p. viii.

12. In 1957 election Krishna Menon polled 171708 votes while his nearest rival Peter Alvares polled 123967 votes. *Link*, February 12, 1967, p. 10.

13. Brig. J.P. Palvi, *Himalayan blunder* (Dehra Dun, 1969), p. 457.

the Army, Navy and Air Force, we should be thankful to Krishna Menon for the vision and determination with which he worked.¹⁴

In spite of his earnest efforts to overhaul the armed forces which India inherited from Great Britain, and make themselves-reliant, the Chinese aggression had led to his resignation from the Cabinet and subsequently from the Congress Party. Despite these unexpected developments and the sad and sudden demise of Jawaharlal Nehru, Krishna Menon's relevance was not doubted by the electorate of Bombay. It is clear from the fact that they prevailed upon him to fight the 1967 general election from their city as a non-party candidate. The decision to sever his links with an organisation which he had served for 35 years was not an easy one for Menon. While he was not apologetic for his past association, he certainly did not wish to be a prisoner in an organisation which had ceased to be the vehicle of social and economic advancement.¹⁵ Krishna Menon had reminded the people time and again after his exit from the congress Party that he had no quarrel with the Congress policy pledges. He regarded them as progressive. But he thought that the decision-making in the Congress no longer rested with elements who believed in the Congress pledges and programmes but with forces whose lack of faith in them and whose aim of bringing about a total change in the direction of Congress

14. Shankar Dayal Sharma's Speech, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

15. The Battle of Bombay, *Link*, February 12, 1967, p. 11.

polities.¹⁶ Rajagopalachari, focussing the importance of Krishna Menon's election from Bombay, wrote to the organisers of Menon's election campaign in 1957:

Not even Jawaharlal Nehru's return at the elections--certain as it is--is so important as Krishna Menon's victory in the Bombay elections. After his brave and single-handed fight in the Council of the United Nations, united in their hostility to India, if he should by any chance of mishap fail to be returned in Bombay what would be left of the prestige of India before the world?¹⁷

Balraj Sahni, the popular film star, told a Bombay audience during the 1962 elections:

Characteristically, Menon loved the hardest role in a political struggle. In the days of the fight for freedom, he chose to carry the battle to the enemy's camp—England—rather than fight in home ground. Today also he has chosen to fight reaction in the citadel and refused to retreat to a safer constituency.¹⁸

In the estimate of Bombay's voters, Krishna Menon's victory was important not merely from the political point of view of national progress but from the point of view of India's prestige abroad as a nation jealous of its freedom and wedded to the

16. *idem.*

17. *idem.*

18. *idem.*

common ideal of a world rid of war and all forms of oppression.¹⁹ Proud as he was an Indian and an Asian, Krishna Menon was in many ways an ideal world citizen.²⁰

METHODOLOGY

Indian Foreign Policy is a challenging development rooted in our tradition, history and ideology in retaliation to the policy of domination and colonisation of the West. Indian National Congress under the direction of Nehru evolved it from 1920s focussing it on the problems of world peace, anti-colonialism and anti-racialism. Speaking at Colombia University in 1949, Nehru elaborated on the goal of Indian Foreign Policy thus:

India is a very old country with a great past. But, it is a new country also with new urges and desires. Inevitably she had to consider her foreign policy in terms of enlightened self-interest, but, at the same time, she brought to it a touch of her idealism. Thus she had tried to combine idealism with national interest.²¹

Central to Nehru's concept was non-alignment which is a refusal to make any commitment, political or military, in advance to any nation or bloc. The framers of our foreign policy provided this new concept with tangible ideological, political and practical content. The present study examines the over all perspective of Indian foreign policy, its historical and ideological content, its efficacy and

19. *idem.*

20. *idem.*

21. Robert L. Hardgrave Jr. *Indian Government and Politics in a Developing Nations* (New Delhi, 1979), p. 213.

limitations with special reference to the contributions of V.K Krishna Menon who occupied a position second only to Nehru from 1953 or even earlier until late 1962, among the decision-making elite of India. Krishna Menon observes:

Non-alignment is not an extraneous theory imported into our policy or body politic. It has partly grown out of the circumstances of the 20th century world and the dangers and fears to which it is so ominously subject. It has more than once assisted to avert world catastrophe. It is the essential projection of our national being, and our sense and fact of independence into international relations.²²

Menon made major contributions to the evolution and practice of India's foreign policy, in its search for the co-existence of nations in modern world and to the philosophy of international relations in the nuclear age. In the formulation of India's foreign policy he has provided Nehru with the substance for building a rational policy by posting him with the information on the ground realities of Europe, which he was in a position to do by virtue of his continued stay in England for almost a quarter of century. He also appraised Nehru of the changing world scenario and suggested how India could steer clear in the then existing cold war situations. Nehru, the percipient observer and erudite decision maker, used these tools for knitting the fabric of India's policy of non-alignment. Krishna Menon became the chief spokes-man outside India of our newly found policy of

22. V.K. Krishna Menon, "Democracy, Socialism and Emergency." *Link*, January 27, 1963, p. 21.

non-alignment and sought to legitimise its philosophy in the West that had viewed it with great suspicion. He spoke authoritatively and convinced the world in general and Afro-Asian nations in particular about the relevance and efficacy of the policy of non-alignment. His silver fluid intellect and eloquence made this policy a common possession of the newly emerged nation-states. Nehru's erudition combined with Krishna Menon's knowledge and familiarity of European situations and his ability to relate these situations with the realities of India facilitated the formulation and practice of India's foreign policy.

The present study is divided into Nine chapters including the introduction and conclusion. It begins with an extensive investigation into Krishna Menon's childhood, education both in India and England, his involvement in various associations in India, his efforts for Indian independence through the India League in England and his growing up as a responsible Indian who cared for his brethren in his motherland. The study focuses attention on the circumstances and the processes of the evolution of India's foreign policy and the valuable contributions made by him. The study also examines the practice of India's newly evolved policy of non-alignment in different world situations in the Post-World War II arena with special reference to the contributions of Krishna Menon, in the membership of India in the Commonwealth of Nations as a Republic, India's role as a leader and mediator in the Asian-African Conference at Bandung, Geneva Conference on Indo-China, Korean Crisis, Hungarian uprising and Congo crisis. Krishna Menon had been

India's voice in the United Nations for almost a decade from 1952-62. The study examines his efforts in preserving world peace and for the cause of disarmament. The Kashmir problem which was taken to the United Nations by India in good faith had been in shambles when Krishna Menon reached the U.N as the leader of the Indian delegation. An effort is made to find out the extent of success Krishna Menon achieved in convincing the General Assembly and the Security Council of the UN on the merit of India's claim to Kashmir as an integral part of India. Krishna Menon became India's Defence Minister in 1957 and overhauled the armed forces India inherited, and took keen interest in making it self-reliant. During his tenure, Indian Military successfully liberated Goa in 1961 from the occupation of the Portuguese and won the praise of the whole nation. But, the Chinese Aggression of India in 1962 was a setback resulting in a humiliating defeat of India, which led to the resignation of Krishna Menon from the Central Cabinet and subsequently from the Congress Party.

A serious effort is made in this study to highlight Menon's efforts to liberate India from British imperialism, his contributions towards the evolution and practice of India's foreign policy and defence policy, his articulation of India's views on a variety of international issues such as Disarmament, Great Power Rivalries, Korea, Indo-China, Suez, Congo, Hungary, Kashmir, the Arab- Israel Conflict, the admission of China into the United Nations, the liberation struggles in Africa, the

action in Goa, the circumstances that led to the Chinese debacle and the overall perspective of India's foreign policy.

SURVEY OF LITERATURE

The study on "Krishna Menon and India's Foreign Policy" attempts a detailed and descriptive analyses of the theory and practice of India's foreign policy with special emphasis on the contributions of Krishna Menon. Notwithstanding Menon's great contributions to the evolution and practice of India's foreign policy, no serious effort had been made so far to highlight it and in the process the world came to believe that Indian foreign policy is Nehru's policy. True to his nature Krishna Menon too had not left any important document indicating his achievements and contributions for the benefit of posterity. Hence his political philosophy, efforts towards India's freedom movement, and the contributions towards the evolution and practice of India's foreign policy are still unknown. In order to establish the credentials of Krishna Menon the researcher has used the primary and secondary sources available in India exhaustively.

Krishna Menon papers preserved in the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, Teen Murty Bhavan, New Delhi had been scanned thoroughly to learn the work he had done in England from 1925 to 1947. It is unfortunate that a good number of documents pertaining to Krishna Menon are not open to scholars for

certain reasons. The researcher has referred to the Proceedings of Indian Parliament, Documents published and unpublished by the Government of India, UN Publications, books and journals, news papers and periodicals having reference to Krishna Menon of the relevant period. The researcher acknowledges the gratitude to the authors and editors of; selected works of Jawaharlal Nehru, Biographies of Krishna Menon, Biography of Jawaharlal Nehru, Krishna Menon's Speeches in the UN edited and compiled; Jawaharlal Nehru's letters to the Chief Ministers, books on Indian Foreign Policy, International Relations, Chinese Aggression, Krishna Menon and India League, India and World Politics. The researcher has also examined the journals like, International Affairs, USI Journals, India Quarterly, International studies, Foreign Affairs Reports, International Journal, Foreign Affairs, Modern Review, Link, Main Stream and Yojana and News papers like, The Hindu, The Indian Express, The Statesman and The Herald of the relevant period for the purposes of the study.

The Researcher also had extensive and detailed discussions and interviews with a good number of persons who were privileged to associate or work with Krishna Menon. Prominent among them are AK. Damodaran, V.K. Madhavankutty, Janaki Ram, Sri Gopala Rao, Suhash Chakravarty, E.X. Joseph and T.J.S. George.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study on V.K. Krishna Menon and India's Foreign Policy tries to examine the contributions of Menon in a wider perspective, with a view to bringing into light his contributions for the liberation of India from British colonialism, formulation and practice of her Foreign Policy and Defence Policy, the circumstances which led to the Chinese debacle culminating in his resignation from the Union Ministry and subsequently from the Congress Party itself. It also makes an indepth study of the causes of the eruption of various International issues which threatened the world peace and the efforts made by India in general and Menon in particular to lessen the world tension and to find solutions to such catastrophe, within and outside the United Nations. There is no dearth of works on the evolution and practice of India's Foreign Policy and on its applications in various national and international situations both in India and abroad. These studies also trace the circumstances under which India's Foreign Policy originated, its course of development, its efficacy, justification and so on.

In all the published works on the evolution and practice of India's Foreign Policy, Nehru is described as the architect of India's Foreign Policy. It should be noted that India's Foreign Policy has sprung from our tradition and culture; it was inherent in the age-old national ethos and philosophic postulates. Nehru himself admitted that he had not originated any policy as such. It is true that Indian Foreign

Policy is an extension of its Domestic Policy and Domestic Policy is the manifestation of its longing for growth and stability in consonance with the nation's geography, tradition and culture and the cherished aspirations of the people. But there is no denying the fact that policies whether Domestic or Foreign do not evolve by itself. A nation's policy is the outcome of the deliberate actions of that small group of men who make decisions about the nation. In that sense, as the first Prime Minister of India, Nehru had given sense and direction to both Domestic and Foreign Policies

A detailed study of the formulation and practice of Indian Foreign Policy reveals that along with Nehru, Krishna Menon had been instrumental in formulating the Foreign Policy of India and its skilful application in a variety of national and international situations. But in all the works on India's Foreign Policy Menon is not given the due place he deserves. This marginalisation of Krishna Menon led the world to believe that Nehru is the sole architect of India's Foreign Policy and came to call it Nehru's Policy.

Similarly the role of Krishna Menon in India's Freedom Struggle had not been recognised till Dr. Suhash Chakravarty made an extensive study on Krishna Menon and India League. True, Krishna Menon was not in India to be seen in the mainstream of Indian Politics during Indian Independence Movement; but was actively campaigning for India's freedom, fighting in the citadel of the enemy. It is

a gross injustice to this crusader for India's freedom, not to have given the place of honour in the annals of Indian History.

As the Defence Minister, Menon formulated a Defence Policy to make Indian Armed Forces self-reliant and strong. He thought that the armaments required for the Indian Defence Forces could be indigenously manufactured. He firmly believed that India, and the liberated countries, must build-up self-reliance and exhorted them not to forget the lessons of history. But the Finance Ministry as well as the detractors of Krishna Menon could not appreciate his efforts in developing indigenous production of Defence related materials. Nehru had candidly admitted the fact that the Chinese debacle was due to a colossal negligence on the part of the Government and no single person could be held responsible for it. Notwithstanding the great strides the Armed Forces made during Menon's tenure as Defence Minister, the Chinese debacle was attributed to him and he had to resign from the Ministry and subsequently from the Congress Party.

Next to Jawaharlal Nehru, Krishna Menon was the most knowledgeable and able exponent of India's Foreign Policy. Menon was a man highly respected abroad, perhaps even more than in India. Yet, he was more an Indian at heart than most Indians understood and helped implement India's Foreign Policy, more than any other. Krishna Menon's role behind the scene at the Geneva Conference of 1954, his aid to Nehru at Bandung Conference in 1955, the Suez Crisis in 1956, and

the Balgrade Conference in 1961 are a few instance relevant in this regard. Krishna Menon made his own Political Contributions while interpreting India's policies and thus strengthened them. He restored the prestige of India and infused new life into India's case on Kashmir at the United Nations after it had been mishandled before 1957.

It is necessary for the present and the coming generations to know this great son of India in the right perspective. When Krishna Menon died at the age of 78, the then Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi provided the most appropriate summing up of that eventful life. "A volcano is extinct". Notwithstanding his great contributions, history has not given him the due place he deserved. Menon too was responsible for depriving history of his own stories despite the advice of his well-wishers, including Lord Mount Batten. The present study endeavours to unveil the great contributions made by V.K. Krishna Menon for his motherland..

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

A major problem concerned with this study has been the dearth of source materials. There are a good number of book on India's Foreign Policy, but the contributions of Krishna are conspicuously missing in these work. The published works on Krishna Menon are mostly biographies which enlighten us on various aspects of his life. Some of the woks throw light on his achievements and failures as the Defence Minister of India. His activities in England during the Indian

Independence Movement, his achievements as High Commissioner in Great Britain, and his contributions for the formulation and practice of India's Foreign Policy are not properly recorded and acknowledged. Since he spent most of his life abroad and the remaining part in Delhi, he did not have many close friends or associates in Kerala who would have thrown some light on the works and achievements of Krishna Menon.

Despite the fact that, he was very proud of his land of birth, destiny willed that he live away from his place of birth. Though he had many friends abroad, he did not have many in India more particularly in Kerala, except for a few who worked under him. It seems that the historians and others working on India's Independence Movements and Indian Foreign Policy have sidelined Krishna Menon; probably with a view to projecting the Indian Foreign Policy as the brainchild of Nehru. True to the nature of Krishna Menon, he had not reduced any of his contributions to writing. Probably his habit of being too Independent and also his intolerance to those power-crazy mediocre politicians made him the most misunderstood of his contemporaries. This might be one of the reasons for not having got wide currency for the great contributions he had made for the country.

The Krishna Menon papers, preserved at the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, Teen Murty Bhavan, New Delhi are the best source available to make a detailed study of Krishna Menon. But most of them are not available for scholars

for certain technical reasons. However, there are references to Krishna Menon and his contributions, in various articles published in News Papers and other periodicals lying scattered, which are incoherent though, are not available in any of the libraries in Kerala. So the researcher had to depend on the libraries in Delhi, Bangalore and Madras to collect data required for the study.

Chapter II

**KRISHNA MENON AND
INDIA'S FREEDOM STRUGGLE**

Vengalil Krishnan Kunjikirishna Menon was born on May 3, 1896 in his mother's ancestral house, Vengalil at Panniyankara, a suburb of Calicut town in the erstwhile Malabar District of Madras Presidency.¹ The Vengalil house was founded by Narayani Amma and Palakkad Raman Menon, Krishna Menon's great grand parents. Raman Menon, Krishna Menon's grand father, was a well known Diwan Peishkar in the State of Travancore, a princely State in South Kerala.² Raman Menon and Narayani Amma had four sons and four daughters. One of their daughters, Valiyammalu Amma had only one daughter, Lakshmi Kutty Amma, an exceptionally charming, intelligent and obstinate lady.³ While Lakshmi Kutty was in her teenage, Komath Krishna Kurup, the son of a prince of the Kadathanad royal family whose feudatory authority extended over a large territory north of Calicut, came for his education to Calicut.⁴ As Lakshmikutty Amma fascinated him, he frequented the house of Koothali Nair culminating in their marriage in 1889.⁵

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1. T.J.S. George, *V.K.Krishna Menon: A Biography*, Trans. by K.N. Gopalan Nair (Kottayam, 1964), p. 35.
 2. *ibid.*, p.41.
 3. *ibid.*, p. 42.
 4. V.K. Madhavan Kutty, *op. cit.*, p. 11.
 5. T.J.S. George, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

Krishna Kurup after obtaining B.A and B.L degrees from Madras University became a Lawyer at Tellicherry and settled there.

From the beginning of his career at the Bar in Tellicherry, Krishna Kurup was known for his forensic ability and fine character. Endowed with abilities of no mean order and well versed in various branches of law, it did not take long for Krishna Kurup to forge ahead and attain a place among the top leaders of the Tellicherry Bar. He was a person of high integrity and it used to be said of him that he was unyielding in the matters of opinion which he considered to be sound.⁶ Krishna Kurup had eight children of whom Krishna Menon was the third. Others were Chinnammalu Amma, Janaki Amma, Raman Menon, Kochu Narayani, Kunjilakshmi, Ammukutty and Padmavathy.⁷

Unlike other parts of India, the Malabar coast has a peculiarity and uniqueness of its own. The matriarchal system of descent which prevailed there from time immemorial continues even today. The name Vengalil is the name of the 'Marumakkathayam' (Matriarchal) family or 'tharavad' he belonged to. 'Marumakkathayam' is a system of joint family with property right for all its female members. It is a corporation of sorts and descent is traced through women. A mother and all her children, male and female, constitute the nucleus of 'tharavad' without the father being a member of it; descendants of the male members have no

6. V.K. Madhavan Kutty, *op. cit.*, pp. 10-11.

7. T.J.S. George, *op. cit.*, p. 46.

property right in the family.⁸ That is how the son of Komath Krishna Kurup became Vengalil Kunjkrishnan Krishna Menon.

His early education was in Tellicherry at the Municipal Lower Secondary School and at the Brennen High School. In 1910, the family moved to Calicut because of the illness of his mother and also because of a new house, named 'Eranampalam' that had been constructed by his father at Panniyankara, Calicut. The education of Krishna Menon was continued in what was then known as the Native High School, Calicut, now known as Ganapath High School from which institution he matriculated in 1913.⁹ In June that year he joined the Zamorin's College Calicut, presently known as Zamorin's Guruvayurappan College, and remained there for a period of two years till May 1915, when he passed the Intermediate Examination of the Madras University, with Ancient History, Modern History and Logic as optional subjects.¹⁰

On completion of Intermediate, Krishna Menon was sent to the Presidency College, Madras to pursue his higher education. Commanding a panoramic view of Bay of Bengal, Presidency College, on the Marina, was considered one of the

8. V.K. Madhavan Kutty, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

9. *ibid.*, p. 12.

10. *idem.*.

foremost colleges in India at that time.¹¹ He chose Economics and History as his main subjects.¹²

At the Presidency College, however, Menon got his first exposure to the world and he took advantage of the opportunity to work out the terms of reference of his own independent quest for life.¹³ The period of Menon's stay in the college as a student was marked by a fresh spurt of nationalist feelings in the Madras Presidency. Adayar's Theosophical Society was the centre of that upsurge presided over by Annie Beasant, who launched the Home Rule League transcending organised national sentiments in areas hitherto untouched by it.¹⁴

About this time in 1915 back in Kerala, Janaki Amma came into contact with the Theosophical movement that had a great impact on the family. Her enthusiasm was soon communicated to her brother, Krishna Menon in Madras.¹⁵ The Theosophical Society was founded in 1875 by an American, Colonel Olcott and a Russian, Madam Blavatsky. Its headquarters were a sprawling estate, situated on the banks of the Adayar river in Madras. This paradise, with its large

11. Janaki Ram, *V.K. Krishna Menon: A Personal Memoir* (New Delhi, 1977), p. 5.

12. T.J.S. George, *op. cit.*, p. 66.

13. Suhash Chakravarty, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

14. *idem.*

15. Janaki Ram, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

shady trees and beautiful estuary that was home to a variety of exotic birds was a heaven for Krishna Menon.¹⁶

The three declared objects of the society were: 1. To form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity without distinction of race, creed, sex or colour. 2. To encourage the study of comparative religion, philosophy and science. 3. To investigate the unexplained laws of Nature and the Powers latent in man.¹⁷

It was during this period that Krishna Menon came into contact with Dr. Annie Beasant, the then President of the Theosophical Society in whom he found the real role-model he has been seeking and that made a tryst with his destiny. He soon became an ardent 'Home Ruler'. Inheriting the legacy of a great tradition, he soon transformed himself into a revolutionary and that it was instinctive rather than deliberate. He had by then developed a disdain for imperialism and that he went to defy the evils attached to the imperialist rule in India. He was bold, fearless, and was not too concerned about the consequences and that was the trait of his personality which made him one of the most noble citizens of India as also the most misunderstood. He became very much involved with theosophy and the Home Rule Movement even at the cost of his studies in the college. A few years earlier

16. *ibid.*, pp.5-6.

17. *ibid.*, p. 6.

Jawaharlal Nehru too had been drawn towards the Home Rule League. By various acts and speeches, Menon had earned the envy of all those who came across him.

Krishna Menon was once instrumental in hoisting the Home Rule Flag with red and green colours on the flag staff of the college building which action greatly surprised the English Principal, Prof. H.J. Allen and the staff of the college. It was feared that the authorities would take recourse to drastic action by expelling him from the college, but the principal viewed the matter lightly and let him off with a warning.¹⁸

Under Dr. Beasant's guidance, Krishna Menon devoted much of his time for the Boy Scout Movement. He, later became the Scout Commissioner for Malabar and the Cochin State. However, his probing and revolutionary mental make up deterred him from pursuing his studies the way his father Krishna Kurup wanted him.

Krishna Menon graduated in 1917 and joined the Law College as his father wished. But he never took examinations. In 1918 he had joined the Theosophical Society as a full-fledged member and become even more involved in its activities.¹⁹ His most distinguished act at the Law College was when he openly flouted rules by donning the national dress as advocated by Mrs. Beasant - the dhoti and kurta. This

18. V.K. Madhavan Kutty, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

19. Janaki Ram, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

was to be his mode of dress in India till the end of his days. The Law College authorities were far less tolerant of Menon's defiance, especially when he topped his national dress literally and figuratively with a long, red and green muffler. He was threatened with dismissal, but refused to yield.²⁰

Even in his college days in Madras, Krishna Menon was considered to be an aggressive speaker. Much to the embarrassment of the teachers and senior government officials, he used to speak about the legitimacy of the freedom struggle and about the way in which indigenous aspirations were being stifled by the foreign government.²¹

As Dr. Annie Beasant had joined the Congress, soon after she started the Home Rule Movement in India similar to the Home Rule Movement in Ireland, the Theosophical Society also had assumed a political role. Lokmanya Tilak who after his long prison terms had shaken off his extremist image and had been re-admitted into the Congress, too started a Home Rule Movement.²² However, the area of operation of Mrs. Beasant's and Tilak's movements were clearly demarcated.

As the Headquarters of the Theosophical Society was at Madras, it was here that Dr. Beasant's Home Rule League was most active. Her medium of educating people about the activities and aspirations of the Home Rule League was simple,

20. *idem*.

21. V.K. Madhavan Kutty, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

22. Janaki Ram, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

i.e., by lectures, pamphlets and news letters. These were the methods that Krishna Menon learnt and used effectively in the India League later. The Home Rule Movement of Dr. Beasant was Menon's first encounter with politics. He seemed to have thrown himself headlong into it. Jawaharlal Nehru, in far away Allahabad, too became a theosophist and became joint secretary of the local branch of the Home Rule League.²³

Two major achievements of Menon during his Presidency College days were the award of the Oppert Prize in 1915 and Elliot Prize in 1918. The Oppert Prize was instituted by the pupils of Dr. Gustav Oppert, late Professor of the College, basically to encourage the study of Sanskrit. Menon was awarded the prize for having specially distinguished himself in the discipline. Proficiency in Sanskrit stood him in good stead.²⁴ The Elliot Prize was instituted by the pupils of E.H. Elliot in order to commemorate his connection with the college and encourage the study of English literature and language. In 1918 Menon bagged the prize and developed a remarkable mastery over the language. Clarity, comprehension, wit, sarcasm and irony, conceptualisation, literary allusion--all within the ambit of Menon's extensive range of references--rendered his prose persuasive and compelling.²⁵

23. *ibid.*, p. 7.

24. Suhash Chakravarty, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

25. *ibid.*, pp. 35-36.

In consonance with the movement for Home Rule in India Beasant was keen to inaugurate an organisation in England and she found her enthusiastic supporter in Emily Luytons, the daughter of Lord Luytons, one time Viceroy of India.²⁶ After much spade work both in India and England, the Home Rule for India League (British Auxiliary) was formed in 1916 at 1 Robert Street Adolphi, London, with George Lansbery as Chairman, Mrs. Despard as Vice-Chairman, C. Jainarajadas as Treasurer, with M.A. Muriel and Countess De La Warr, John Scurr as Secretaries, and Villiers as Assistant Secretary.²⁷

During the Home Rule agitation, the Home Rule for India League worked as an active organisation. It held meetings, issued news-letters and activated various bodies, editors, eminent personalities and Members of Parliament. Its principal function was to spread the idea of Beasant and the demands of Indian nationalism as defined by the liberals and the constitutionalists.²⁸

From the day Krishna Menon moved to Adayar, he devoted his whole time and energy for the social and political work organised by the Theosophical Society and was for a time a Lecturer at the National University controlled by it.²⁹ During this period, Krishna Menon was trained to speak in public by, among others,

26. *ibid.*, p. 47.

27. *ibid.*, p. 48.

28. *ibid.*, p. 49.

29. V.K. Madhavan Kutty, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

Mrs. Beasant, who herself was a great orator. She was, perhaps, responsible, more than any one else, for moulding him into a skilled orator.³⁰ Krishna Menon was not only a great orator, but he was also an enthusiastic listener to the speeches of men of substance. He made it a point to be present among the audience to listen to the speeches of scholars who frequented Madras in those days. His enthusiasm found no bounds, if the subject was social or political in nature.

Dr. Beasant had started the Indian National Boy Scout Association to suit Indian conditions with Headquarters at Madras, in which one of her trusted and devoted Lieutenants, F.G. Pearce fresh from the University of London and trained in scouting, was deputed to organise the movement in South India. Dr. Beasant chose Krishna Menon to assist Pearce, because in him, she found a willing and sincere worker as also a youthful and vigorous disciple capable of standing great stress and strain.³¹ The remarkable success which the Scout Movement in Madras and its neighbourhood achieved made Dr. Beasant very confident of Krishna Menon's ability and industry, with the result that she sent him to his home district of Malabar in 1918 to organise the movement there.³²

In Malabar, Krishna Menon dedicated himself to the cause of the Scout Movement. He worked with determination and devotion. His sincerity of purpose

30. Janaki Ram, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

31. V.K. Madhavan Kutty, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

32 *ibid*, p. 2.

was highly appreciated, though a few considered him over enthusiastic. In a period of three years he had been able to spread the movement in Malabar and give it a firm footing.

Meanwhile Dr. George S. Arundale had become very popular in England for his contribution in the field of education in India and he was invited to preside over a convention being organised by Mr. Ensor at Letchworth.³³ Dr. Beasant and Arundale decided to co-opt some of the more dedicated young men to profit by an educational experience in England so as to develop their particular interests in a better environment. They could, then return to India and serve the causes that were closest to their hearts. Krishna Menon was a natural choice.³⁴

In June, 1924, Dr. Arundale and Krishna Menon boarded an Italian ship bound to Venice from where they travelled overland and reached England on a wet and sombre morning.³⁵

The convention at Letchwarth attended by Menon along with Arundale in July 1924 was the commencement of an *affaire occupe*. A stint at Christopher School at Hertfordshire, where Menon taught History and obtained his Diploma in Education with distinction in 1925, was sort of an interlude before a plunge.³⁶

33. T.J.S. George, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

34 . V.K. Madhavan Kutty, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

35. T.J.S. George, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

36. Suhash Chakravarty, *op. cit.*, p. 53.

Krishna Menon, though now qualified to become a teacher, was not prepared to stay put with the job as a teacher in England. The urge to do something for India's independence was the bottom line in his scheme of plans. Egged on by his almost compulsive desire to have a comprehensive understanding of contemporary History, Menon joined the London School of Economics, which, probably the most successful of all Webbian experiments, was a wonderful home for free discussion, happily mixed races and genuine learning.³⁷ When he joined the LSE, it was to study Political Science under Professor Harold J. Laski. In 1928 Menon took the Degree of Bachelor of Science with first class. Later he joined the University College, London, and studied an entirely new subject, viz., psychology and presented a thesis titled 'An Experimental Study on the Mental Process of Reasoning' for his Master's Degree.³⁸

Harold Laski thought very highly of Krishna Menon whom he considered one of the most brilliant he had ever had. "Yes, I taught Krishna Menon," said Laski many years later to diplomat Arthur Lall, "and it wasn't always Krishna Menon who was at the receiving end."³⁹ Krishna Menon in a letter to his father, Krishna Kurup, wrote:

My Honours subject is political philosophy and I have scored on those papers the highest marks and he(Laski) told me that he could not give me

37. *idem.*

38. V.K. Madhavan Kutty, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

39. Janaki Ram, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

any more being my own professor and that he has not had a better paper on political ideas since he has been here.⁴⁰

Krishna Menon completed his Law course in 1934, taking over ten years. During the intervening period, he made advanced studies in Economics, Politics and Psychology, with the result that he took an M.Sc. Degree in 1934, for his research in 'Political Thought of the Seventeenth Century'. This created a very great impression on Professor Laski who had already taken a paternal interest in Menon's educational career and also in his political activities in U.K. Harold Laski's influence was more than that of a teacher on a student. There was a kind of osmosis between the two minds, a flow that coloured the style and thinking process of Krishna Menon.⁴¹

1928 and 1929 witnessed the emergence of the Commonwealth of India League as a national organisation with branches all over the country. By then Menon was already a name to be reckoned with as an enterprising activist of the Commonwealth of India League, well known in political circles for its vital role in piloting the Commonwealth of India Bill in Parliament in 1925. The significant piece of India work in which Menon participated as a devoted apprentice during the first two years of his long innings in Britain was the intense propaganda campaign organised by no less a person than Dr. Beasant herself for the Commonwealth of

40. *ibid.*, p. 16.

41. V.K. Madhavan Kutty, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

India Bill. The Bill was largely the result of Dr. Beasant's initiation. It was drafted by a national convention composed of about 270 representatives of Central and Provincial Legislatures, local boards and corporations, the Home Rule League, leading figures of various political parties, clubs and associations and some non-party public men. The convention was convened to frame a constitution for the Commonwealth of India. The President of the convention was Tej Bahadur Sapru, V.S. Sreenivasa Sastri its Vice-President, Annie Beasant its General Secretary and A. Regunatha Mudaliar its Treasurer. Among those who took part in the deliberations were C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar and B.S. Kamat.⁴² The report contained the essential principles on which the constitution should be based. The Bill was taken to England by Dr. Beasant in July 1925 to be presented to the British Parliament.

Although the Bill was eventually dropped, it created quite a stir in London. The Home Rule for India League (British Auxiliary) was a ramshackle, if not moribund, organisation kept alive by Emily Lutyens. Dr. Beasant resurrected it with a new nomenclature. The name was changed to Commonwealth of India League with the principal object of promoting the cause of the Bill.⁴³

42. Suhash Chakravarty, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

43 . vide, *Krishna Menon Papers*, September 15, 1929, Letter of Krishna Menon to Mrs. Byranji, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, Teenmurti Bhavan, New Delhi.

Dr. Annie Beasant, however, felt that the work in Britain had been unsatisfactory and hence she requested Menon to stay on in Britain until the summer of 1930 to help organise Indian propaganda work.⁴⁴ Krishna Menon accepted the request and agreed to stay on in England, although he was aware of the great task he was to shoulder. It was a stupendous task organising large number of branches all over the country and managing the Indian news.⁴⁵

Menon strove hard to create British public opinion in favour of the legitimate demands of the Indians. He desired that the British people should support the cause of India and that alone would expedite the process of independence India had been visualising. Quite understandably, Menon thought that the most effective way of spreading the cause of India in Britain was to make the platforms of India League to visiting Indian leaders. He delivered addresses on India all over the country. On many occasions he was listed as a speaker in three or four different places. Krishna Menon made it a point to see that he or some one else was present to explain the conditions of India to the audience.⁴⁶

After being installed as the Joint Secretary of the Commonwealth of India League, Krishna Menon spent his time and energy in the formation of more branches in various parts of England. In a short period, about twelve branches were

44. *idem.*

45. *idem.*

46. V.K. Madhavan Kutty, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

opened and almost all of them became very active.⁴⁷ The Manchester branch had become the most advanced centre of the League, in spite of the fact that it was entirely composed of the English. Its Secretary, Thomas Harwood Redfern was a committed worker and dynamic leader. He thought, it was necessary to enlist the support of the Labour Party and other socialist bodies for the purpose of the League.⁴⁸ It may be noted that for the dissemination of information about Indian events little was done by way of press publicity. The whole propaganda work was done by sending speakers to various bodies and centres who explained the Indian condition to the audience which received a good deal of publicity.⁴⁹ Menon also had taken care to let others know about the successful activities of the Commonwealth of India League office. His letter addressed to Dr. C.P. Ramaswami Iyer testifies to this.⁵⁰

In another letter addressed to Mrs. B.P. Byranji, Menon narrates the plight of the Commonwealth of India League "no money, no office, no staff, no nothing." Yet, he expressed his optimism and resolve that "we shall trudge along."⁵¹

The principal source of strength to the Commonwealth of India League was provided by Redfern and Menon. Together they had organised various activities of

47. *idem.*

48. *idem.*

49. *idem.*

50. *ibid.*, p. 36.

51. *vide, Krishna Menon Papers.*

the League and drafted resolutions and sent them to different organisations for adoption. The one for the youth movements emphasised that every nation had the right to rule itself, that the exploitation of India by Britain was contrary to the ideals of British youth and, thus, all the British youth movements were urged to assist in the struggle for Indian freedom.⁵² For the junior co-operative guilds, it was underlined that they expressed sympathy with the aims of Indian youth for freedom of their country from political bondage which was detrimental to the well-being of the people and to the free expression of the life of the nation.⁵³ For the peace movements, the League's draft resolution asserted that the existing relationship between India and Britain was a menace to the peace of the world and that they were urged to make every effort to tackle practical measures in the event of a war of colour and race.⁵⁴

Krishna Menon felt elated at the willingness of the youth movement, labour movement and women's organisations to help the League and its programmes. He thought that their appeal had touched the sentiments of each group prompting them to extend their willing co-operation to the Indian cause. In 1929 Menon decided to publish in the 'Indian News' a series of articles by different writers under the general heading 'understanding India'. The purpose of the series was to

52. *vide, Krishna Menon Papers*. May 6, 1929. List of Resolutions from Bristol Branch of the Commonwealth of India League.

53. *idem*.

54. *idem*.

wake up the readers to the situation in India and to a realisation that all was not well there, nor had the trusteeship of Britain been what it had been made out to be by its apologists.⁵⁵ On January 17, 1930 Menon wrote to Annie Beasant on his work in London. He informed her that there was a good deal of demand for real knowledge about India. He thought that if the Commonwealth of India League did not rise to the occasion, the anti-Indian elements of either extreme would take the field. The League's work had grown and the organisation had also begun to demand his time and energy. "I have not been able to read a book," he wrote, "or go to college for some months now. As it is, we have to work late hours and over the weekends."⁵⁶ On December 6, 1929 Menon wrote to Underwood at Leeds:

The Indian news is continuing. I should perhaps tell you that from the last November I have taken over all the responsibility for the paper. That was the only way to secure its continuance. You will realise that this is an enormous responsibility.⁵⁷

In another letter on November 24, 1929 Menon explained his disgust to Redfern on his decision to dissociate himself from the Indian News. While he sincerely thanked Redfern for all the good work he had done for the League, Krishna Menon also explained his financial condition. Though financially hard-up, he wrote, he

55. Suhash Chakravarty, *op. cit.*, p. 124.

56. *idem.*

57. *vide*, *Krishna Menon Papers*, December 6, 1929, Letter of Krishna Menon to Underwood.

possessed abundant physical energy and that is being taxed more and more, soon there will be little of it. He further wrote:

When an Englishman defends mother India, he brings to the task the great qualities of his race and this you have done in abundance. Here I wish you could pass on a little of that good humour and steadfastness to me sometimes, for in the whirl of Indian affairs, my own southern blood runs too highly.⁵⁸

From the letters he had sent to his colleagues it can be inferred that Menon was prepared to give all that he possessed when he made his resolve that India had to have Dominion Status. He knew that he had to put up with all the miseries that were incidental to working for it. In due course of time the Indian National Congress had been demanding 'complete Independence'. Krishna Menon too had subscribed to the Congress view of complete independence deviating from the known stand of the League for Dominion status which antagonised the older people who had been associating with the Commonwealth of India League and culminated in the resignation of many of them, including Dr. Annie Beasant.

The Commonwealth of India League had been working for the Dominion status for India. While the old guard of India's Congress Party wanted the party to accept the Dominion status, its younger group under Pandit Nehru demanded complete independence. When fresh from his visit to the Soviet Union and the

58 . *idem*.

Congress against colonialism in Brussels, Nehru sponsored a resolution for complete British withdrawal at the Madras Session of the Indian National Congress in 1928, Gandhiji thought him impetuous and wrote to him:

I feel that you love me too well to resent what I am about to write. In my case I love you too well to restrain my pen when I feel I must write. You are going too fast. You should have taken time to think . . . I do not know whether you still believe in unadulterated non-violence.⁵⁹

The difference persisted and Gandhiji wrote to him again the same year in July. "The difference between you and me appear to me to be so vast and radical that there seems to be no meeting ground between us."⁶⁰

Krishna Menon was sure that the British interpretation of Dominion status meant independence, but this word had many other meanings for those who did not live in Britain. Menon was trying to align the India League in Britain with the Congress Party in India. And this was too radical for the members of the League. Menon at this stage broke from the Theosophists.⁶¹ By this time the Indian National Congress had passed the famous 'Poorna Swaraj' resolution at its Lahore Session (1930) presided over by Jawaharlal Nehru. Krishna Menon did not have any difficulty in choosing between theosophy and his political ideas which by then

59. R. Venkita Raman, *A Shaper of History - Jawaharlal Nehru Centenary Volume* (Delhi, 1989), p. vii.

60. *idem.*

61. V.K. Madhavan Kutty, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

had taken a proper direction under Laski. This apart, Dr. Beasant his earlier mentor, had also moved away from the Congress. National liberation became Krishna Menon's primary concern.⁶²

The end of Commonwealth of India League came with extreme suddenness. At the end of an unfinished annual meeting, the majority of members in support of outright independence adjourned and met elsewhere. The same day they decided to form a new India League with V.,K. Krishna Menon as its Honorary Secretary. Krishna Menon wrote to Margaret Cousins that Dr. Beasant resigned from the League "On a disagreement with policy."⁶³

But the India League was actually formed on November 11, 1931. At the Executive Committee meeting of the Commonwealth of India League on that day, a resolution was passed to change the object of the League. It recommended to the Council that the object of the League be reworded as to read to support "the claim of India for Swaraj." It also recommended that the name of the League be so amended as to read "India League."⁶⁴ In the minutes of the meeting, it is recorded that "the proceedings were then adjourned to meet Mahatma Gandhi jointly with the parliamentary committee."⁶⁵ Gandhi was in London to attend the Second

62. *idem.*

63. *ibid.*, p. 41.

64. *ibid.*, p. 42.

65. *idem.*

Round Table Conference. Next year Bertrand Russel agreed to become the President of the India League.

A circular issued in January 1930 listed the achievements of Commonwealth of India League. The League had become a national organisation with branches at Manchester, Liverpool, Bristol, Edinburgh, Birmingham, Wolverhampton, Hull, Cardiff, Holloway, Bradford, Leeds, Bath, Watshead and Suttan. It also stated that the activities of various branches were well organised and properly co-ordinated.⁶⁶ In another letter to P.A. Wadia Menon claimed that the Commonwealth of India League had 30 branches in the country. The Indian News, published fortnightly, was read by 4000 readers. The various branches together had organised hundreds of lectures during the year. He further claimed that Commonwealth of India League was the largest organisation in Britain working for Indian freedom and its activities had been increasing from day to day.⁶⁷

Educating the British on India, appealing to their conscience, lobbying among the Members of Parliament, making the India League platform available for all visiting national leaders, publishing pamphlets for India etc. became the main activities of Krishna Menon. In addition, skits, shadow plays and film shows on India were also arranged. Indian dancers and singers were invited to perform.

66. *vide, Krishna Menon Papers, January 21, 1930, Circular, Commonwealth of India League.*

67. V.K. Madhavan Kutty, *op cit.*, p. 43.

There were readings of Tagore and Jawaharlal Nehru. Birthdays of Indian National Leaders, like Gandhiji, Nehru and Tagore were celebrated.⁶⁸ He had been sending appeals to the people of Britain to help the cause of India's freedom. In a letter sent out through the India League, Stafford Cripps appealed to the people to understand what the Indian struggle meant to the people of Britain.⁶⁹ He wrote:

In the common effort to win freedom and justice from tyranny, suppression and exploitation, the same economic, social and political problems arise in India as in our own country. The ruling class of Great Britain who are today exploiting the miners, the cotton workers, the agriculture labourers and the other workers of Great Britain are at the same time denying their freedoms to Indian people.⁷⁰

He continued his letter highlighting the work of the Indian National Congress:

The Congress is carrying on a splendid battle for freedom in India, and it is our duty to give the Congress our utmost support. In order that we may make that support effective, we must attain a far more widespread understanding of the fundamentals of the Indian problems. We must try to bring home to the people how this issue is linked closely with the whole problems of imperialism and war abroad and capitalism and fascism at home. The original home of fascism was not Italy but the imperial dependencies of this and other empires.⁷¹

68. *idem.*

69. *vide, Krishna Menon Papers*, Letter written by Stafford Cripps and distributed through India League.

70. *idem.*

71. *idem.*

He concluded his letter advising the people of Britain to help the people of India to win their freedom from imperialism.

The fight of the Indian people today is part of the world struggle against fascism and reaction, and just as we try our utmost to help the Spanish people to overthrow fascism in their country, so we should help the Indians to win their freedom from imperialism.⁷²

In support of the national independence of India, the India League organised a National Independence Demonstration in Trafalgar Square on January 3, 1938. The object of the demonstration was to call attention to the problem of the liberty of the people of India and elsewhere, to express British sympathy with the Indian people and to link up the problem of peace with that of liberty.⁷³ People belonging to different nations, expressing their solidarity with the Indian cause had joined the demonstration. Other organisations representing the peoples of China, Africa and Abyssinia had also participated in the demonstration. This was the first demonstration of its kind held in London. There was a march to the square of about two thousand people representing various organisations and carrying their own banners. Many students, both Indian and British, took part. Portraits and slogan banners prepared by the India League on the subject of the demonstration were also carried and the march made a very striking impression.⁷⁴ Several thousands of

72. *idem.*

73. *idem.*

74. *idem.*

people afterwards listened to the speakers from the plinth of Trafalgar square. A resolution was also passed at the national independence demonstration extending sympathy and support to the Indian struggle for national independence.⁷⁵ The resolution echoed the sentiments of Nehru, the then President of the Indian National Congress, that "imperialism and fascism are blood brothers."⁷⁶ It continued:

We recognise that the fight against imperialism in India, Burma, Ceylon, Africa and in the rest of the colonial empire, is part of our common struggle for democracy and against fascism and war, and we, therefore, call upon all democratic and peace-loving men and women in this country to consciously ally themselves with and to support actively these struggles against the common foe.⁷⁷

The meeting after the demonstration was addressed by well known personalities of different parties, including Dr. Naude Royden, Wilfred Roberts, M.P., George Stauss M.P., John Strachey, Victor Gollans, Sorenson, M.P., Monica Whaetely and Hutchinson. Contingents of students from London College, Oxford, Cambridge and the provincial universities and seamen and other Indian, Chinese and African workers from East London, took part in the demonstration.⁷⁸ After attending the demonstration in support of national independence, Dr. Naude

75 . *idem.*

76. *idem.*

77. *idem.*

78 . *idem.*

Royden wrote to Krishna Menon congratulating him for the success of the massive demonstration. He wrote:

It is very real happiness to me to do anything to make English people understand that all is not well in India and that English people must try to understand the tremendous importance of what is going on there and the impossibility of continuing to coerce a great nation. I should like to congratulate you very warmly indeed on the demonstration. It is one of the best I have ever seen in Trafalger square and among the best that I have seen about India. I hope you are encouraged by this growth of interest and felt that the enormous amount of work that you must have put into, it was worthwhile.⁷⁹

Meanwhile back in India the Congress under the Presidentship of Subhash Chandra Bose was becoming dangerously divided. However, with the ouster of Subhash Chandra Bose from the helm of affairs of the Congress, the confrontation became less intense. The Congress started interacting with the League more frequently and found it the mouth-piece of the former in Britain. Though not formally affiliated to the Indian National Congress, the India League became the limb of the Congress in England and Krishna Menon its unofficial representative. The people of India heard about Krishna Menon through his speeches from world platforms much before they saw him. Menon's voice was echoing from many such platforms and India's voice was heard through him.⁸⁰

79 . *idem*.

80. V.K. Madhavan Kutty, *op. cit.*, p. 46.

The decision of the Indian National Congress to send Krishna Menon as its representative to the World Peace Conference at Geneva and also to the International Peace Conference at Brussels in 1935 was a recognition of his work for the cause of India and her freedom.⁸¹

In May 1936 Jawaharlal Nehru informed Krishna Menon that the Foreign Department in the All India Congress Committee which Krishna Menon had been suggesting for the last few years had begun to function. Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia had been put in charge and Krishna Menon was asked to interact with him and write regularly on foreign affairs.⁸² The Foreign Affairs Department set up under the All India Congress Committee had two-fold functions. It was required of the units to keep in touch with officials and unofficial representatives and sympathisers of the Congress in foreign capitals, supply them with information on the condition of India, so that they could carry on propaganda on behalf of the Congress effectively. Secondly, the Department had to take an immediate interest in major foreign policy fields which came within the authority of British Government in India.⁸³

The fact that there was such a department in the AICC office also meant that the organisations like the India League in Britain, which was now functioning

81. *ibid.*, p. 47.

82. *idem.*

83 . A.K. Damodaran, *Jawaharlal Nehru: A Communicator and Democratic Leader* (New Delhi, 1997), p. 48.

energetically under Krishna Menon, had the official authority to transact business on behalf of the Congress under instructions from the president and the working committee through this section.⁸⁴

Jawaharlal Nrhru had already met and liked Krishna Menon. But it was while arranging the publication of his autobiography in London, in which Krishna Menon became a vital link, that their relationship became intimate and the friendship continuous. It was about this time that the question of a permanent set up in London to represent the Congress was seriously discussed and the decision was made in favour of Krishna Menon's India League.⁸⁵ This in itself was not as important as the fact that Jawaharlal discovered in Krishna Menon an invaluable contact with the Labour Party, with many intellectuals and media groups in London, and also with leftist political activists throughout Europe.⁸⁶

Nehru had been able to establish his contacts on a much wider scale with the anti-fascist movement all over the world. In these developments, the personal friendship with Krishna Menon, which had now become an important facet of Nehru's activities, played a central role. Through Krishna Menon Jawaharlal kept in touch with major figures in the British Communist Party and some distinguished members of the informal extreme left groupings within the Labour Party. Among

84. *idem.*

85. *idem.*

86. *ibid.*, p. 97.

these people were attractive left wing politicians, like James Maxton, H.N. Brailsford and Stafford Cripps.⁸⁷

Krishna Menon was also in touch with important publishing firms in England who were sympathetic to the cause of nationalism in India and socialism everywhere. Of these firms Gollancz was the most important. There was Allen and Unwin, traditionally interested in Indian books and also the newly formed Pelican Books section of Penguin Series of which Krishna Menon was the General Editor for a brief period.⁸⁸

The 1938 visit to Europe was by any standard a quantum jump in Jawaharlal's evolution as an international figure and also as a communicator in a two-way fashion, explaining India to the world outside and explaining the complicated world outside to people at home. There were also, curiously enough experiences during this visit which honed his skills as a negotiator and decision-maker on future political arrangements in India and the termination of British connection. He left Bombay in June and returned only in November. His programme was strenuous enough to meet his demand on himself and his friends. The central part of the visit was the meeting in London and Paris and the visit to Spain, all meticulously arranged by V.K. Krishna Menon.⁸⁹

In Spain Jawaharlal went to the battle front along with Krishna Menon and had lengthy conversation with General Lister and other military leaders. Nehru

87. *idem.*

88. *ibid.*, p. 98.

89. *ibid.*, p. 116.

was able to convey to the Spanish leadership the sympathy of the Indian people at this moment of trial.⁹⁰

By the time he completed his visit of Europe, Nehru had found a true friend in Krishna Menon and that friendship was intimate and continuous. 'Nehru and Krishna Menon had first met when the India League delegation went to India in 1932, but that meeting had been a brief and formal one. Their later friendship and rapport developed during Nehru's visit in 1935 to England.'⁹¹ His visit to Europe in 1938 enabled both these visionaries to know each other and recognise their political worth. In Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit's opinion Menon and Nehru were close because they spoke the same language. They had similar backgrounds in terms of their education and fabian socialist background.⁹²

Krishna Menon also became Nehru's literary agent in London beginning with the publication of the *Autobiography and Glimpses of World History*. He was working at that time as an editor at Bodley Head, editing their *Twentieth Century Library*.⁹³

Menon's work through India League did not confine to England alone. He had also taken pains to brief the delegates attending various conferences. In one of

90 . *idem*.

91. Janaki Ram, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

92 . *idem*.

93 . *ibid.*, p. 45.

the meetings of the League of Nations in Geneva, representatives of various member countries were briefed by Menon through personal communications and the Indian News. 'The Polish delegate became an active supporter of India's cause. The frequent correspondence between Menon and the enthusiasts in Geneva was replete with information on the propaganda of the League and its impact on delegates to the League of Nations.⁹⁴

In the resolution on the international situation at the Congress session of 1936 a handsome tribute was paid to Krishna Menon for his speeches at the World-Peace Conference Geneva and also the International Peace Conference at Brussels in 1935. The AICC observed:

The World Peace Congress met at Brussels in the first week of September and the Indian National Congress was represented by V.K. Krishna Menon. Krishna Menon achieved remarkable success in impressing upon the Congress that the continuing cause of war was the system of imperialism that generated imperialist rivalries and colonial domination and consequently wars.⁹⁵

Asok Mehta wrote in an editorial in the Congress Socialist about Krishna Menon's nomination to Brussels Conference:

The nomination is a well-merited recognition of his long and devoted service to this country abroad. Krishna Menon is the Secretary of the India League

94 . vide, *Krishna Menon Papers*, October 3, 1931. L. Lasoka's letter to Krishna Menon.

95. V.K. Madhavan Kutty, *op cit.*, p. 47.

and has for years been a familiar and popular figure in British political life. It would be no exaggeration to say that Krishna Menon is the heart and soul of the League and he has done more towards popularising the Indian National cause in England than any other individual, Indian or English.⁹⁶

Little by little Krishna Menon, who had got to know the Labour leaders rather well, was sucked into the vortex of Labour politics. They appreciated him as a sincere and dedicated worker. In 1934 Krishna Menon was chosen to stand as the Labour candidate to the Borough Council of St. Pancras. He remained its councillor for the next fourteen years.⁹⁷

Krishna Menon's association with St. Pancras was marked by unstinted service rendered to the Borough and the respect and gratitude he in turn got from the people of the area. Many years later, one of the Council women told Arthur Lall: "Krishna Menon always thinks seven streets ahead of all of us."⁹⁸ In recognition of his services, he was conferred with the 'Freeman of the Borough' in 1955. Bernard Shaw had been the first person to become a 'Freeman of Borough'.⁹⁹

During the war years Menon was the Councillor and Air Raid Warden in St. Pancras and he was actively involved in war efforts, while India had chosen to keep

96 . *idem.*

97. Janaki Ram, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

98. *ibid.*, p. 43.

99 . *idem.*

aloof from the war. It was an uphill task for him, on the one hand to discharge his duties as a responsible Councillor and Air Raid Warden and, on the other, to explain India's non-co-operation in the war efforts to the British people. As his first political commitment was to the cause of Indian freedom, he chose to defend India's cause by highlighting the hypocrisy of Britain's India policy. In Menon's view, choosing between a Nazi Government and British Imperialist rule was no choice at all. Even asking such a question to the Indian people, he remarked at a people's convention in December 1941, was to ask a fish, if it preferred to be fried in margarine or butter.¹⁰⁰

One of Krishna Menon's greatest contributions during the war was perhaps his ability to translate wartime sentiments against Nazi imperialism into a criticism of the British colonial occupation of India.¹⁰¹

However, during the war he lost the support of the Labour leaders for the Indian cause, as it was politically expedient for them to come down heavily on any opposition to Britain's war efforts. Despite this schism between the Labour leaders and Krishna Menon, he was still chosen as the Labour candidate for the parliamentary seat of Dundee. Eventually, the Labour Party's stand on India's participation in the war resulted in Menon having to withdraw from the Party. It

100 . *ibid.*, p. 60.

101 . *ibid.*, pp. 60-61.

was one of Krishna Menon's biggest sacrifices i.e., giving up a safe parliamentary seat in 1940 for the Indian cause.¹⁰²

On November 29, 1940 G.R. Shepherd, National Agent of the Party, wrote to Krishna Menon about its decision to cancel his candidature for one of the Parliamentary seats in view of Menon's allegiance to the cause of India as well as the provisions of the party constitution requiring strict discipline.¹⁰³

Krishna Menon, in his reply to James Middleton, Secretary of Labour Party, wrote on December 23, 1940:

I note that the National Executive Committee has considered my 'political position' and came to the conclusion that my 'natural allegiance to India' is not compatible with the Labour Party policy. It is an allegiance that I share with the vast majority of Indian people and the National Trade Union and Socialist Movements in India. It is equally an allegiance to these principles of freedom and social justice basic to the International Socialist Movement, the same which brought me into the Labour Party of which I have remained an active member for sixteen years. . . Politically, the nation's Executive Committee has not declared beyond all doubt that it has its own conception of what it calls the "welfare of the Indian people" and that this conception is incompatible with that of those who, in its view, owe a "natural allegiance" to India. In other words Labour Party policy is now declared by its supreme Executive to be opposed to the basic conceptions of self-determination and

102 .vide, *Krishna Menon Papers*. Letter sent to Krishna Menon by G.R. Shepherd, Nov. 29, 1940.

103. *idem*.

national independence of subject peoples, and at best to be some forms of benevolent and patronising imperialism. In relation to India my position remains unchanged. I am unrepentant in my allegiance. I shall continue to work to bring about the realisation that the struggle of peoples of all lands is a common one against a common foe, that their exploiters seek to divide and weaken them and that in their unity lies their strength.¹⁰⁴

Undaunted by the events, Krishna Menon went ahead with his crusade against British imperialism. It was Menon's relentless efforts that exerted pressure on Britain to send the Stafford Cripps Mission to negotiate a settlement. With the 'Quit India Movement' gaining momentum, all prominent leaders of the Congress were arrested and imprisoned. Menon seized this opportunity and intensified his propaganda for the Indian cause.

Krishna Menon went to the extent of influencing the Allied Powers to pressurise Britain to make a favourable decision on India. He thought that Roosevelt, Stalin and Chiang Kaishek would persuade Britain to concede the demands of the Indians.¹⁰⁵ With the appointment of Wavel as the Viceroy of India, Menon thought that things would change in India. Towards that end he intensified his efforts through the India League which went about propagating the Indian cause. This has brought about a sea change in the attitude of the more progressive elements of the British people, particularly the labour union within the Labour

104 . vide, *Krishna Menon Papers*. Letter of Krishna Menon to James Middleton, Dec. 23, 1940.

105. vide, *Krishna Menon Papers*.

Party. He argued that in the light of the Allied declaration of certain values during the war, they were duty bound to exert pressure on Britain to grant freedom to India. With the induction of Harold Laski as the President of the Labour Party, Krishna Menon could influence it to a greater degree and that resulted in the Party Executive changing its stand on India.¹⁰⁶

If one were inclined to speculate, then one of the more interesting lines to do so would be, had the Labour Party not been so committed to Indian freedom - a commitment wrung from them by a combination of lobbying, haranguing and politicking - would India have won freedom when she did? Michael Foot felt that India League and Krishna Menon had an important role in changing Labour opinion by the end of the war.¹⁰⁷

Even Krishna Menon's bitterest critics could not deny that it was the change in the Labour Party's stand on India that ultimately gave India her freedom. Krishna Menon's contribution to this change was substantial - it was the culmination of the work of nearly quarter of a century.¹⁰⁸

The India League under the energetic leadership of Krishna Menon had been relentlessly championing the Indian cause in England. It had publicly aired its opinion on all important matters concerning India. It vehemently expressed the

106 . *vide, Krishna Menon Papers.*

107 . Janaki Ram, *op. cit.*, p. 69.

108 . *idem.*

view that the responsibility of the governance of India should be placed on Indians. It held the view that the Indian constitution should be made by Indians as the constitution of Australia, South Africa and Ireland had been made by their respective people, and the policy of the British government should be to enable the masses of India to enjoy political power under the new constitution. It argued for the release of all political prisoners, withdrawal of repressive ordinances, and ending the era of repression. The League had successfully brought to public attention that thousands of men and women including leaders, well-known and highly respected in England, had been in jail in India. People in England knew little about the lathi charges, the arrests, the imprisonments without trial, the deportations and confiscation of property. While the Press in England manipulated all news in such a way as to prove that Indians were unfit to govern themselves. The highly charged propaganda of the League for the Indian cause had brought home the sufferings and miseries of the Indians under the imperialist yoke. Krishna Menon fought the battle in the enemy's land boldly and fearlessly and succeeded in stirring the public opinion in India's favour. It was no mean achievement in those days without any resource and support from anywhere. All the time Menon was hard up and found it difficult to make both ends meet. Financial problems continued to plague the League. In early 1931 Menon reported that the current issues of the 'Indian News' had gone to the Press but there were possibly no resources left. He owed a good deal of money to his friends on account of the

'Indian News'. He had been trying to get some money to repay his loans but not a soul had been willing to lend a hand on this side of things. Financial discomfort was complicated by a complex set of issues that afflicted the League. Menon often felt nervous and thought he was becoming increasingly less useful for the nature of politics expected of him. Yet, undaunted he carried on his crusade, never looked back till he reached the goal. But many did not know his contributions for the freedom of India. Only people close to him, like Nehru, knew the work he had done and the sacrifices he had made.

Chapter III

EVOLUTION OF INDIA'S FOREIGN POLICY

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The foreign policy of India like that of any other country is an extension of its internal policy and reflects the dominant domestic concerns. 'Our foreign policy', Nehru wrote, 'will ultimately be governed by our internal policy'.¹ The foreign policy of a country is primarily based on its own individual interests and what it considers good for the world in general. Further a country's foreign policy is essentially conditioned by its internal circumstances. Foreign policy is a product of 'interests', which are governed by a country's political, economic and social structure perceived through its history, culture, and tradition. Every country conducts its foreign relations with a view to protecting its national interests.

The basic constituents of national interest however, remain more or less constant and these would include security against aggression, the desirability of increasing the level of living standard of masses and the maintenance of stable conditions in the periphery of its boarder.²

It is always a difficult task to define a country's interests. It is inevitable, however, that in a system of international politics with the nation-state as the unit, the common man should judge the success of the foreign policy in terms of the benefit accruing to the

1. K.P.S. Menon. *Yesterday and Today* (New Delhi, 1976), p. 119.

2. Niranjana M. Khilmani, *Realities of Indian Foreign Policy* (New Delhi, 1984), p. 30.

people.³ It has been rightly pointed out by Pandit Nehru during the foreign affairs debate in the Dominion Parliament that:

The principle followed by all nations, no matter whether their politics have got a red, pink or true blue tint, is one of self-interest. In case of any war, India also will not hesitate to take sides as her self-interest dictates. And in the immediate future, India would do well to keep an independent 'neutral' policy⁴

Indian foreign policy and domestic policies are fused in the concern for national security and economic independence. Eradication of poverty was an important ideal, said Mrs. Indira Gandhi, but even more important was the preservation of India's freedom—the development of a defence capability against external threats, the building up of infrastructure to strengthen the economy and achieve self-reliance and protect the nation's honour and self-respect.⁵ Elaborating on the importance of national interest as an inescapable factor in the formulation of our foreign policy Nehru said

Whatever policy we may lay down, the art of conducting the foreign affairs of a country lies in finding out what is most advantageous to the country . . . whether a country is imperialistic or socialist or communist, its foreign minister thinks primarily of the interests of that country.⁶

Self-interest is integral to a state's foreign policy and nationalism whatever

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3. A. Appadorai, *Domestic Roots of India's Foreign Policy-1947-1972* (Delhi, 1981), p. 3.
 4. Dasgupta Kamalesh, *Our Foreign Policy: Modern Review*, V. 82 (6) (June 1948), p.441.
 5. Bal Dev Raj Nayar, *Political Mainsprings of Economic Planning in New Nations, Comparative Politics*, V. 6 (Apr. 1974), p. 362.
 6. Vide, Debates. *Constituent Assembly of India*, V. II (December 4, 1947).

disguise it may often time assume, is the central factor of foreign policy. National self-interest cannot, however, disregard the interests of others. The national interest of India was not incompatible with the legitimate interests of other nations. In Jawaharlal's view "indeed, national interest may itself demand a policy of co-operation with other nations."⁷ Therefore, he told the Constituent Assembly of India, "we propose to look after India's interests in the context of world co-operation and world peace, in so far as world peace can be preserved."⁸

It is through the instrument of foreign policy that a state transacts its business with the rest of the world. Its aim is to protect and promote the interests of the nation. Therefore, it requires a clear understanding of what these interests are and how far one can hope to go with the means at its disposal.⁹ Further, the formulation of the foreign policy of a country is based on knowledge and experience and the policy so formulated ought to be in accordance with the domestic perception.

In the formulation of foreign policy, the newly liberated countries of the third world had to address themselves to certain pertinent questions. 1. What are the political and economic goals of the countries of the third world, 2. What kind of world co-operation is needed to achieve social transformation in the newly liberated countries? 3. What kind of structural constraints has the third world inherited during

7. A. Appadorai, *op. cit.*, p.14

8. *idem.*

9. P.N. Haskar, *India's Foreign Policy and Its Problems* (New Delhi, 1989), p.73.

the colonial period? 4. What mechanism can the third world use to liberate itself from the shackles of the past and then make full use of the opportunities available in the present era for the development of their societies?¹⁰

The foreign policy of any country is shaped and guided by a variety of factors. Generally basic determinants of foreign policy are geographical location, historical experiences, political tradition, political ideologies, national character, domestic socio-economic needs. International environment and national leadership, geo-strategic location and strategic considerations also play a crucial role. India is placed in a strategic part of Asia set in the centre of Indian ocean with close connections to West-Asia, South-east Asia and Eastern Asia. India's central location on the main trade route between Europe and Far East via the Mediterranean, the Red Sea, the Indian Ocean, and the Straits of Malacca provides sea routes for trade and commerce. Again bordered on the north by the world's highest mountains, the country is protected from winter cold of the north and that has denied it easy communication with inner Asia. India's command over the Indian Ocean is vital to her existence.¹¹ Also India's foreign policy has been influenced by post-war international developments such as bi-polar divisions of the world, being replaced later by polycentric trends, rapid proliferation of nuclear weapons, polycentrism within the communist world and emergence of third

10. Amiya Kumar Bagachi, *Private Investment in India* (New Delhi, 1975), p. 76.

11. Shakti Mukherjee and Indirani Mukherjee, *International Relations* (Calcutta, 1986), p. 226.

world as a potent factor in world politics.¹² Krishna Menon observes in this regard:

It is also true that the foreign policy of a country is affected by that of other countries, both consciously and deliberately and otherwise. This is in a small measure true of domestic policies and of all spheres of national administration. This occurs at least in three ways. Pressure may come from another country—political, military or even sentimental. These are the more obvious. Secondly, the concerned country may be obliged to modify her line of conduct or orientation because of the gravitational pulls or because the events and circumstances in another country project economic, military or other consequences beyond its borders with the concerned country and to its affairs. Thirdly, independent countries invariably follow the rule of reciprocity, unless they deliberately decide not to follow it, in their own national interest. Reciprocity is dignified and legitimate exercise of national judgement and function. Reciprocity reflects independence. No nation-state, old or new, can write on a clean slate. It is conditioned by its own historical antecedents and inheritance as well as by world developments. Thus, a state stands conditioned by international customs, tactics and the law and practice that have developed in respect of them.¹³

The newly liberated countries of the third world were confronted with the problems of challenges of adjustments in their domestic and the world environment. It required well thought out formulations of domestic and foreign policy. By the time the third world emerged, the nations of the world had already become divided into two blocs under the leadership of the United States of America and the Union of Soviet

12. *ibid.*, p. 227.

13. V.K. Krishana Menon, *Foreign Policy Continuum*, Seminar, Nov 1965, p. 43.

Socialist Republic 'Certain forces inherent in the traditions and experiences of the social and political movements made it difficult for the third world countries to identify with either of the bloc.¹⁴ Their greater contacts with the west in the past had led to a natural inclination in their thinking on the lines of western political and economic systems. Thus, in India, Indonesia and Burma parliamentary democracy was sought to be realised.¹⁵ In spite of their preference for the political and economic model of the West, they decided to keep away from the influence of the West, because they refused to be the client states of their former masters.

Along with this, however, there was a basic distrust of the western powers. This was mainly due to the imperialist characteristics of most western powers. There was an obvious snag in the argument that the western nations were trying to preserve democracy against totalitarian communism, as long as they sought to maintain colonies. "The evils of western imperialism were much more real and obvious to these nations than those of some distant danger of communist totalitarianism"¹⁶

Further, it became the moral duty of the newly liberated countries to extend full support to those nations, which were still struggling for freedom. Therefore, anti-imperialism became the accepted policy of the third world. These nations were also conscious of the fact that the imperialist threats will not end unless it is fully

14. N.P.Nayar, "Growth of Non Alignment in World Affairs," *India Quarterly* Vol. 18(1) (Jan-Mar 1962), p. 29.

15. *idem*.

16. *ibid.*, p.27.

exterminated from the third world and imperialism would not withdraw without struggle.¹⁷ Therefore, the policy acceptable to the third world was a policy of struggle against imperialism and racial discrimination.

Nor was a total alignment with the Soviet bloc easy in the circumstances. The nationalist movements of these countries were mostly led by middle class intellectuals who were in no sense communists or socialists, except possibly in a romantic way. The socialist or communist elements present in the nationalist ranks were comparatively too weak and small to effect any change in the general character of these nationalist movements.¹⁸ The extreme rigidity of the social and political system of the Soviet Union had cast strong doubts in the minds of the nationalist leaders, despite its impressive economic achievements and absence of any obvious racial discrimination.

Krishna Menon observes that:

In 1945, immediately before India got her independence, it was all 'one world' but by 1947 it was 'two worlds'. And we, for the first time, had to make up our minds on the issue, how we would function and what we would do. We would not go back to the west with its colonialism, and there was no question of our going the Soviet way; we did not even know them much.¹⁹

Under the then prevailing world situation it became necessary for India to take the step

17. K.S. Pavithran, *Jawaharlal Nehru--The Architect of Indian Foreign Policy*, in C.N. Somarajan (Ed) *Formulation and Practice of India's Foreign Policy* (New Delhi), p. 34.

18. N.P. Nayar, *op.cit.*, pp. 29-30.

19. Michael Brecher, *India and World Politics* (Oxford, 1968), p. 2.

in its international relations, best suited to her own interests.

In spite of India's long association and experience with the West, she did not copy any foreign models in the formulation of her foreign policy. India believed that by virtue of her long history and tradition, she had an individuality of her own and India should retain this without adhering to outworn ideas or traditions. Nehru observed:

In foreign affairs in a period when cataclysmic conflict seems never too far below the horizon, she has invariably taken her stand with those who are striving for the maintenance of peace, reconciliation and co-operation.²⁰

In foreign relations India thought it imperative to cultivate friendly co-operation with all the countries and help the process of maintaining international peace and harmony. India's national interest was the governing principle of her foreign policy. Jawaharlal Nehru told the Constituent Assembly of India on December 4, 1947:

We may talk about peace and freedom and earnestly mean what we say. But in the ultimate analysis a government functions for the good of the country it governs and no government dare do anything, which in the short or long run is manifestly to the disadvantage of the country.²¹

However, the content and definition of national interest varies from time to time. But maintenance of the territorial integrity of the state is the prime concern of every state while formulating its foreign policy. Apart from the maintenance of territorial integrity,

20. Jawaharlal Nehru, *Changing India, Foreign Affairs*, V. 141 (1962-63), p. 455.

21. A. Appadorai, *op. cit.*, p.14.

four other objectives of Indian foreign policy were revealed in Nehru's first broadcast to the nation as the Head of the interim government on September 7, 1946:

We shall take full part in international conferences as a free nation with our own policy and not merely as a satellite of another nation. We hope to develop close and direct contacts with other nations and to co-operate with them in the furtherance of world peace and freedom. We believe that peace and freedom are indivisible and the denial of freedom anywhere must endanger freedom elsewhere and lead to conflict and war. We are particularly interested in the emancipation of colonial and dependent countries and peoples and in the recognition in theory and practice of equal opportunities for all races.²²

However, India's adherence to world peace had strong overtones of national interest, without in any way diminishing the humanitarian motives and concerns for other nations. Indian foreign policy is rooted in history, traditions and present geopolitical factors and circumstances. Its roots can be traced to India's belief in the co-existence of good and evil in the world and the golden middle path, it believes, is the best answer. 'At best, the heritage of the Indian National Congress Party as accumulated in the yearly resolutions during sixty years and more of struggle is the tradition that lies behind the present foreign policy of India.'²³ Nehru was of the opinion that Indian foreign policy, was in the process of being formulated and there could be no finality about it. While it had to be based on certain fundamental

22. V.N. Khanna, *Foreign Policy of India* (Delhi, 1997), p. 15.

23. K.L. Sreedharan, "The Philosophic Bases of India's Foreign Policy," *India Quarterly*, V.14(2) (April-June, 1958), p. 198.

principles, it was also to be evolved in the light of experience, and adjusted to changing circumstances. Foreign policy had thus, a long distance objectives as well as short distance objectives, but the latter had to be in keeping with the former.²⁴ Indian foreign policy was also a formulae to keep away from the grave threat to peace in the world emanating from the antagonistic ideological-cum-military blocs in the post-war period.²⁵

Though a clear beginning of the foundation of an independent foreign policy was writ large in the minds of the nationalist leaders, it could not take a concrete shape till freedom was achieved. It was in 1920s that Nehru spelt out the principle of the foreign policy of a future independent India. "In her policy," he said, 'India sought to combine idealism with national interest'. In Nehru's views foreign policy ought to achieve peace and secure emancipation of the oppressed nations, elimination of racial discrimination and non-intervention in the internal affairs of other countries.²⁶ He also spoke about defence of freedom both national and personal, about combating such maladies affecting a large part of humanity as disease, poverty and ignorance.²⁷ But he invariably emphasised that peace was the goal of India's foreign policy.

Certain fundamental principles guided the Congress in its attitude towards

24 . B.R. Nanda, *Jawaharlal Nehru: Rebel and Statesman* (New Delhi, 1995), p. 232.

25 . *idem*.

26 . Orest Martishin, *Jawaharlal Nehru and His Political Views* (Moscow, 1989), p. 303.

27 . *idem*.

international problems. Firstly, the right of self-determination for all oppressed peoples of the world. The right of slave-nations to independent existence is essential to a democratic set-up of the world.²⁸ Second, stern opposition to imperialism and its twin brother fascism.²⁹ Thirdly, non-alignment with power blocs. Speaking in the Indian Parliament Nehru proclaimed “we will not attach ourselves to any particular group.”³⁰ For India, the policy of non-attachment implied its refusal to accept definite commitment or join a system of pacts or committing India in one side or the other. Independence of the two power blocs in making up her own mind as to the rights and wrongs of a given problem, the use of method that relax inflexibility and counter inflexibility forms the backbone of India’s foreign policy.³¹

By formulating and promoting the cause of non-alignment, India offered to the world an alternative to military alliances of rival power blocs and the arms race of the cold war. On account of her policy of non-alignment, India was able to serve the cause of peace in the world. She was in a position to examine every problem dispassionately and point out a solution for the same. As the modern component of an ancient policy, the policy of non-alignment essentially sought to secure the basic liberties of nations, to safeguard the freedom of people to pursue their integrity and sovereignty and pursue

28 . Mohanlal Goutam, *The Congress View, India Quarterly* , V. 7 (2), (Apr-June 1951), p. 107.

29 . *idem.*

30 . *idem.*

31 . K.L. Sreedharan, *op.cit.*, p. 208.

the political systems of their choice to work for the benefit of their people.³² For India, non-alignment is a means by which it seeks to achieve its policy objectives. Therefore, it is important, not to conceive the 'means of the policy' as the 'goal of the policy.'

The policy of non-alignment was to sustain a dynamism in international relations, allowing nations to exist truthfully and to work for their own prosperity exercising their own faculties freely to select the avenues of co-operation of their choices in the international field.³³ Thus, India's foreign policy of non-alignment implies that India is not prepared to join any system of pacts or alliances to commit herself to any camp, while trying to maintain friendly relations with all kinds of nations. It is a 'means' to preserve world peace. The policy of non-alignment is not an accidental product of the whim and fancy of a few nationalist leaders. "Historically, the foreign policy of India, to a certain extent, emanated from the past legacy of India, her national urges and objectives, her way of life and her cultural heritage."³⁴ Thus, Nehru said, "it is a policy which flows from our past, from recent history and from our national movement and its development and from various ideals we have proclaimed."³⁵

Speaking at the Amritsar Congress Session Nehru said, "the foreign policy of

32. Girish Chandra Roy, "Indian Foreign Policy in Retrospect." *Modern Review*, Vol.130 (6) (Jun 1972), p. 442.

33. *idem.*

34. K.S. Pavithran, *op.cit.*, p. 35.

35. *idem.*

India is based on certain fundamental concepts which arose from the mind and heart of India.”³⁶ One of the greatest contributions of India in the world affairs is the enunciation of the policy of non-alignment.

Indeed, it is difficult to find a parallel case in which a democratic country, so vast in area and with a very large, diverse and heterogeneous population, has fully supported in peace time the foreign policy of its government. It is far more correct to speak of an Indian foreign policy in the case of India than is the case in respect of many other democratic countries: in the latter case, their foreign policy is more the foreign policy of the party in power for the time being rather than a consensus of opinion among major parties or political groups.³⁷

Therefore, it endures and certainly brings rich dividends to the country. That is how each successive government has taken pains to emphasize the element of continuity rather than change in India’s foreign policy. Even the most severe critics of India’s foreign policy of non-alignment are agreed on one point:

From India’s own national point of view, it has brought dividends to the country. By becoming a folding-bridge or an intermittent ‘middleman’ between the two power blocs, India acquired a prominence and eminence in the comity of nations far in excess of her military strength or industrial importance.³⁸

As is mentioned elsewhere, India’s foreign policy has over the years been directed

36. *The Hindu*, Feb 17, 1956.

37. M.S.Rajan, “Indian Foreign Policy in Action 1954-56”, *India Quarterly*, V. 16(3) Jul-Sept. 1960, p. 203

38. K.L. Sreedharan, *op.cit.*, p. 196.

towards the promotion of the country's basic national interests in the light of the requirements of the changing internal and external environment. The three major areas of our interests are: 1) to create a pattern of foreign relations which helps and does not in any way hinder the solution of India's domestic problems of achieving a higher rate of economic development, of initiating radical social changes without affecting the stability of the political institutions and values chosen after independence, and of building a well integrated nation out of the diverse people who inhabit the country 2) to ensure security and integrity of India and eventually to erect a structure of stable peace in the region and 3) to strive to promote world peace. At any particular point of time, India's foreign policy problems were the problems of choosing between alternative methods of advancing the country's national interests in the areas of internal progress, regional stability and world peace and world reform and deciding how the emphasis of these three sets of objectives should be distributed when they exerted contradictory pulls over the country's foreign policy.³⁹ Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit observes:

In our assessment of the world situation, we, like other nations, find ourselves confronted by two alternatives. One is the belief that peace can be maintained by building military might and held in balance by an armament race. The other is the view that it can be preserved only by peaceful means, that the armament race endangers its preservation and that no stone must be left unturned to lessen

39. Sisir Gupta, "India's Foreign Policy 1947-70." *USI Journal*, V 100(4) Oct-Dec 1977, p. 417.

the tensions that exist in the world. To us, it seems logical that the latter is the surer way to safeguard the peace. Our approach to peace might then be called “neutrality.”⁴⁰

India’s foreign policy of non-alignment did not mean ‘neutralism of the Swedish or the Swiss kind, nor did it mean ‘value neutrality’ as is often erroneously suggested by some western observers. It did not stem from a desire on India’s part to avoid the opportunities or obligations of power politics, but simply from a wish to avoid the obligations of military alliances because such ties provided opportunities for economic and military gain but at a heavy political price. In the Indian context non-alignment reflected the belief that close ties with the great powers would inhibit India’s freedom of action in world politics and that freedom of political manoeuvre was necessary to promote her material interests and political influence.⁴¹

India’s policy of non-alignment is against status quo in international relations. That means opposition to colonialism, imperialism, racial discrimination and now of neo-colonialism.⁴² India’s non-alignment rejects the concept of superiority of super powers. It advocates sovereign equality of all states and it encourages friendly relations among countries. It advocates peaceful settlement of international disputes and rejects the use of force. “It favours complete destruction of nuclear weapons and pleads for

40. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, “India’s Foreign Policy.” *Foreign Affairs*, V. 34, 1954/55, p. 432.

41. *idem*.

42. V.K. Khanna, *Foreign Policy of India*, *op. cit.*, p. 48.

Comprehensive disarmament and supports all efforts to strengthen the United Nations.”⁴³

Nehru made it clear that India's approach to peace is a positive and constructive, not a passive neutral approach. In the existing international environment, Nehru felt strict neutrality was impossible. In one of his most blunt utterances Nehru said: “If there is a big war, there is no particular reason why we should jump into it, nevertheless, it is a little difficult now-a-days in world wars to be neutral.” India, he went on to say, “would not join a war if she could help it; but if the choice came, she was going to join the side, which was to her interest.”⁴⁴

The basic objective of India's foreign policy are: 1. Maintenance of international peace and security, 2. Anti-imperialism, 3. Peaceful and political settlement of international disputes, 4. anti-racialism, 5. peaceful co-existence and 6. Non-alignment. Non-alignment is the soul and substance of India's foreign policy. It is essentially an approach or posture. It is not a negative, but positive, dynamic and evolutionary concept. It does not indicate passivity and differs from neutrality. As is mentioned elsewhere, Nehru claimed that non-alignment implied no political or military commitment to any bloc. It signifies a deliberate detachment from either bloc or determination to judge every issue of international concern on its own merit. It is not a policy of expediency, but a policy based on enlightened self-interest. In essence

43. *Idem.*

44. MohanLal Goutam, *op. cit.*, p. 109.

non-alignment is the ability to exercise a reasonable degree of independence of policy and action in world affairs. Nehru observed: “non-alignment is freedom of action which is part of independence.”⁴⁵

India’s policy of non-alignment has contributed much to conceptualisation, integrity and strength of the third world. Subsequently, Nehru along with Nasser and Tito, set-up international non-aligned movement through the Belgrade Conference of 1961. Gradually majority of the third world countries accepted non-alignment as a foreign policy strategy. India has been playing a crucial role in consolidation of international non-aligned movement and has been striving strenuously to adjust it to the requirements of the ever-changing inter-state relations.

45. Sakti Mukherjee and Indrani Mukherjee, *op. cit.*, p. 229.

Chapter IV

**KRISHNA MENON AND THE EVOLUTION OF
INDIA'S FOREIGN POLICY**

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On a wet and sombre morning in the month of June 1924 Vengalil Krishnan Kunjickrishna Menon reached London, the metropolis of the far-flung British empire.¹ Though Krishna Menon accompanied George Sydney Arundale to attend an educational conference at Letchworth, he had already made a rendezvous with history. Dr. Annie Beasant thought that Krishna Menon would profit by an educational experience in England in a better environment and return as a good teacher and social worker to propagate the causes that she had championed in India. Recalling his first few years in England Krishna Menon wrote:

I began to feel consciously after my first few days and months in England, that humanity--people, men, women and children, are much the same everywhere. I have read a great deal of national characteristics of the placid and illogical English, of the logical French, the high pressure American, the sinister Russian and the spiritual Indian. I have found the people friends, acquaintances or people as a whole, very much like every where in the world.²

Krishna Menon was, thus, face to face with a foreign civilisation and was forming his first impressions. Suhash Chakravarty observes the early perceptions of Krishna Menon in England:

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1. Suhash Chakravarty, *op. cit.*, p. 13.
 2. V.K.Madhavan Kutty, *op. cit.*, p.25.

Menon, a percipient observer, did not fail to take note of the profound transformation in international politics since world war I. It was obvious that the idea and practice of unrestricted warfare had come to stay. His probing mind realised the grim realities of Europe. Both Germany and Russia were kept out of the Versailles negotiations. A stigma of guilt was imprinted on Germany in perpetuity. Thus, the most horrible of wars was followed by a treaty which in many respects was a prolongation of war. He also realised that the French policy and the invasion of Ruhr continued the war by other means. The Soviet Union withstood allied intervention and then was made to feel an outcaste in world affairs supplemented by a *Cordon sanitaire*. In consequence the infant Soviet State was obliged to organise itself in a sort of suspended state of war with the western states. To the west, it appeared that the new communist state threatened the very basis and viability of the European order.³

Krishna Menon kept his probing mind open and thought aloud as to how best the prevailing situation can be harnessed to liberate India from the shackles of British imperialism. The Soviet revolution added its weight to the spirit of anti-colonialism and anti-imperialism.

Both Lenin and Wilson addressed the masses and urged for the transformation of the war into a revolutionary crusade. Wilson called for national self-determination and democracy and Lenin, in contrast, for world revolution and classless society. Both asked for a warless world and supra-national organisation: the League of Nations for Wilson and the Communist International for Lenin. Menon found in both something attractive. The

3. Suhash Chakravarty, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

question that Menon posed to himself was, if the essence of both could be alloyed into a third effective alternative.⁴

Though reconciliation between the two prescriptions was almost impossible, Menon decided to probe into that possibility. However, he was convinced that justice for India could only be found in the emerging trends of the left movement to whom various kinds of internationalism—pacifism, disarmament, the outlawing of war, federalism, judicious intervention by a popular League of Nations, world government and democratic control of social life—became the pivotal concepts.⁵

Menon was also alive to the resurgence of the Afro-Asian world since the beginning of the century. The war accelerated the process. The victory of Japan over Russia in 1905 had been a serious blow to European ascendancy and her sense of invincibility. The impact was confirmed and reinforced by German discomfiture at the hands of Japan in Shantung in 1914 and the successful campaign of Kemal Ataturk against France in 1920 and against Greece in 1922. The effects of the revolution in Russia in 1905, hailed as a struggle against despotism had been felt in the unrest in Vietnam, the Persian revolution of 1906, the Turkish revolution of 1908 and the Chinese revolution of 1911. The war stimulated the nationalists of the Maghreb and Arab nationalism in Syria, Iraq and the Arab peninsula and forced Britain to make a concessional declaration towards India.⁶

Krishna Menon kept his inquisitive mind alert and his perceptive eyes wide

4. *idem.*

5. *idem.*

6. *ibid.*, p. 23

open to comprehend the dynamics of the intricacies of world politics. Michael Brecher observes that the term 'imperialism' is a favorite in Krishna Menon's Lexicon, frequently recurring in speeches at United Nations and in India's parliament as well as the public forum, and in extemporaneous reflections.

Whether or not explicitly identified, "imperialism" for Menon refers to the Western bloc, more specially to those states which controlled territories overseas; it is the policy designed to enlarge, perpetuate, or prevent the dissolution of colonial empires--and colonial by definition is restricted to overseas land and people.⁷

The continued exploitation of the countries of the third world by the imperialists was an important historical experience for Krishna Menon and that he, quite naturally, had developed a disdain for both 'colonialism' and 'imperialism'.

The India League was the largest and the most effective political effort ever made in Britain on behalf of India. It had established fraternal relations with various organisations devoted to democracy, popular sovereignty and world peace. With the election of Bertrand Russel as Chairman, the India League forged ahead and became a national forum of British radical opinion for justice and fair play in India.⁸ By any standard, the Executive Committee of the League represented experience, wisdom,

7. Michael Brecher, *India and World Politics* (Bombay, 1968), p. 300.

8. Suhash Chakravarty, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

conviction, commitment, purposefulness and initiative tempered by democratic consciousness and public morality.⁹ Krishna Menon had insight into the international politics so essential in the interpretation of the ramifications of the Indian problem. Bretrand Russel thought of Krishna Menon as a 'particularly brilliant youngman,' an exceptionally gifted and experienced speaker and typically representative of the advanced thought of modern young India. He wrote:

Krishna Menon has been in the forefront of political work for India in England. He has a profound knowledge of philosophy and history and with his western culture he brings a virile mind to bear upon modern problems of the awakening East.¹⁰

Krishna Menon had successfully established contacts with organisations and societies interested in doing humanitarian work. One such was the national council, formerly known as the national peace council, a non-political and non-sectarian organisation seeking to federate people of all shades of opinion and bring together on to a common platform all societies who desired the abolition of war and attainment of universal peace.¹¹ The council had sympathisers and supporters in all parts of the world as well as co-operation of more than fifty organisations including the No-War movement, Theosophical Order of Service, World Peace Union, Fellowship of

9. *idem.*

10. Bertrand Russel's -Letter to W.B. Feakins Lecture Agency, Oct 5, 1932. *Krishna Menon Papers.*

11. Subash Chakravarty, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

Reconciliation and Women's International League.¹²

As far back as 1930 Krishna Menon had been able to comprehend contemporary realities and the importance of creating world public opinion against British imperialism. Away in Geneva delegates to the League of Nations were briefed by Menon through personal communication and the Indian News. The Polish delegate, became an active supporter of India's cause, urged Krishna Menon to supply more information and was advised to start a news agency in Geneva. Krishna Menon had been able to impress upon the Polish government that the struggle in India was for national liberation and not a communist revolution as made out by them. The Polish delegate had assured Krishna Menon that if India made an appeal to the League of Nations for the liberation of India, it would vote in favour of the Indian demand. He had also requested Krishna Menon to arrange a visit of Rabindra Natha Tagore to Warsaw on his way to Moscow.¹³

Geneva was buzzing with reports of the attempt by the League sympathisers to internationalise the Indian question. Krishna Menon was keen to open a foreign committee of the League affiliating various branches in different parts of the world and organising them into a federation.¹⁴ Meanwhile Madam L. Morin came forward with the idea of forming a French Committee in Paris and wrote to Menon on various allied

12. *idem*.

13. Vide, *Krishna Menon Papers*. Letter of Lasoka to Krishna Menon, Oct 30, 1930.

14. Suhash Chakravarty, *op cit.*, pp. 275-76.

questions. Menon was convinced that it would not be difficult to organise a committee in Paris which would become the French section of the League's international body having autonomous position.¹⁵ But L. Morin could not organise a French committee. In France he wrote, the work was delicate, public opinion was little informed and although there was a romantic attachment in certain circles for India in general and for the personalities of Gandhi and Tagore in particular, people had little interest in the complicated questions of India's political emancipation.¹⁶ But Krishna Menon did not give up the idea of forming a French committee.

He turned to Dr. Privat, Professor at Geneva University and formerly substitute delegate to the League of Nations. Dr. Privat agreed to speak to a few reliable persons in Paris. Recommending Privat to Mile Martha Mange, Menon thought that a lecture by Privat might be an ideal opportunity to start the proposed committee and it would certainly arouse interest in India. Mange was advised to make good use of Privat because he was well known in the continent and would be useful in Geneva. Madam Guyesse, a kind and devoted personality having close contact with Gandhi, had already formed a group called "Friends of Gandhi" whose aim was essentially to spread Gandhi's ideas, on every point, giving stress to pacifism in particular. She was a rich lady then infatuated with Gandhi's spiritual ideas. It would be a good thing for Mange, he suggested to impress upon the lady that the League intended to spread Gandhi's views, that Gandhi supported the work of India League and its name and objects were

15. *ibid.*, p. 276.

16. *ibid.*, p. 277.

suggested by Gandhi himself.¹⁷

The formation of international committee had a specific strategic importance in Menon's scheme of plans. He was keen to see that these bodies were formed without much delay so as to make an indelible impression on the British government.¹⁸ Happy tidings came from United States as well. Richard B. Gregg informed that he and a few like-minded people had organised a group of people who supported the idea of complete independence and freedom of India by non-violent means.¹⁹

Indeed, Krishna Menon had by then been recognised as an original stimulating interpreter of contemporary world realities. The Executive Committee of the India League considered that Krishna Menon should tour America and organise a series of lectures on the Indian situation. By mid-August the preliminaries of the visit were completed.²⁰ Krishna Menon had mastered the art of conducting international relations during his association with the India League.

During his stay in England Menon equipped himself intellectually and politically to face the grim realities of the then existing world situations. He realised that 'imperialism', 'fascism' and 'colonialism' were facets of the same global malady. He took a vow to fight and finish these colossal blood brothers as these were

17. *ibid.*, p. 278.

18. *idem.*

19. *idem.*

20. *ibid.*, p. 282.

responsible for the unending problems surmounting the world. Through the India League, Menon had successfully established contacts with various organisations the world over and befriended great personalities and statesmen. He had learnt the art of conducting international relations and even became an adept in handling world situations. He was ready to plunge into the world politics and destiny has decided it to be so.

Nehru along with Krishna Menon had been instrumental in formulating a foreign policy for India. In the sphere of foreign policy Nehru thought it most important to recognise the existing realities. He proceeded from the fact that the world was varied and would remain so, and it would be futile to try to unify or shape it in accordance with one's taste. Krishna Menon too subscribed to the views of Nehru. Krishna Menon made major contributions in the search for co-existence in the modern world and to the philosophy of international relations in the nuclear age. He provided the substance for building a rational foreign policy for India. He travelled through out the length and breadth of Europe and reported to Nehru the political realities of the then Europe. He also appraised Nehru of the changing world scenario and how India can steer clear in the then existing situations. Nehru gladly used these valuable informations for formulating India's foreign policy. Krishna Menon, in his pursuit for comprehending the world situations and moulding a foreign policy for India which would suit interstate relations, became the chief spokesman outside India of India's

foreign policy. He sought to legitimise the philosophy of India's foreign policy in the West which had viewed it with suspicion. He spoke authoritatively and convinced the world, which had fallen into two rival camps, the efficacy of a new non-aligned foreign policy. His quick silver fluid intellect and eloquence have made it a common possession of the newly emerging third world. Nehru's erudition combined with Krishna Menon's knowledge of European situation and the world at large, and his ability to relate those situations with the realities of India facilitated the enunciation of the non-aligned foreign policy of India. The New York Times voiced a widely held view when it wrote:

Probably the most important thing to realise is that he (Krishna Menon) is the man behind the man. Indian foreign policy is Mr. Nehru's Policy. Mr. Krishna Menon is Nehru's spokesman, not his 'eminence grise' But as a trusted statesman for one of the world's most important men, Krishna Menon becomes himself one of the world's important men.²¹

It may be noted in this regard that Nehru never claimed that he was the 'father' of India's foreign policy.

It is completely incorrect, Jawaharlal Nehru told the Indian Parliament in 1958, to call our foreign policy Nehru's policy'. . . I have not originated it. It is a policy, inherent in the circumstances of India, inherent in the past thinking of India...inherent in the conditioning of Indian mind.²²

21. V.K.Madhavan Kutty, *op.cit.*, p. 4.

22. Jawaharlal Nehru, *Indian Foreign Policy: Selected Speeches 1946-61* (New Delhi, 1961), p. 86.

However, the Indian National Congress was bereft of any foreign policy content in its programmes till Nehru came to its helm of affairs. He, as a visionary, visualised the importance of a foreign policy input in its agenda.

It is true that some Indian leaders and publicists in the 19th and early 20th century took interest in international affairs, but this interest was generally confined to the problems of Indians living in British colonies and to the vicissitudes of British politics in so far as they affected the administration of India. The Irish national movement and the rise of Japan stirred Indian public opinion and during the first world war some ardent patriots like Lajapat Rai and revolutionaries like M.N. Roy travelled to Europe and the United States to seek support for the cause of Indian freedom, but their efforts made little impact in the course of events.²³

World War I meant much to India. It was an unprecedented event in history. The state of being at war all the world over led to the experience of a variety of emotions at the same time.²⁴ It was a thrilling moment for various sections of Indian opinion, as Indian troops found themselves along with the British for the first time in different theatres of the war fighting for the empire.²⁵ Nonetheless the need for a coherent foreign policy input in the crusade against British imperialism was not being felt strongly by the leaders of the Indian National Congress. 'The Khilafat Movement in India before and after the war revealed the colossal ignorance of Indian leaders,

23 . B.R. Nanda, Jawaharlal Nehru, *op. cit.*, p. 222.

24 . Subash Chakravarty, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

25. *idem.*

including Gandhi, of the realities of Turkish and European Politics.²⁶

In 1932, the India League dispatched a delegation to India to make an independent investigation of Indian conditions. It was one of the finest acts of the India League under the able leadership of Krishna Menon. The India League parliamentary delegation consisting of three Labour members of parliament--Monica Wheatly, Ellen Wilkinson and Leonard Matters--with Krishna Menon as Secretary toured India with the object of obtaining a first-hand picture of the economic, political and social conditions existing in India, the trends of public opinion on the British rule etc. It was hoped that an authoritative report would serve as a basis for the proper shaping of public and parliamentary opinion in England.²⁷

The publication of the report was a landmark in the history of the India League. The courage with which Krishna Menon and the delegation brought out the facts and presented them to the British government and public gave a new impetus for the Indian work in England.²⁸ There is almost no record of Nehru's interest in the India League in Britain in those early years, when V.K. Krishna Menon was just beginning his activities and Bertrand Russel was its President.²⁹ There is also no evidence that Nehru was directly concerned with the extremely important visit of the unofficial

26. B.R. Nanda, *op. cit.*, p. 222.

27. V.K. Madhavan Kutty, *op. cit.*, p. 48.

28. *ibid.*, p. 51.

29. E.S. Reddy, *op. cit.*, p. 48.

Mission sent to India by the India League (as a sort of alternative to the Simon Commission) which came out with the important 'condition of India report'. This extra ordinarily detailed document published in England by the India League, with an introduction by its President, Bertrand Russel, had been drafted by its Secretary, Krishna Menon.³⁰

It was later, in 1935, when Jawaharlal went to Europe again, in connection with the rapid deterioration in Kamala's health, that the threads are picked up again in the attempt initiated by Gandhi to make common cause with British friends of Indian freedom and the parallel, entirely separate, attempt by Jawaharlal Nehru to establish contacts with the League against imperialism in Europe and the world peace congress.³¹

In due course of time Nehru had become the most effective spokesman of the Congress creed and programme to the people of India and to the world outside. Nehru was considered to have an international image, because of his special links with the dramatic developments in the world outside. These links went back to his earlier connections with the League against imperialism and its Brussels conference. These older connections had, however, become rather dated because of the long interruptions in communication.³² These rather narrow international contact had been replaced in the middle thirties by the much wider connections with the anti-fascist movement all

30. *idem.*

31. *idem.*

32. *ibid.*, p.97.

over the world in which Jawaharlal took a lively and continuous interest and whose activists in Europe and America recognised in him a distinguished sympathiser in a remote and unlikely place.³³ In these developments the personal relationship with Krishna Menon played a critical role.

Nehru and Krishna Menon understood each other and shared a common interest ever since they came into close contact in the early thirties. In fact both had the realisation that India's struggle against colonial rule and the independent India of the future were vitally related to the contemporary world historic process.³⁴ Nehru and Krishna Menon who wanted the Congress to be active in the international front began thinking, planning and acting together. Krishna Menon began reporting to Nehru in detail about the world situation, especially European situation which helped Nehru to keep himself informed of these developments in an Indian context. One immediate result of this understanding of each other was Pandit Nehru's decision as the President of the Indian National Congress to depute Krishna Menon to the International Peace Congress at Brussels.³⁵ By the time Krishna Menon returned from Brussels there was great awareness among the Congress leaders of the effectiveness of India's voice being heard in world forums.³⁶ Nehru wrote to Dr. Rajendra Prasad on November 22, 1935

33. *idem.*

34. V.K. Madhavan Kutty, *op cit.*, p. 119.

35. *ibid.*, p.120.

36. *idem.*, p.121.

about Krishna Menon who had made a lasting impression on him. "He (Krishna Menon) is a very able and energetic and highly thought of in intellectual, journalistic and left-wing labour circles. He has the virtues and failings of the intellectual."³⁷

Krishna Menon became more or less the Congress Spokesman at international meets. This was the beginning of the perfect partnership between Nehru and Menon. The secret of this lay in Menon's ability to grasp Nehru's instructions and to translate them into viable policies.³⁸ Nehru wrote to Krishna Menon on August 23, 1936: "As you know our Congress has not got a clearly defined foreign policy. But you are acquainted with the background of our work and policy and you should keep this in mind in Geneva."³⁹ Kripalani's instructions to Krishna Menon on August 3, 1938 were in the same vein. He said: "I am glad you have accepted Jawaharlal's proposal and consented to write to us periodically about foreign policy. It is not possible for me to make any suggestion now, you will have to decide what is significant."⁴⁰ Krishna Menon felt that Congress should have a clear foreign policy. He wrote to Nehru on September 25, 1937: "It is bad enough for a great movement like the Congress not to have a foreign policy."⁴¹

37. Sarvepally Gopal, *Jawaharlal Nehru: A Biography, Vol. I* (New Delhi, 1975), p. 202.

38. Janaki Ram, *op.cit.*, p. 54.

39. *ibid.*, p. 55.

40. *idem.*

41. *ibid.*, p. 56.

Krishna Menon's depth of understanding Mahatma Gandhi had a great deal to do with his contribution to the foreign policy of India. Krishna Menon clearly understood the relevance of Gandhi's philosophy of non-violence. A significant piece of preparatory work for Gandhi's arrival to participate in the Round Table Conference, was the carefully drafted notes on Gandhi, collated and edited by Menon on the basis of back ground papers of Andrews and Horace Alexander, a few published work on Gandhi and his autobiography, Menon did an admirable job in a very short time.⁴² It was both authoritative and relevant to the occasion. The notes were prepared to offer a simple hand book on the ideas and concepts of a complex man. Judicious quotations were put together to construct a coherent and logical system. Gandhi's views on morality were given special importance.⁴³ Menon's hand book gave a comprehensive view of Gandhi's prescriptions of nation, morality, religion, ahimsa, truth, untouchability, state and human brotherhood. The volume was cogently worked out in short synoptic paragraphs composed in Gandhi's own words.⁴⁴ It was intended to offer a message of the civilization of the East to the West, engrossed in confrontation, tension and strife.⁴⁵

Krishna Menon particularly contributed for the evolution of the concepts of

42. Suhash Chakravarty, *op. cit.*, p. 149.

43. *idem.*

44. *ibid.*, p. 150

45. *idem.*, p. 150.

non-alignment, which, according to him, was the instrument of India's foreign policy.⁴⁶ He always held that the country's foreign policy should be directed towards 1. the strengthening of relationship with friendly countries, 2. the neutralisation of hostile forces, 3. the maintenance and promotion of national independence and 4. the furtherance of world peace.⁴⁷

The term 'foreign policy' itself is a misnomer, says Krishna Menon. The dictionary meaning of the word 'foreign' is: belonging to another country, from abroad, alien, extraneous, not belonging, uncommitted, not appropriate. What is denoted by foreign policy as we use the term is none of this.⁴⁸

Foreign policy is not foreign. It is national policy. It is the policy of a state, the approaches, decisions and actions in respect of the relations of the state concerned to other states or another state. Its origin, its sponsorship, its control and the determination of its objectives are all national. It is quite true that foreign events or extraneous circumstances would influence all these.⁴⁹

Krishna Menon held that foreign policy cannot be separated from domestic policies and events, from defence, economic orientation and development or the need and urges for solidarity of the nation. Nationalism is the most powerful single force in

46. V.K. Madhavan Kutty, *op.cit.*, p. 123.

47. *idem.*

48. V.K. Krishna Menon, Foreign Policy Continuum, *Seminar*, Nov. 1965, p. 42.

49. *idem.*

the world today.⁵⁰ He adds:

The objective of foreign policy is world peace, co-existence and co-operation. In this, is included maintenance of national sovereignty, non-alignment, reciprocity in international relations, promotion of mutual respect and interest. It also calls for the eradication of fear and enrichment of confidence.⁵¹

Krishna Menon was aware of the fact that a united and strong nation was the '*sine-qua-non*' of an effective foreign policy. The efficacy of a nation's policy abroad depends entirely on its internal strength and unity of the country. Menon thought that the principle of non-alignment which is the bed-rock of our foreign policy is better suited to unite the people of India in the field of foreign policy. He wrote:

India has not aligned herself with any power bloc in the world and, therefore, wishes no enemies and perhaps no friends. India has done so because she is anxious that she should not give cause for enmity to any power. Alignment with one of the power blocs will eventually make our country either a stepping ground, arsenal, or the target of attack by the other bloc.⁵²

He adds: "the foreign policy of a country is not mainly the enunciation of a principle. Such a principle would not exhaust all that foreign policy implies."⁵³ Yet, he argues that there are principles involved which may be the basis of foreign policy at any given

50. *idem.*

51. *idem.*

52. L.S. Srivastava Joshi, *International relations, Part III*, (Meerut, 1997), p. 153.

53. V.K. Krishna Menon, *op cit.*, p. 42.

time or until abandoned. They are the basis and the basic orientations. These do not necessarily undergo fundamental change because a country in the pursuit of its national policy makes adjustments even changes in them.⁵⁴

The foreign policy of India is more often spoken of as 'non-alignment' than by any other appellation. The five principles--'Pancha sheela'--are also, though to a lesser extent, spoken of as India's foreign policy. Neither of these label helps to explain or truly connote the foreign policy of India or the conduct of it. The foreign policy of India cannot be fully understood either by us or by the foreigners except in the context of the events that led up to her independence.⁵⁵ It is the policy and conduct of her international relations and her approach to world affairs after her independence, which we mean when we speak of Indian foreign policy. Nor is Indian foreign policy less affected or conditioned by the quick changes which have come about in the world.⁵⁶

Although, the term 'non alignment' first sprang into popular use in the middle of 1950s, there is no agreement as to who actually coined it first. Scholars differ on it. "Historically speaking it may have been V.K. Krishna Menon, while articulating the aspirations of the newly independent countries in the United Nations in the early 1950s though its contents were conceived by Jawaharlal Nehru."⁵⁷ Salim Ahemed Salim

54. *idem.*

55. *idem.*

56. *ibid.*, p. 43.

57. K.S. Pavithran, *op.cit.*, p. 33.

observes in this regard: “Krishna Menon, India’s former Diplomat and Defence Minister and Nehru’s personal friend for many decades, expressed the opinion that the concept might have been first used in the early 1950s during the bilateral and multilateral discussions of Afro-Asian States.”⁵⁸ Krishna Menon told Michael Brecher in an interview:

Even if no one conceived it, non-alignment was more or less a residue of historical circumstances. In 1945 immediately before India got her independence, it was all ‘one world’ but by 1947 it was ‘two worlds’ and we for the first time had to make-up our minds on the issue how we would function and what we would do. ...And with attaining of our independence, we desired not to get involved in foreign entanglements. But it is not as though we sat around the table deciding how we should non-align ourselves. There were two blocs. Both the Prime Minister [Nehru] and I exclaimed or thought aloud ‘simultaneously why should we be with any body’.⁵⁹

That is the genesis and justification of the concept of non-alignment. Even in the early forties Krishna Menon used to say that India considered non-involvement in super power politics as the basis of India’s thinking on foreign policy. He had come more close to the word non-alignment in 1948 when he said that our policy is not ‘neutral’ but non-attachment.⁶⁰ The word ‘non-alignment’, Menon says, was first used by him spontaneously and he believes that, it was used in the United Nations when India was

58. Salim Ahmed Salim, *The Concept and Practice of Non-alignment*, Jawaharlal Nehru Centenary Volume (New Delhi, 1989), p. 589.

59. *idem.*

60. V.K. Madhavan kutty, *op. cit.*, p. 123.

being ridiculed for being neutral. Krishna Menon told in the General Assembly that "we are not neutral; we are non-aligned. We are non-aligned to either side, we are non-aligned."⁶¹ In fact, the Prime Minister [Nehru] did not approve very much of the word at the beginning, but it had quickly gained currency.⁶² Krishna Menon was emphatic that the policy of non-alignment enabled us to strengthen ourselves. It gave us considerable degree of self-confidence, inner strength and things of that kind. It has been built up into a philosophy. He adds: "I believe it also enabled us to establish relation with China, whatever may have happened afterwards. It prevented, in my opinion, deterioration of relation with Soviet Union."⁶³ Pandit Nehru said "the policy of non-alignment is not a policy of weakness or expediency but a policy of peace for the newly independent countries which had shaken off the yoke of colonialism and imperialism."⁶⁴ Nehru said in the Constituent Assembly on March 8, 1949:

the Supreme question that one has to face today in the world is how we can avoid a world war. Some people seem to think that it is unavoidable and therefore, they prepare for it and not only in a military sense but in a psychological sense and thereby actually bring the war nearer.⁶⁵

61. Micheal Brecher, *op.cit.*, p.3.

62. *idem.*

63. *ibid.*, p. 13.

64. Malini Parthasarathi, Why NAM is Relevant, *The Hindu* (Coimbatore, Aug 31, 1992).

65. *ibid.*, p. 8.

In such a situation the exponents of India's foreign policy, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Krishna Menon thought that there was substantial scope for non-aligned movement to build a shared perspective on all issues confronting the nations. Krishna Menon did not hold the view that the non-aligned nations should form a bloc.

This is where our own people misunderstand non-alignment. Non-alignment is not a bloc and it is not a group. I say that a non-aligned nation must be non-aligned with the non-aligned, otherwise where is independence. . . . And that is why, when some people here say why haven't all the non-aligned people stood up and shouted against China, I tell them 'they have their own policy, they have their own independence.'⁶⁶

However, in his view 'non-alignment is not inflexible'. In a sense, it is true (non alignment has become more than just a policy) there are always variations. But they are not deviations; they are ghosts! [i.e. distorted by propaganda].⁶⁷ Indeed Krishna Menon had contributed significantly to the evolution, popularisation as well as practice of India's foreign policy.

66. Micheal Brecher, *op. cit.*, p.13.

67. *idem.*

Chapter V

**KRISHNA MENON AND
FOREIGN POLICY CONTINUUM**

Chapter V

KRISHNA MENON AND FOREIGN POLICY CONTINUUM

Although independent India was a novice in the game of international politics in 1947, she emerged as one of the most influential members in the comity of nation's within a short span of time, reflecting the relevance and soundness of her foreign policy. Jawaharlal Nehru is generally believed to be the architect of our foreign policy. A study of relevant materials reveals that along with Nehru, Krishna Menon had also played an important role in the formulation and practice of India's foreign policy. Not only that, he had also contributed significantly to protect and promote India's interests in the then prevailing international situation dominated by the USA and the USSR. This is testified to by Menon's role in the Korean crisis, the Cambodian problem, the Suez crisis, and so on. Quite understandably, India happened to enjoy power and prestige in international relations far disproportionate to her economic clout or military might.

Krishna Menon and Foreign Policy Continuum is divided into three chapters in which the first entitled 'Krishna Menon in international relations' deals with the role of Krishna Menon in the United Nations. Menon was India's voice in the United Nations for almost a decade. It throws light into the various international issues which came before the UN for mediation while he was the leader of the Indian delegation. It also deals with Krishna Menon's relentless crusade for Disarmament,

both nuclear and conventional.

The second contains Menon's contribution in placing India in the Commonwealth of Nations when the then prevailing law did not permit a Republic in the Commonwealth. It also deals with the Kashmir problem which was (and still continues) the bone of contention between India and Pakistan. It was during Krishna Menon's tenure as the Defence Minister that Goa was liberated from the Colonial occupation of Portugal. This chapter highlights the circumstances that led to an armed conflict to liberate Goa and the crucial role played by Krishna Menon.

The third addresses various international crises which threatened world peace. It treats each issue in detail and bring into focus the role of Krishna Menon in lessening the tension and finding solutions to these problems. They include Korean Crisis, Geneva Conference on Indo-China, Bandung Conference on Asia-Africa, Hungarian and Congo Crisis.

I

KRISHNA MENON IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

On achieving Independence in 1947, India had to face many problems both domestic and international. The social, economic and political problems at the domestic front and a world vitiated by cold war rivalries between two hostile camps led by USA and USSR had prompted India to incorporate many policies which gave Indian foreign policy certain unique characteristics. The social and religious

dimensions of her society had influenced India to adopt 'secularism' in domestic politics. The post-war international developments had influenced India to follow the policy of 'non-alignment' in international relations. In fact, the policy of 'non-alignment' is a reflection of the ideal of 'secularism' pursued in the domestic politics.¹

India was quite conscious of the need for co-ordination between precept and practice in her approach to international affairs. "It was opposed to a double standard, not only in her foreign policy but between her foreign policy and her domestic policy."² Nehru said:

Our policy, whether national or international, spring from the same source and have the same objective. Basically, they both aim at peaceful method. They are not static policies. They aim at changes, national or international, through peaceful methods.³

Krishna Menon too was of the opinion "that resort to violence within the country would be a stab in the back of the government operating in the international field."⁴ The avowed objective of India's policy, Nehru said, is to create the finest human beings.

The final things, he said, were not factories or river valley projects or even universities. They would all be just brick and mortar, if they did not lead to

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1. Robert Trumbell, *India Since Independence*, Foreign Policy Association (New York, 1954), p. 46.
 2. *idem*.
 3. *The Hindu*, December 27, 1955.
 4. *The Hindu*, September 8, 1956.

the achievement of the primary objective of making people happy.⁵

In the international sphere India wanted to behave according to its national character. India behaved in an equally friendly way towards both the blocs without regard to the systems they followed, in the true spirit of Indian tradition which teaches human beings to tolerate and respect each other's point of view.

It might have been a strange spectacle to those whose minds were prejudiced with inclusive philosophies of capitalism and communism to find India praising both these systems in the same breath; but anybody conversant with the glorious Indian tradition could have found nothing strange in it.⁶ As a corollary to its policy of equidistance from the power blocs without antagonising either, India pursued a policy of friendly relations with immediate neighbours. The principles enshrined in the 'pancha sheela' treaty signed first with China and then with Burma have served as the corner-stone of India's policy of friendship with her neighbours.⁷ On account of her policy of non-alignment, India has served the cause of peace in the world.

Non alignment is the name as well as the foundation of India's foreign policy. It is the product of national liberation movement unleashed all over the world by the defeat of fascism and the emergence of the socialist system. Non-alignment is a political concept giving expression to the struggle of the countries liberated from the political domination of imperialism to break their

5. *The Hindu*, August 2, 1956.

6. D.S. Claire, "Assessment of India's Foreign Policy," *Modern Review*, V. 18 (3, Sept 1960), p. 195.

7. *idem*.

continued economic dependence to build an independent national economy, the foundation of political sovereignty.⁸

The representatives of twenty states claiming to pursue non-alignment in their intercourse with the comity of nations met at Cairo in June 1961 in a preparatory meeting for the Belgrade Conference and attempted to define a non-aligned country.

After long debates, the conference adopted five broad criteria to distinguish a non-aligned country, i.e., a non aligned country should: 1. follow an independent policy based on non-alignment and peaceful co-existence; 2. support liberation movements; 3. not be a member of a multilateral military pact in the context of the East-West Struggle; 4. not be a member of a bilateral military pact with a big power in the East-West Struggle; 5. not grant military bases to foreign powers.⁹

Pandit Nehru and Krishna Menon were the two towering personalities in the post-independent India who had been instrumental in formulating the foreign policy of India and bringing it into practice in international relations. Nehru realised that Krishna Menon was the ideal person to represent the Congress at international forums. In 1936 at Brussels Conference Krishna Menon said, free people liberated from domination and thus themselves averse to conquest are the best guarantors of peace. He stressed that India's struggle for freedom and her opposition to war was

8. Subrato Banerjee, *Non-alignment Today—Changes and Prospects* (New Delhi, 1985), p. 28.

9. vide, *Review of International Affairs*, Belgrade Conference, No. 5, p. 19.

one continuous endeavour in the cause of peace.¹⁰ Both Nehru and Menon agreed that national affairs could not be divorced from international happenings.

Krishna Menon's close association with the leaders and people of Great Britain, his knowledge of European situations, his scholarship in History, and his ability to relate all these to the Indian situation had been helpful in building up the India's Foreign Policy. He was also the chief spokesman of India's foreign policy outside India. He presented India's case brilliantly in various international forums and sought to legitimise India's newly evolved foreign policy. In 1957 campaigning for India's second general elections in Madras, Nehru spoke at length about the candidate in North Bombay, V.K. Krishna Menon. He told the milling crowd at the island grounds about the big headline news of the day, the United Nations Security Council debate on Kashmir. He said:

Our case was presented before the Security Council by my colleague Krishna Menon and I want to tell you that he did his work brilliantly and most effectively and the line he took there represented completely our views on the subject... I want to say it because there are some people in the country and some people in other countries whose job in life appears to run down Krishna Menon because he is cleverer than they are, because his record of service for Indian freedom is far longer than their's and because he has worn himself out in the service of the nation.¹¹

10. Janaki Ram, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

11. Shankar Dayal Sharma's Speech at the Birth Centenary Celebrations of V.K. Krishna Menon in the Central Hall of Parliament, (New Delhi, May 6, 1997).

Nehru used to say during the election campaign that a “vote for Krishna Menon is a vote for India’s foreign policy.”¹² Speaking on Krishna Menon’s candidacy in North Bombay Parliamentary constituency Pandit Nehru said “we want our policy to be voted in Bombay. It is our challenge to those who disagree with our foreign policy not to run away from criticism.”¹³ Nehru was declaring that Krishna Menon had contributed significantly to the evolution of India’s foreign policy.

II

KRISHNA MENON IN THE UNITED NATIONS

One of the promising developments of the twentieth century in interstate relations has been the proliferation of international organisations. For the first time in history permanent organisations of a nearly universal type have emerged.¹⁴ Through out the most of recorded human history some form of international organisation has always existed. In the nineteenth century a few administrative and non-political organisations emerged which made way for the establishment of political organisation of the twentieth century. The term international organisation has been defined as any co-operative arrangement instituted among states to perform some mutually advantageous functions implemented through periodic

12. V. K. Madhavan kutty, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

13. *ibid.*, p. 119.

14. Palmer and Perkins, *op. cit.*, p. 296.

meetings and staff activities.¹⁵ In the true sense, a beginning in the direction of formal and permanent political international organisation was made with the establishment of the League of Nations. Then came the United Nations which is a more developed and effective institution than its predecessor--the League of Nations.¹⁶

When India attained independence, she found the great nations of the world divided into two opposing camps headed by United States of America, which had attained a pre-eminent position by virtue of being the arsenal of the allied powers who fought the Fascist Coalition and the Soviet Union which had attained a preponderant position by advancing its military frontiers adding the small countries of Eastern and Central Europe to the Socialist System with its vast potentialities. This situation and subsequent diplomatic battles between America and the Soviet Union and the ensuing arms race had plunged the world into a cold war which hovered over humanity like the 'Sword of Damocles'. The gravest danger seemed to come, not from the smaller nations, but from the possible conflict between those that were elevated in the structure of the United Nations to be the custodians and guarantors of peace.¹⁷

India's foreign policy has been a policy of active participation in world

15. *ibid.*, p. 299.

16. L.S. Srivastava and V.P. Joshi, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

17. Ahmed S. Bokhari, *The Statesman*, New Delhi, May 15, 1959.

affairs particularly in the United Nations. She views every problem on its merit, criticising and denouncing whenever a problem deserves such a treatment. In the United Nations India actively supports what the Charter stands for and champions the cause of world peace. It goes to the credit of India, that during the cold war period, when the newly emerged Afro-Asian nations did not figure in the global scene, she had played an eminent role and became the leader of the third world adhering to the policy of non-alignment. The major aspects of India's policy in the UN were against racial discrimination, imperialism and colonialism, participation in Trusteeship Council and the enunciation of policies for world peace through disarmament. The people of India wholeheartedly supported the Indian government and its policy in the UN as had been proved in a public opinion survey carried out during the cold war in four Indian metropolitan cities. The survey found that as many as 85 per cent of the respondents were aware of the UN.¹⁸ Nearly 75 per cent of these believed that the organisation was doing a 'very good job' or a 'good job'. And more than 80 per cent thought that the UN was 'very useful' or fairly useful to India.¹⁹ This popular impression coincides with the opinion of the educated and influential segments and has remained fairly consistent over time. For instance, in an October 1996 opinion survey conducted in New Delhi's Jawaharlal Nehru University more than 75 per cent of the

18. Amitabh Mattoo, *India and United Nations*. Foreign Service Institute (New Delhi, 1997), p. 247.

19. *idem*.

respondents believed that the UN had been partially or very successful in the maintenance of international peace and security.²⁰ Nearly 90 per cent supported India's participation in UN peace keeping operations, though a majority wanted a withdrawal of the UN Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan and a very few respondents believed that the organisation has a role to play in the dispute over Jammu and Kashmir.²¹ From these we may infer that, first, most sections of public opinion in India continue to have considerable faith in the ideals of the UN, Second, there is no significant section of opinion in the country which wants India to withdraw from the organisation or adopt a passive attitude towards it and finally an overwhelming majority believe that the UN has a future.²² India has a passion for United Nations and believes that it is the chief instrument for world peace. The "big five" were expected to continue to be friendly to each other. But soon they ceased to act in unison, the hopes of the fathers of the UN Charter were thrown back when the diplomatic duel between Washington and Moscow ensued.²³ Considering the division among the members of the U.N, Nehru clearly spelt out the objectives of India's foreign policy in this respect:

Unfortunately, almost everything that comes up before UNO is considered from the point of view of one group or bloc of nations or another.

20. *idem.*

21. *ibid.*, p. 248.

22. *idem.*

23. Claire, D.S. An Assessment of India's Foreign Policy. *Modern Review*, V.108 (3), September 1960, p. 198.

Sometimes, inevitably, we have to support some group, but generally speaking, the attitude India should adopt should be an independent attitude with no marked alignment with any group. We should make it clear that we stand not only for Indian interests but, more especially, for the interests of peace and freedom everywhere and that we are not going to be dragged in the wake of power politics so far as we can help it.²⁴

Nehru's observation reveals the attitude of India in the United Nations as early as in 1946. In another note on December 16, 1946, Nehru remarked:

I see no reason why India should allow herself to be exploited in this game of greedy and opportunist powers who say one thing and mean another. I think it is time that India should take up a straight attitude even though she might have little support in the Assemblies of Nations. I am inclined to think, however, that any country, which adopts this straight attitude and speaks really in terms of United Nations Charter without whittling them in anyway, will have a vast audience in the world and tremendous support.²⁵

Taking cue from the attitude espoused by Nehru, Krishna Menon went to the United Nations as a member of the Indian delegation in 1946. Probably Nehru choose Krishna Menon as his personal envoy to give expression to the views he had been articulating. In 1946, Krishna Menon first represented India at the United Nations. That was as an alternate representative during the second part of the first session of UN General Assembly. He ably represented India on the Political and Trusteeship Committees of the Assembly. Herald Tribune of New

24. S. Gopal, *Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru*, Vol. I, p.440.

25. *ibid.*, p. 451.

York reported on his contribution thus: Menon proved in Trusteeship meetings as one of the most brilliant champions of colonial people.²⁶

It was in 1952 that Krishna Menon again represented India in the UN as the deputy leader of the Indian delegation in the seventh session of the General Assembly.

It was in 1952 that Krishna Menon made his debut as a full-fledged delegate at the United Nations. Even his critics concede he was one of the most dynamic diplomats to make an impact at the UN since its founding. When Krishna Menon is around, said a Canadian diplomat once, ideas buzz around like nuclei in an atom. He can think up a solution for any problem, however, knotty.²⁷

R. Venkitaraman that Krishna Menon was like a seismograph in the United Nations, vibrating to every fluctuation in world affairs and registering India's reactions to each one of them.²⁸ There was such a thing as Menon scale which, like Richter's, recorded vibrations of different intensity depending on the gravity of the tremor.²⁹ Krishna Menon's association with the United Nations as leader of Indian delegation from 1952 to 1962 goes down in history as the most crucial in the post-second world war period. During this period India played very

26. V.K.Madhavan Kutty, *op. cit.*, p. 96.

27. *idem.*

28. R. Venkitaraman, *Forward*, Krishna Menon at the United Nations, (N. Delhi, 1994), p. viii.

29. *idem.*

important role on many important world issues and contributed substantially towards the solution of some of the difficult problems.

One of Krishna Menon's greatest contributions in the United Nations was his crusade against colonialism. He made powerful plea for the liberation of the dependent peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America. The specific characteristics of the Indian national movement were always brought to the attention of the world audience in their relevance to contemporary issues. Referring to the colonial war in Algeria Krishna Menon asked in the General Assembly on December 13, 1958:

What is more essential to the dignity of people than freedom? How can a country live in terms of dignity and modern civilisation even if we give education, food and build roads--all dictators build roads and supply all the creature comforts, but without freedom?³⁰

Referring to the imperial position he said, "there is no escape from these facts; the worst freedom we could ever ask for would be freedom from facts."³¹ Krishna Menon argued and fought the case of Algeria for a decent negotiated settlement with France. Subsequently under duress from both Asia and Africa France agreed to negotiate and ultimately Algeria attained independence on October 8, 1962.

When the question of Cyprus was brought before the United Nations by Greece in 1954 for securing the union of Cyprus with Greece, Krishna Menon not

30. *Krishna Menon's Speeches* in the U.N. December 13, 1958, Decolonisation--Peace, p.7.

31. *idem.*

only opposed the inclusion of the item in the agenda, but also fought for the independence of Cyprus basing his argument that Cyprus was a colonial territory entitled to self-government and independence. All along in the argument, Krishna Menon gave primary importance to the Cypriot people and their national identity. On September 24, 1952 in the plenary meeting of the General Assembly Menon declared:

The position of our Government is that we would support and we desire the establishment of Self-Government and independence according to the wishes of the people wherever possible--and we hope it will be possible everywhere--by peaceful methods of conciliation and negotiation for their freedom...we regard this island as the homeland of its peoples, entitled to nationhood and independence...we regard nationhood as territorial, it makes no difference to us whether, in a particular territory people are of one ethnic group or another. Therefore, the territory of Cyprus is regarded by us as the homeland of a people entitled to the recognition of their nationhood.³²

Though Cyprus became independent long after this discussion, there was again division in the island due to unresolved nature of the ethnic problem.³³

Krishna Menon always championed the cause of Trust territories. In this regard his role in the case of South West Africa is commendable. South West

32. *Krishna Menon's Speeches* in UN, September 24, 1954, p.19.

33. E.S. Reddy and A.K. Damodaran (Eds.) *Decolonisation, Peace and the U.N.*, p. vi.

Africa, a former German colony, was placed as a 'C' mandated territory under the South African Government in 1920. After World War II the League of Nations was dissolved. But at the concluding session of the League of Nations Assembly in San Francisco in 1945 all the mandatory powers agreed to put their mandated territories under the Trusteeship system. With the exception of South West Africa, the former mandated territories had become Trust territories by 1947. The Union of South Africa contended that the United Nations was not a successor to the League of Nations, hence she had refused to send annual report to the United Nations. She has also refused to give permission to some tribal chiefs who were invited by the Trusteeship Council. International Court of Justice stated that the provision of Chapter XII of the UN provides a means by which South West Africa can be brought under the Trusteeship system.³⁴ The General Assembly requested South Africa to place the territory under the United Nations Trusteeship system as administering powers of other mandated territories had done.³⁵ The union of South Africa, however, rejected the appeal of the United Nations and any supervision of its administration by the United Nations. In 1966, the UN terminated the mandate over South West Africa (later renamed Namibia) but could not take over the administration in the face of South African opposition. After many years of struggle by the Namibian people, and international action in

34. D.S. Claire, *op. cit.*, p. 198.

35. A.K.Damodaran and E.S. Reddy (Eds). *op. cit.*, p. 80.

support of their struggle, South Africa was obliged to grant independence to the territory on March 21, 1990.³⁶ Krishna Menon championed the cause of the natives of South West Africa in the UN General Assembly in 1953, 1956, 1958 and 1959. He argued with all his might that the natives would be worse under South African laws, if South Africa is allowed to incorporate South West Africa.

Krishna Menon also gave serious thought to the colonial problems of Portuguese colonies, West Irian (New Guinea) and fought for their independence. Portugal, which became a member of the United Nations in 1955, through an amendment of their constitution, called their colonies 'overseas provinces' and refused to send information on conditions in these territories to the United Nations as required by the UN Charter.³⁷ The matter was discussed by the General Assembly in 1961. On November 13, 1961, India introduced a draft resolution on behalf of 36 countries and it was adopted on December 19, 1961 as resolution 1699 (XVI).³⁸ Krishna Menon presented the case of colonies occupied by Portugal and brought home the atrocities being perpetrated on the colonised people and their miseries and strongly demanded that these colonies be vacated as they were the acquisitions of conquest and afterwards of exchanging barter with

36. *idem.*

37. *ibid.*, p. 70.

38. *idem.*

fellow colonialists.³⁹

The political status of the territory of West Irian (West New Guinea) was under dispute between the Governments of Indonesia and the Netherlands. At the request of Indonesia, the matter was discussed by the General Assembly in 1954, and at several subsequent annual sessions. Indonesia claimed that West Irian belonged to Indonesia and that reunification was essential for peace in the region. The Netherlands argued that West Irian was a non-self-governing territory entitled to self-determination under the U.N. Charter. V.K. Krishna Menon who represented India in the UN fully supported Indonesia in its dispute with the Netherlands over West Irian. He argued in the General Assembly that the issue was not a boundary dispute, nor was it a question of rival claims to a territory existing in a political or historical vacuum, but simply a continuation of the question of the Indonesian people's right to national independence.⁴⁰ The question of West Irian went to the United Nations because the Netherlands amended its constitution in 1952, making West Irian a part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, contrary to the bi-lateral agreement while granting independence to Indonesia. It was provided in the Charter of Transfer of Sovereignty of 1949, by which the Netherlands granted independence to Indonesia that the status-quo should be maintained in the territory and that the question of its political status

39. *Krishna Menon's Speech* in the U.N., Nov. 13, 1961, p. 73.

40. E.S. Reddy and A.K. Damodaran (Eds.) *Krishna Menon in the U.N.*, Nov. 29, 1954.

should be determined through negotiation within a year between the two countries.⁴¹ Krishna Menon argued that regardless of the status of the Charter of the Transfer of Sovereignty, article I thereof had become permanent by performance, because the Kingdom of Netherlands had unconditionally and irrevocably transferred complete sovereignty over Indonesia.⁴² Krishna Menon fought the West Irian case in 1954, 1957, 1961, and 1962 in the UN General Assembly and finally on August 15, 1962 the Governments of the Netherlands and Indonesia reached an agreement on plans for settling the political future of the territory and the agreements were endorsed by the General Assembly on September 21, 1962.⁴³

India recognised the Peoples Republic of China soon after its establishment in October 1949 and supported proposals in the United Nations that its delegation should take the seat of the Government of the Republic of China ((Formosa). The question of Chinese representation “stretches like a long serial story through the debates of the General Assembly.”⁴⁴ The question of People’s Republic of China’s admission came up before the United Nations for the first time in the autumn of 1949, but the Security Council failed to arrive at a solution. In 1950, a

41. *Ibid.*, p. 137.

42. *ibid.*, p. 145.

43. *ibid.*, p. 137.

44. Basanti Mitra, Chinese Representation in the United Nations, 1961-63, *India Quarterly*, V. 22 (1), January-March, 1966, p. 18.

motion introduced by India in the General Assembly to give the Central Government of the People's Republic of China the seat occupied by the Government of the Republic of China, was rejected by 33 votes to 16, with 10 abstentions.⁴⁵ India and Krishna Menon earned the hostility of the United States for its persistent advocacy of the seating of the People's Republic of China, but India remained consistent even when relations with China were severely strained in the late 1950s.⁴⁶ Krishna Menon argued the case for admission of China in the United Nations and said:

In 1950 my delegation submitted a draft resolution (A/1365) to the Assembly to provide a seat in the Assembly. Every year since and in every United Nations gathering, when India was a member of it, we have consistently and persistently maintained our attitude that the proper representation by the real Government of China.⁴⁷

The People's Republic of China was seated in the United Nations in 1971, several years after Menon ceased to represent India at the UN. Throughout the 1950s India was consistently arguing for the Chinese representation in the United Nations. Towards the end of the 1950s came the problems of Tibet. Krishna Menon did not gloss over these realities but refused to be persuaded to give up the

45. *idem*.

46. E.S. Reddy and A.K. Damodaran (Eds). *Colonisation, Peace and the United Nations*, p. 163.

47. *Ibid.*, p. 167.

earlier policy of supporting Chinese membership of the United Nations.⁴⁸

During the discussion in the General Assembly of the crisis in the Congo, India together with seven other non-aligned countries, presented a draft resolution (A/L 331 and Rev 1).⁴⁹ This draft resolution urged the United Nations to implement its mandate fully to prevent breach of peace and security, to restore and maintain law and order and to assist the Congolese people in meeting their pressing economic needs and the immediate release of all political prisoners under detention--the convening of parliament and measures to prevent armed units and personnel with Congo from interfering in the political life of the country. Krishna Menon forcefully argued the Congo issue exhorting United Nations to find a solution to Congo crisis referring to the grave and ominous situation existing there. He said:

The 'grave and ominous situation' is the situation of the ominous prospect of blood bath in Africa, a challenge to the position of the United Nations in Africa, the possibility of an international conflict and a fall in the prestige of the United Nations in the world which would be harmful to the cause of humanity, especially at the present time when the world must proceed to disarm if it is to survive.⁵⁰

On the Congo question India had contributed a great deal. Similarly on Suez,

48. *ibid.*, p. vii.

49. *ibid.*, p. 210.

50. *Krishna Menon's Speeches* at the U.N. Dec. 16, 1960, p. 228.

Korea, Indo-China and Hungary India played a great role and all these issues synchronised with Krishna Menon's successful diplomacy within and outside the United Nations. Looking back, the interesting thing is the moderation with which Krishna Menon put forward the anti-colonial position without leaving behind any permanent hostility. Both Britain and France were criticised but in a gentle tone.⁵¹

On Hungary episode, Krishna Menon made it clear that the very first resolution criticising the Soviet military action contained some objectionable formulations which made it impossible for India to vote for the resolution.⁵² He proposed that Dag Hammarskjold, the Secretary General, should make enquiries to ascertain the position in Hungary as the facts on which charges were made and the debate rested were news paper accounts,⁵³ bringing dividends to Krishna Menon's efforts.

Krishna Menon proved his mettle as a shrewd diplomat and fine negotiator both inside and outside the United Nations. His handling of issues like, Korea, Suez, Indo-China, Kashmir and Goa which threatened regional and global peace earned him a name in perpetuity and brought India in the centre stage of world events. It was, on the whole, a long and fruitful association. The participation by Krishna Menon in almost all the important debates in the United Nations for ten

51. E.S. Reddy and A.K. Damodaran, *op. cit.*, p. vii.

52. *ibid.*, pp. vii-viii.

53. Michael Brecher, *op. cit.*, p. 87.

years is significant.⁵⁴ Since 1947 India has worked steadfastly for peace: whether in Korea, Indo-China or in the Suez, she raised her voice in support of peaceful methods for resolving points at dispute, and she did, on the invitation of the parties to the dispute, shoulder responsibilities which only a trusted non-aligned nation could be asked to take up. In other words, the non-alignment policy adopted by India has helped her in co-operation with other nations interested in the preservation of peace to create a climate for discussion which, for the time, at least, helped to relax international tension.⁵⁵

III

DISARMAMENT

Ever since the dawn of history man has been producing armaments to protect himself from the attack of either the animals or of his fellow human beings. Today, for his survival and the preservation of human civilisation, man has to think differently. Dr. Gerald Weudt remarked:

If world war III comes, which we pray will never happen; it will be a war in which most people may die from silent, insidious, anti-human weapons that make no sound, give no warning, destroy no forts or ships

54. E.S.Reddy and A.K.Damodaran, *op. cit.*, p. ix.

55. A. Appadorai, *Chinese Aggression and India. International Studies*, V.5, 1963-64, p.2

or cities, but can wipe out human beings by the millions.⁵⁶

President John F. Kennedy predicted that "A full scale nuclear exchange, lasting less than sixty minutes, could wipe out more than 300 million Americans, Europeans and Russians, as well as untold numbers else where."⁵⁷ War, today has the potentialities for destruction beyond the range of human comprehension. Therefore, it is imperative that the world should be rid of war. The question of peace and security of mankind, quite understandably involves directly or indirectly the question of disarmament.⁵⁸ Disarmament is the elimination, reduction or limitation of a nation's armed forces. It can usually be achieved by international agreement. According to Charles P. Schleicher, Disarmament means :

Agreement, at least among the principal powers, that states will not maintain armaments and armed forces beyond certain levels and usually that some types of weapons will be abolished or entrusted to an international authority.⁵⁹

The terms disarmament and arms control, both are related to reduction of armaments, present and future. But the two are not synonyms. Disarmament refers to reduction or abolition of existing weapons. It does not cover weapons of the future. The control of the weapons of the future is

56. L.S. Srivastava and V.P. Joshi, Part II, *op. cit.*, p. 133.

57. Palmer and Perkins, *op. cit.*, p. 207.

58. Ajit Kumar Sen, *op. cit.*, p. 634.

59. *idem*

described by the term arms control. Mahendra Kumar sums up the distinction thus: Disarmament seeks to control armaments; and arms control tries to check arms race.⁶⁰

The trend since world war II, for more and more countries to manufacture nuclear weapons have led to a campaign for arms control. Supporters of this campaign believe that the overwhelming power of the nuclear arm is excessive. Countries with nuclear arms have enough weapons to wipe out each other several times over. International Arms Control Agreement reduces world tension by reducing the need for countries to acquire nuclear weapons.

The history of the beginning of disarmament efforts can be traced back to the first Hague Peace Conference in 1899 on the initiative of Czar of Russia. This Conference was attended by 28 nations with the purpose of limiting armament and of military budget. The conference in the end expressed the hope that the governments 'may examine the possibility of the limitation of armed forces by land and sea and of war budgets.'⁶¹ The next conference held at the Hague in 1907, attended by 44 nations; also could not make much headway in this direction. The President of the Conference commended that "If the question was not ripe in 1899, it is not any more so in 1907. It has not been possible to do anything on these lines, and the conference

60. V.N. Khanna, *op. cit.*, p. 168.

61. Hans Morgenthau, *op. cit.*, p. 476.

today finds itself as little prepared to enter upon them as in 1899”⁶².

However, disarmament on a significant international scale dates from the end of world war I (1910-1918). The peace treaty signed after the war disarmed Germany and limited the size of its army. In 1922 France, Italy, Japan and Great Britain have agreed to destroy some of their battleships and ban the building of new ones for 10 years. In 1930, Japan, Great Britain and the United States of America also agreed to limit the size of their cruisers, destroyers and submarines. This agreement lasted until 1936. By 1941 all the nations who were parties to these agreement were at war.

After world war II, international agreements provided for the disarming of Germany and Japan. The United Nations tried to secure an agreement limiting arms for all countries, chiefly through the Disarmament Commission.. In 1963, the United Nations Test Ban Treaty was signed and ratified by the United States, Soviet Union, the group of East European Communist states. Later a series of treaties banned or limited military activities in many situations. They included a ban on military actions in outer space (1967), a nuclear weapon ban in Latin America (1968), and a UN approved Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (1970). The UN also approved Sea-bed Arms Control Treaty (1972), to set limits to the placing of nuclear weapons on the ocean floor, and a Biological Weapons Convention (1975). In 1972 the United States and Soviet Union signed two agreements. One was to control each

62. L.S. Srivastava and V. P. Joshi, *op.cit.*, p. 140.

others defensive missile strength. The other was to restrict the production of certain types of strategic nuclear weapons.

Beginning in the late 1980s, improved US-Soviet relations led to a number of arms control agreements. In 1988, a US-Soviet treaty went into effect that eliminated all of the two countries ground launched nuclear missiles with ranges of 500 to 5,500 kilometres. The treaty also provided for the first inspection procedure on national territory to support verification. In 1990, the United States and the Soviet Union, along with 20 other nations, signed a treaty to destroy large number of their tanks and other nuclear weapons in Europe. This agreement, known as the Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty, went into effect in 1992. In July 1991, the US and Soviet Union signed the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START). In 1993, US and Russia (after the disintegration of USSR) signed START II, a treaty to supplement START I. In 1993, 125 countries signed a UN-sponsored treaty banning the manufacture, use, transfer and stockpiling of chemical weapons.⁶³ However, the persisting divergence between Russia and the US over missile defence could undermine the prospects of START II and poison the overall relation between the world's foremost nuclear powers. On September 9-10, 1996 the United Nations General Assembly had a brief resumed session lasting less than a day and a half, at the end of which it approved by an overwhelming majority a resolution adopting a Comprehensive (nuclear) Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) and called upon all states to sign the treaty and later become parties to

63. vide *World Book Encyclopaedia*, Vol.5.

it at the earliest.⁶⁴

Disarmament is considered to be the most effective means of preventing war and guaranteeing peace. It is commonly believed that unless there is disarmament, war and destruction cannot be checked. The only direct cause of war, according to disarmament approach is the existence of armaments. It is argued that war results from armaments and therefore, it can be checked only by disarmament.⁶⁵ Palmer and Perkins commends that: "If armaments are conducive to war, should it not follow that, disarmament is the road to peace".⁶⁶ "If limitations of armament comes, it will be a result rather than a cause of peace."⁶⁷ It is more realistic to argue, that "so long as the 'force system' prevails, then armament has a utility" and that "so long as it has utility, so long will armaments survive and the greater the utility, the greater will be the armaments."⁶⁸ It must be recognised that war today has potentialities for destruction beyond the range of human comprehension. The coming of the nuclear and the space age has ushered in "the age of overkill"⁶⁹ Dr. Albert Einstein, one of the pioneers of the nuclear age, once remarked: "I do not know the weapons with which world war III will be fought, but I can assure you that world war IV will be fought with sticks

64. M.A. Vellodi, "CTBT The Anti Climax," *The Hindu*, October 10, 1996.

65. Srivastava and V.P. Johii, , *op. cit.*, pp. 133-134.

66. Palmer and Perkins, *op.cit.*, p. 198.

67. *idem.*

68. *idem.*

69. *ibid.*,p. 207.

and stones.⁷⁰

Of all the arguments in favour of disarmament, the most important and pertinent one is the economic waste. It is really an irony of fate that when millions of people, in under-developed countries starve, developed and developing countries spent huge sum of money on the production of armaments. On April 16, 1953 the American President Eisenhower said:

Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired, signifies in the final sense, a theft from those who are hungry and are not fed, those who are cold and not clothed. This world in arms is not spending money alone. It is spending the sweat of its labourers, the genius of its scientists, the hopes of its children.⁷¹

Another argument is that the armament itself is a cause of war as it leads to the feeling of insecurity, mutual jealousy and rivalry. The problems of disarmament is not, merely a problem of liquidation of armament, but it is a problem of organising the world community and removing distrust and suspicion from the mind of men.⁷²

India consistently supported all efforts for disarmament and arms control. It was the first country to plead for total ban on nuclear testing as far back as 1954. Speaking in the Lok Sabha on April 2, 1954 Prime Minister Nehru had called for an 'immediate stand still' agreement by the two super powers until the United Nations

70. *idem.*

71. Ajit Kumar Sen, *op. cit.*, p. 634.

72. *ibid.*, p. 635.

elaborated a comprehensive disarmament agreement.⁷³ Disarmament had been a passionate cause for Nehru. Nehru wrote to the Chief Ministers on March 6, 1961:

Look at the world. Here is a rocket rushing at incredible speed to Venus (referring to the launching of a satellite by Soviet Union on February 12, 1961). Presently men will be indulging in space travel. At the same time men also continue to indulge in building up terrible weapons of war and no one can say that they will not be used, even if this results in the utter destruction of mankind. Disarmament should be the first and vital issue before every one, not only disarmament in the physical sense of putting an end to vast armed forces, but even more so in its effect on the mind. We have to disarm our mind, of hatred and the spirit of violence. When that will be, I do not know. But unless this comes about, disaster on an inconceivable scale is inevitable.⁷⁴

Krishna Menon was equally passionate about disarmament. On no issue, perhaps, has Krishna Menon spoken more passionately and more consistently than on disarmament.⁷⁵ He observes:

To my mind two facts are important in the disarmament discussion: One is speedy progress towards disarmament, the other allows all steps and stages towards disarmament and then for abolition of war itself . . . we hold that disarmament is only a step towards the abolition of war itself. Unless nations are prepared to outlaw war and no longer regard them as methods of settling disputes between nations, wars will continue, in spite of disarmament. But

73. V.N. Khanna, *op.cit.*, p. 168.

74. J. Nehru, *Letters to the Chief Ministers*, Mar 6, 1961, V. 5, pp.425-26.

75. Micheal Brecher, *op.cit.*, p. 328.

this is no reason for us to slow down our efforts.⁷⁶

At one level, for Krishna Menon, it was the issue of global nuclear war leading to planetary devastation and that he thought this had to be prevented at all cost and a machinery devised within the parameters of existing global organisations to prevent the outbreak of such a conflict between the great powers. In another level the continuing environmental hazards posed by atmospheric tests concerned him very much.⁷⁷ He articulated with precision and passion and brought out India's concern with the environmental hazards posed by weapon testing in the atmosphere.⁷⁸ On July 12, 1956, making the statement in the Disarmament Commission Krishna Menon said:

No one can calculate the consequences for future generations of the results of the fallout from explosions. If that is so, then those who are responsible for the conduct of affairs have to think very far and very deep before they commit themselves to consequences unknown and ungovernable.⁷⁹

He aspired for total disarmament as a pre-condition for abiding peace and the realisation of a world government; and felt optimistic that it was possible sooner than late. He defined India's proper role as a relentless pressure on the nuclear powers to reach agreement to cease tests, suspend the production of fissionable materials and

76. V.K.Krishna Menon, *Problems of War and Peace*. *Link*, New Delhi, July 20, 1969, p. 35.

77. G. Parthasarathi, *Forward, Krishna Menon on Disarmament*, Sept 8, 1994, p. vii.

78. *idem*.

79. *Krishna Menon's speeches at UN Disarmament*, July 12, 1956, p. 38.

begin the destruction of stock-piles.⁸⁰ Krishna Menon firmly believed that it was India's obligation to persist in this endeavour until complete disarmament, conventional, as well as nuclear is attained. He admonished those who advocated a nuclear capability for India or any variant thereof and regretted the diminished militancy and activity of Indian spokesmen on this issue at Geneva or New York.⁸¹ He had used every forum available to him to remind humanity about the devastating effect of nuclear weapons and exhorted them to abstain from the production and stock-piling of such weapons. Krishna Menon's approach to disarmament was always conditioned by his refusal to make the meaningless distinction between nuclear disarmament and the reduction of weapons. Therefore, he repeatedly urged upon a plan of comprehensive disarmament which would include besides suspension of nuclear tests, an armament truce, a reduction of budget of all governments of their expenditure on military establishments.⁸²

On the Bomb, Menon was emotional in the extreme and his image of nuclear weapons in the global environment is fussy.⁸³ His comments begin and end with the same purist and self-righteous assertions: "Why should I debate mass suicide A nuclear bomb is not a weapon of offence or defence; it is a weapon of mass

80. Micheal Brecher, *op. cit.*, p. 329.

81. *idem.*

82. V.K. Madhavan Kutty, *op. cit.*, p. 110.

83 Micheal Brecher, *op. cit.*, p. 313.

extermination”.⁸⁴ Krishna Menon was of the opinion that, under no circumstances should India build or acquire nuclear weapons; nor should India seek or accept a nuclear umbrella from one or more nuclear powers, for this would undermine non-alignment.⁸⁵ However, Krishna Menon accepted the necessity of conventional weapons until total disarmament and effective world government are achieved.⁸⁶

Making the statement on the 82-nation draft resolution in the first committee of the General Assembly Krishna Menon said: “My country is convinced that there is no half way house between peace and war.”⁸⁷ During the period between 1952 and 1962 Krishna Menon carried on a continuous propaganda in favour of general and nuclear disarmament and firmly believed that it was possible to disarm the world; that it was possible for man to throw away his arms. These hopes, though illusory, carried conviction with him. Krishna Menon wrote:

On world issues, mainly disarmament and the prohibition of nuclear arms, India has been in the forefront and been more than once responsible for resolving deadlocks as between the blocs. Indian initiative played a considerable part in bringing about the eighteen-nation conference on disarmament at Geneva when the Disarmament Commission had been stultified. It prevented the disarmament issues from being killed.⁸⁸

On November 15, 1960, India together with eleven other countries presented a

84. *idem.*

85. *idem.*

86. *ibid.*, p. 314. .

87. *Speeches at UN Disarmament*, Nov.2, 1959, p.137

88. V.K.Krishna Menon, *Foreign Policy Continuum*, *op. cit.*, p.. 48.

draft resolution to set out a number of directives which should form the basis of an agreement on general and complete disarmament, and to urge that “negotiation be resumed for the purpose of the earliest conclusion of an agreement on general and complete disarmament under effective international control.”⁸⁹ While introducing the draft resolution Krishna Menon said :

The negotiations at Geneva have gone on the basis that by compromise and agreement what are called underground explosion should be permitted and should be arranged as between the members of the nuclear club.⁹⁰

He argued that there should be a total suspension, a total abandonment of these explosions.⁹¹ He further elaborated his views on disarmament, expressing his concern for saving humanity from nuclear devastation that:

I think we should tell people that disarmament cannot be done cheaply, and economy is not its main purpose: that it is done in order to save humanity from the disastrous consequences of atomic conflict.⁹²

Krishna Menon was for a world in which nations should not settle their differences by force of arms. A world in which international order would prevail. A secure world in which all people would be free from the fear of war. In short, he envisioned total disarmament of all nations under law. Quite understandably he appeared totally upset when India exploded a nuclear device at Pokhran in 1974

89. E.S. Reddy and A.K. Damodaran, *op. cit.*, p. 218.

90. *Krishna Menon Speeches*, Nov.15 , 1960, p.221.

91. *idem.*

92. *ibid.*, p. 223.

V.K. Madhavan Kutty testifies:

Till his death in 1974, Krishna Menon was emotionally involved with the conviction on disarmament. When India exploded a nuclear device in Pokhran in August 1974, Krishna Menon was seriously ill and hospitalised in the Pandit Pant Hospital. When Menon saw the news paper report, he started shivering with anger. He asked the nurse to get the Prime Minister on the telephone forthwith. When she came back and told that the Prime Minister was not available, he shouted at her and ordered that Homi Sethna, the Chairman of Atomic Energy Commission, be asked to see him immediately. The nurse reported that he too was not available. Tearing his hair Krishna Menon was heard saying that he was on the consultative committee of Parliament for Atomic Energy and that Sethna had no authority to do this behind his back. He was seen grasping for breath.⁹³

Krishna Menon's dream of a world free of nuclear weapon; his aspiration of total disarmament, could not come to fruition and since the dawn of nuclear age there have been more than two thousand nuclear tests. However, India had done everything possible to reconcile its own security needs with the general wish of the international community to see an end to nuclear testing. But the security environment, both globally and regionally are highly explosive and of late the United States is embarking on a warfare strategy that shatters the illusion of peace. The new doctrine prepared includes newly defined terminology for computer based warfare. Under the existing environment India had to take recourse to nuclear tests whose objectives at the macro

93. V.K.Madhavan Kutty, *op. cit.*, p. 110.

level were to test, acquire and confirm India's nuclear weapons capacities to cope with the nuclear strategic threats.⁹⁴ Another aim is to prevent the institutional perpetuation of the unfair hegemony of the five existing nuclear weapon powers and an international strategic order based on discrimination and inequality between the nuclear weapon powers and all other countries of the world.⁹⁵

The first time India took an active part in the discussion on disarmament was in 1953 when, on the proposal of India, a Sub-committee of the Disarmament Commission was set up so that Great Powers could negotiate in private under UN auspices.⁹⁶ Throughout the speeches in UN, Krishna Menon returns again and again to the need for a friendly dialogue between the major Powers concerned, primarily between the United States and Soviet Union.⁹⁷

The speeches of Krishna Menon in the first Committee of the UN General Assembly over the years on disarmament, demonstrate the single mind pursuit of one aim-general and complete disarmament.⁹⁸

94. J.N. Dixit, *The Hindu*, November 12, 1998.

95. *idem*.

96. E. S. Reddy and A.K. Damodaran (Eds.) *Krishna Menon on Disarmament op. cit.* p. XII

97. *idem*.

98. *ibid.*, p. XIII

Chapter VI

FOREIGN POLICY CONTINUUM--TWO

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I
THE COMMONWEALTH

When India became a Dominion in the British Commonwealth of Nations on August 15, 1947, it was widely believed by both Indians and non-Indians that this was just a transient arrangement meant to enable smooth and cordial transfer of power into Indian hands. However, two years later, when the draft of the new Indian Republican constitution was ready, the Indian government decided to ask for continued membership of the Commonwealth even after becoming a Republic, and the other Commonwealth Governments welcomed and accepted Republican India's continued membership as "the most spectacular event in the constitutional evolution of the modern commonwealth."¹ From the Indian point of view, then, the Commonwealth was (and is) a free association of independent, sovereign states which for historical reasons had come together and maintained that connection for the purpose of promoting certain common interests and goals, the most important of which was the maintenance and promotion of international

1. M.S. Rajan, "India and the Commonwealth 1954-56," *India Quarterly*, V. 16(1) (Jan-Mar 1960), p. 40

peace and security.² India's membership of Commonwealth is an event of very great importance to her but probably of much greater importance to the world as a whole. India has opted to join the commonwealth as a matter of free choice. The significance of this act lies in the fact that she has chosen association with a country which exercised complete political domination over her, and her people had to struggle and suffer for political emancipation. India has chosen to let by-gones be by-gones, bury the memory of her bitter struggle and joined hands in a spirit of good will and fellowship in the hope that a new chapter in the history of her own and that of the world can thereby be opened.³ The immediate bearing of this approach, however, is that India, while retaining her complete freedom of action in internal and external affairs, has to co-operate with other members of the Commonwealth for the good of all and in return receive all assistance that she needs from Britain and other Commonwealth members for solving her many pressing problems.⁴ This, of course, means that not only the Commonwealth countries have to appreciate India's position and problems and do nothing to take advantage of her difficulties of transition from political subjection to freedom, but also make such positive contributions as they can to enable India to fulfil her urgent needs and to equip herself to play her part in

2. *idem.*

3. Gyan Chand, "Industrialisation of India and Commonwealth Co-Operation." *India Quarterly*, V 5 (4) (Oct-Dec 1949), p. 334.

4. *Idem.*

shaping the future.⁵ The historic decision to continue India's membership in the Commonwealth was taken on May 17, 1949 when the Constituent Assembly approved the motion moved by the Prime Minister of India.⁶

Jawaharlal Nehru, while commending the resolution to the Assembly, gave several reasons for India's continued association with the Commonwealth, amongst which were: that the independence of India would not be limited in the least; continuing to be in the Commonwealth would not, in anyway, go against the independence pledge taken on January 26, 1930; it would be beneficial to India and to certain causes in the world that it wished to advance and so on. But the most compelling arguments were, in our views, pragmatic ones, based largely on the historical association of India with Britain.⁷

India agreed to remain in the Commonwealth of Nations because the association fully conformed to the underlying principles of her foreign policy, in particular of removing discord and bringing about harmony among nations. No less a person than the Earl of Home, British Secretary of State for Commonwealth relations, in the course of a visit to India, in October 1955, told the members of the Indian Council of World Affairs that all the Commonwealth countries in effect subscribed to the 'panch sheel', and that the objectives of the foreign policies of the United Kingdom, India and other Commonwealth

5. *ibid.*, p. 335.

6. A. Appadorai, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

7. *idem.*

countries were identical.⁸ The Commonwealth association was not only not inconsistent with India's foreign policy but was actually in harmony with it, was the main emphasis of Nehru's many speeches defending the Commonwealth connection whenever it was challenged by its critics in India. Answering Communist criticism in Parliament Nehru said:

We are in the Commonwealth, I think, because it is good for us and good for the causes which we wish to support, and because it does not come in our way at all in the policies that we pursue, and it is and might be helpful. India welcomed every kind of association with other countries provided it did not come in the way of India's Policy and, indeed, she had even closer association with some countries outside the Commonwealth like Burma, Indonesia, and Yugoslavia.⁹

He would like such associations to take place all over the world. It was infinitely better than a military alliance which was always unfriendly to some country.¹⁰ But Nehru had no intention of going back on the resolution of the Constituent Assembly that India should be a free and sovereign Republic. But the advantage of retaining a link with the Commonwealth were also becoming stronger. It was known that Jinnah was hoping to tease India out of that association, leaving Pakistan as the 'northern Ireland' of the sub-continent; and there was the continuous advocacy of Mountbatten and Krishna Menon at

8. M.S. Rajan, *op. cit.*, pp.33-34.

9. *ibid.*, p. 34.

10. *idem.*

Nehru's elbow.¹¹ To Nehru it was the political advantage of a continuing link with the Commonwealth which at the time was primary and he believed himself to be acting, to some extent, under certain pressure of circumstances.¹²

As it was not clear on what basis India could retain her ties with the Commonwealth, Nehru, on whom the burden of this decision primarily rested, let the matter remain dormant for the time being. But Nehru has allowed negotiations to go on. Krishna Menon observes:

The crucial role the Prime Minister played in this matter was in allowing negotiations to go on; secondly, placing confidence; thirdly, in taking on the opposition; in the preparation of opinion here, and things of that kind.¹³

It is a well known fact that Prime Minister Attlee and Lord Mountbatten were anxious to retain India as a Dominion and remain in the Commonwealth owing common allegiance to the Crown. India did not, in Attlee's view, have a native tradition of Republicanism, which was basically an importation from the West.¹⁴ Jawaharlal wrote to Krishna Menon regarding the use of the word 'Republic' by India thus:

Mountbatten has been naturally anxious to retain India as a Dominion. He has

11. Savepally Gopal, *Jawaharlal Nehru: Biography*, Vol.II, 1947 to 1956 (New Delhi, 1979), p. 46.

12. *Idem*.

13. Michael Brecher, *op.cit.*, p. 16.

14. Saravepally Gopal, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

tried to convince me repeatedly that the word 'Republic' should not be used by us in our constitution. We should be a Commonwealth or State. Having fixed up 'Republic' for the last year and a half any attempt to change it now will be viewed with great suspicion. As a matter of fact, I think, that if we use the word 'Republic' it may be possible to have close relationship with U.K than otherwise.¹⁵

Krishna Menon, after prolonged thought and deliberations brought out a draft which was accepted by Nehru as the basis of India's membership of the Commonwealth as a Republic. The draft reads:

Whereas the new Constitution of India provides that India shall be a sovereign Republic, the government of India hereby declare and affirm India's continuing and equal membership of the Commonwealth of Nations, as now subsisting by the free will of the member peoples, as a symbol of free association of the Independent nations within the Commonwealth . . . The King as the Head of the Commonwealth is a symbol of free association of its independent member nations and is so accepted by all of them.¹⁶

Pandit Nehru had written to Menon that his phrase "the symbol of free association of the members of the Commonwealth seems to me suitable."¹⁷ However, public opinion in India was not in favour of joining the Commonwealth of Nations. Realising the gravity of the situation Nehru wrote to Krishna Menon :

15. S. Gopal, *Selected Works of Jawaharlal nehru*, Vol.6, (New Delhi, 1987), p. 467.

16. V.K. Madhavan Kutty, *op. cit.*, p. 125.

17. *ibid.*, p. 126.

Whatever the merits of the question might be, I fear it is hardly possible for us to continue as a dominion of the British Commonwealth. This would be fiercely opposed by various elements in India and might become a major issue tending to split up our rank.¹⁸

While Attlee and some of the Dominion Prime Ministers desired a special stress on the role of the Crown, India preferred omission of any mention of the 'King'. Krishna Menon, who was as anxious as any British Statesman for a continuance of the Commonwealth association, suggested as a compromise that India need not undertake any overt act of recognising the King, but he could continue to be the president, as it were, of the club in which India was remaining as a member.¹⁹ Nehru agreed. India would neither recognise nor repudiate the King.²⁰ But, Nehru was not sure that the Indian people would agree with the proposal to join the Commonwealth under the then prevailing attitude of Britain towards India.

Attlee and some Dominion Prime Ministers persisted in attaching importance mainly to the position of the King and talked in terms, if need be, of associate but not full membership for India.²¹ Winston Churchill was more imaginative and found a precedent in Roman history for the presence of a Republic in the Commonwealth. But,

18. S. Gopal, *op. cit.*, p.467.

19. Sarvepally Gopal, *op. cit.*, p. 50.

20. *ibid.*, p. 50

21. *ibid.*, p. 51.

both he and the King seemed to have thought in terms of the King becoming the President of India.²² However, Krishna Menon pursued the matter seriously. On the Indian side Gandhiji, Nehru and Sardar Patel agreed on the matter of India's continuance of Commonwealth membership. Krishna Menon had encountered many difficulties even though there were no strong opposition to India's continuance as member of the Commonwealth. Krishna Menon told Micheal Brecher he pursued the case vigorously. It was a kind of squaring the circle that was being sought. This went on for nearly 18 months. We tried various things at that time.²³ At one time I had suggested that the King should be the First Citizen of this country, and for this purpose, in each Commonwealth state, the King would be the First Citizen of the Commonwealth.²⁴ I pursued the matter for months. I told Nehru, and he said 'yes', if you can. I have no objection.' So it was a question of squaring the circle. Then I think I brought around Cripps and he said, 'yes, we can do something'. Then I went and told Nehru what Cripps said.²⁵ He continues:

I put three principles: one was common citizenship; another was reciprocity, the third principle was independence. These three principles were discussed and there were talks at Mountbatten's house at Broadlands, at Downing Street,

22. *idem.*

23. Micheal Brecher, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

24. *idem*

25. *idem.*

here, there, and everywhere. Actually I was a busybody in this business, and the Prime Minister kept saying 'oh' get on with it, do whatever is possible and don't give it up.²⁶

Basing on the draft document provided by Krishna Menon, Nehru formulated his proposal, India would be a republic, but a separate statute could be enacted providing for common Commonwealth citizenship.²⁷ The King as the First Citizen of the Commonwealth will be the fountain of honour so far as the Commonwealth as a whole is concerned.²⁸

The British Government thought that these proposals were insufficient from the legal view point. Krishna Menon testifies:

Mountbatten, Stafford Cripps, Lord Jowitt, the Foreign Office Lawyers were all quite clear that you could not have a Republic in the Commonwealth, there can be no such thing as Commonwealth citizenship; you are either alien or you are native; this was the Foreign Office Lawyers' position.²⁹

Krishna Menon with his own ingenious suggestion made no mention of the King or the Crown in the Declaration he had drafted in association with Norman Brook. "It would have made no difference if the word 'king' had not been put in the

26. *ibid.*, p. 23.

27. Sarvepally Gopal, *op. cit.*, p. 48.

28. *idem.*

29. Micheal brecher, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

Declaration, but Pakistan was anxious to put a spoke in the wheel...” In the course of the discussion Liquat Ali asserted: “what about the king; we cannot have a declaration of the Commonwealth without a King...”³⁰ Then Krishna Menon added these words ‘as such’.³¹ So, the declaration got amended. “India accepted the King as the symbol of the free association of its independent member nations and ‘*as such*’ the Head of the Commonwealth.”³² Thus, Krishna Menon told Micheal Brecher:

The moment you make the King Head of the Commonwealth, within the existing Commonwealth constitutional ideas and practice, we accept the Crown as Head of India. So I said “we are a free state, the King is a symbol of this union and, “as such” the Head of Commonwealth.”³³

One of the first major contributions of Krishna Menon was in helping to transform the British Empire and Commonwealth into the new Commonwealth of Nations.³⁴ He was a strong advocate for the closest of relations between independent India and Britain, and his support for Indian membership of the Commonwealth was consistent with it and with Gandhiji’s philosophy of civilised reconciliation.³⁵ But there was also another consideration in the minds of Nehru and Menon., observes K.R.

30. *ibid.*, p. 24.

31. *idem.*

32. Sarvepally Gopal, *op. cit.*, p. 53.

33. Micheal Brecher, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

34. K.R. Narayanan, “Menon, Nehru and Foreign Policy,” *Main Stream*, May 19, 1984, p. 25.

35. *idem.*

Narayanan:

Nehru especially believed that while rejecting alignment with the Cold War blocs that had then come into being, joining a non-military, non-ideological and voluntary club like Commonwealth would give newly independent India certain international access as well as international cushioning. Perhaps a more subtle consideration was the faint hope held out by statesmen like Aneurin Bivan that Socialist Britain together with India and the other Third World Commonwealth countries and Western Europe could emerge as a third force between USA and the Soviet Union. This hope did not materialise because of the choice by Britain of the connections with America as the primary strategy in its foreign policy.³⁶

In the functioning of the Commonwealth, if we ask how British is the Commonwealth, and how large Britain bulks in Commonwealth affairs, we need to make a distinction between power and influence.³⁷ If we mean how much power Britain has in the sense of sovereignty then the answer is none at all, so far as the other independent members are concerned.³⁸ This position has arisen out of the constitutional position that the King is the symbol of free association of its independent member nations and 'as such' the Head of the Commonwealth. The King or the Queen of the United Kingdom is recognised by all the members as Head of the Commonwealth. Here we have to make

36. *idem.*

37. J.D. Miller, *How British is the Commonwealth* (Foreign Affairs Report), Indian Council of World Affairs, New Delhi, October 1959, Vol. 8, No. 10., p. 120.

38. *idem.*

a distinction between the King and the Crown. The King or Queen is a person; the Crown is an office, with all the panoply of executive government attached to it. But the Crown is not the Head; the King or Queen is, as a person; and as a person in this context, he or she has no one to advise and no task to perform other than that of acting as a symbol of the mutual association of the member nations. "She or he has nothing to do but be."³⁹ This totally symbolic position was conceived as a face-saving device, whereby, on the one hand, traditional imperialists could still find some tenuous relationship between the monarch and the Commonwealth as a whole, while on the other, republicans could remain within the Commonwealth but ensure that monarchy had no direct connection with their own political systems.⁴⁰ Krishna Menon's ingenuity suggested, yet another formula. He said:

for a long time the Australians called this(Commonwealth) the British Commonwealth of Nations; we called it the Commonwealth of Nations. Nobody raised an issue about it. In a practical sense we approached this problem very much the way the British do. Observed Krishna Menon. We did not make an issue of it: 'You can say what you like we say what we like'.⁴¹

Sir Stafford Cripps, referring to the happy outcome of India's decision to remain in the Commonwealth even after becoming a Republic, wrote to Krishna Menon:

39. *ibid.*, p. 121.

40. *idem.*

41. Michael Brecher, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

Without your unflagging efforts, I am sure we could never have arrived at so happy a conclusion. It is a great work for all of us and will be regarded as a fine piece of constructive statesmanship in a world where there is too little of that commodity.⁴²

II

KASHMIR

Between the mighty Himalayan range of the north and the plain of the Punjab lies the State of Jammu and Kashmir. The history of Jammu and Kashmir is an account of rapacious invaders bearing down upon their beautiful valleys to pillage and oppress leaving them in dire poverty to till their terraced slopes with laborious patience.⁴³ In spite of fertile soil, mineral resources, unlimited water supply, the immense wealth of its forests, the matchless skill of its world famous craftsmen and the bracing climate of Kashmir, its inhabitants have had to trek down to the towns of Punjab to work as coolies in order to earn enough money to pay land revenue to the feudal administration and interest to the money lenders.⁴⁴

42 V.K. Madhavan Kutty, *op .cit.*, p. 126.

43. P.N. Dhar . The Kashmir Problem - Political and Economic Background - *India Quarterly* V: 7. (2) Apr/June 1951. p. 143.

44. *ibid.*, p. 143.

Kashmir, the most beautiful part of India, sometimes described as the 'Switzerland of Asia' has according to an eminent scholar Dr. Stein, the distinction of being the only region of the country that possesses an uninterrupted series of written records of its history reaching back beyond the period of the Mohammedan conquest and deserving the name of real chronicles. The political movements that shook India during the first three decades of the 20th century did not affect these people till 1931. It was in this year that they suddenly burst into intense political activity.⁴⁵

Though most of the Kashmiris profess the religion of Islam, they were immune from religious fanaticism. The Hindus of Jammu, the Buddhists of Ladakh and the Muslims of Kashmir valley have been observing the norms of tolerance scrupulously and thereby keeping themselves off from the virus of communalism. Thus, Kashmir has been described as the 'symbol of India'.⁴⁶ The policy adopted by the East India Company and then by the British Government in relation to the princely states did not conform to a uniform pattern. It changed from time to time and varied according to the exigencies of the situation; some times, it was mild while on other occasions, it became aggressive and dynamic.⁴⁷ However, the paramountacy of the Crown came to be established with the promulgation of the Government of India Act 1858 and the Royal

45. J. C. Johari. *Indian Government and Politics*. (New Delhi), Vol. II., p. 459.

46. *ibid.*, p. 461.

47. *idem.*, p. 461

Proclamation made by Queen Victoria thereafter. As a result, the Indian states ceased to be the allies of the British Government as such, 'they were substantially transformed into the protected feudatories of the Crown of England whose sovereignty over them was boldly and frankly announced and pressed with the unquestioned authority of irresistible military power. Thus, the British rulers treated princely states as an asset to their strength and tried to keep them under their paramount control. They accorded almost complete authority to the rulers to maintain their power in the states without in anyway proving a source of menace to the British Raj. Thus, the pattern of administration in the princely states was that of an autocratic nature. Nehru rightly pointed out:

The Indian States represent today probably the extremist type of autocracy existing in the world. They are, of course, subject to British suzerainty, but the British government interferes only for the protection and advancement of British interests.⁴⁸

This extremist type of autocracy had made people virtually poor and they had no say in the running of the administration of the state and it is pointed out that out of the meagre revenue of Rs.27.7 million in 1939 in the State of Jammu and Kashmir, the Maharaja, his paraphernalia and private departments ate away Rs. 4 million annually. An additional sum of Rs.5 million a year was spent on the army. With these large slices

48. Jawaharlal Nehru. *Autobiography op. cit.*, pp. 530-531.

taken off, very little remained for fostering nation building activities. The total amount spent on public health, agriculture, co-operative departments, industries, roads, and irrigation amounted only to Rs. 3.6 million.⁴⁹ Being disillusioned with the state of affairs, Sheikh Mohammed Abdulla, organised a movement under his leadership known as 'Muslim Conference' which in the initial stage had attracted only Muslims and it had a communal complexion. On the night of July 13, 1931 Sheikh Abdulla along with his colleagues was arrested. His arrest was a signal for mass upheavals which resulted in riots, flogging, firing followed in a blood trial. Meanwhile the movement percolated to the lower strata of the people and on June 11, 1939 the Muslim Conference was christened into the 'National Conference'. The doors of the new National Conference were open to all people, whatever their religion, caste or creed.⁵⁰ The leadership of the National Conference began to understand the Kashmir problem as a part of the larger political problem of India and forged link with all the progressive forces in India. However, the National Conference came in for vigorous attack from reactionary forces in India. The Hindu Maha Sabha and the Muslim League denounced the movement.

In the mean time, India was on the march. With the arrival of the Cabinet

49. P.N. Dhar, *op. cit.*, p. 143.

50. *ibid.*, p. 152.

Mission in March 1946, the freedom of India seemed to be drawing near. The British Government made its intention clear through the Mountbatten Plan of June 3, 1947. In respect of the Indian states the Mountbatten plan maintained the stand taken by the Cabinet Mission in their proposals.

Finally, on August 15, 1947 the British Government transferred power to the two Dominions of India and Pakistan. The treaty relation between the Crown and feudatory states came to an end and the princes were left to themselves to decide the future course of their action. The Maharaja of Kashmir decided to watch and wait and executed a Standstill Agreement with Pakistan and India for the continuance of certain existing administrative arrangements. India's stand was that the will of the people of the state should decide the accession to either of the Dominion.⁵¹ Before the Prime Minister could come to discuss these matters, Kashmir was invaded by Pakistan. Therefore, the 'Standstill Agreements' which they were trying simultaneously to conclude with the two countries were interrupted, not by the action of the Government of Kashmir or by the Government of India, but by the active aggression of Pakistan.⁵² Therefore, it was not possible for the Standstill Agreement contemplated to go on and

51. *idem.*

52. E.S. Reddy, A.K. Damodaran (Eds.). Krishna Menon on Kashmir. *op cit.*, p. 13.

other developments followed.⁵³ From the middle of September 1947 infiltration of armed raiders into the western parts of the Jammu province of the state began.⁵⁴ A part of the state territory was occupied. On October 22 thousands of armed and fully equipped tribesmen of the Frontier Province of Pakistan supported and led by Pakistan Army personnel broke into the valley of Kashmir. This was a full scale invasion. Kashmir state forces deployed in small and isolated detachments and scattered over thousands of miles of mountainous terrain could not resist the carefully planned invasion. The state army soon ceased to be a fighting force and the raiders tore down the Jhelum Valley road massacring the civilian population - Hindus and Muslims alike--looting and burning houses and property. Within four days, i.e. by the 26th morning the raiders were in Baramula--a town 54 kilometres away from Srinagar, the state capital. The resistance of the state forces having crumbled, the Maharaja's officials abandoned the threatened territory, and the civil administration broke down.

In this critical hour of crisis the National Conference seized the initiative. In response to Sheikh Abdulla's call a people's Militia of 15,000 men, women and children was thrown up overnight.⁵⁵ This was an unprecedented event in the history of Kashmir. The militia hurriedly set up a central operational Headquarters and spread a

53. *idem.*

54. P. N. Dhar. *op. cit.*, p. 153.

55. *ibid.*, p. 154

country-wide network of its ranks which formed the fighting core of the national resistance.

In desperate circumstances when enemy pincers were within 8 kilometres of Srinagar and the Maharaja along with his entourage had fled to Jammu, the National Conference took charge of the administration, and functioned as the 'de-facto' government.⁵⁶ It was the gallant militiamen who filled the void till the arrival of the Indian Army after the accession of the state to the Indian Dominion as announced by Lord Mountbatten, Governor General of India on October 27, 1947.

The raiders, however, continued their relentless march down the valley. The ill-equipped militia could not check their tidal sweep. The raiders made no secret of the fate awaiting Srinagar. This was the grave emergency under which the Maharaja supported now by the National Conference leaders, offered accession of Kashmir to India.⁵⁷

It is a fact that by virtue of Sec 7(1)(6) of the Indian Independence Act 1947, the Indian States regained the position of absolute sovereignty that they had enjoyed prior to the assumption of suzerainty by the British Crown. In this way the rulers of the Indian states became unquestionably competent to accede either to the Dominion of

56. *ibid.*, p. 155.

57. *ibid.*, p. 156.

India or to that of Pakistan, or even remain independent. We may, therefore, safely assert that the signing of the Instrument of Accession by the Maharaja and the acceptance of the same by the then Governor General Lord Mountbatten, on the advice of Nehru, satisfied the statutory requirement as desired in Indian Independent Act of 1947.

The 329 Sikhs of the First Regiment and eight tons of material landed by nine DC3s on an empty Srinagar air field at dawn, Monday 27, October, was just the first instalment in an uninterrupted flow of men and material India had poured into Kashmir swelling the contingent of 100,000 Indian soldiers to fight the invaders and save Kashmir.⁵⁸ The Indians stemmed their advance and routed the raiders in a pitched battle outside Srinagar. Gradually they drove them in disorder back upto the vale of Kashmir, along the valley through which they had descended on Srinagar, towards the bridges they had seized on a bitter October night believing all Kashmir might be theirs without firing a shot. Ultimately, the despute had reached the United Nations.

On Kashmir, Mountbatten succeeded in persuading Nehru and Patel to link military assistance to immediate accession and the offer of plebiscite after law and order has been restored.⁵⁹ The accession of Kashmir was accepted and Indian troops were

58. Larry Collins and Dominique Lapierre. *Freedom at Midnight*. 1998. New Delhi. pp. 356-57.

59. Sarvepally Gopal, *A Biography*, V. 2, p. 20.

flown out on the morning of October 27, just in time to prevent the sack of Srinagar and to thwart what was believed to be the plan of Pakistan to proclaim accession after the city had been captured. So that Jinnah could make a triumphant entry.⁶⁰ Jinnah, as usual played his card by threatening the British with the possibility of a full scale war with India, so that he thought Mountbatten and Nehru would meet him at Lahore for talks. Since Patel thought such an effort would be a mission of appeasement and also the statement of Pakistan accusing India of 'fraud and violence' in Kashmir caused Nehru to cancel his visit. Mountbatten went alone to Pakistan but nothing substantial came out of his meeting with Jinnah.

However, Mahatma Gandhi believed that a solution could be imposed by the British, if they took a hard line but Attlee was reluctant to do anything despite Mountbatten's prompting. Ultimately, Mountbatten succeeded in persuading Nehru to refer the Kashmir problem to the United Nations. So India made a limited reference to the United Nations with regard to Pakistan's aggression. Patel was not in favour of this.⁶¹ Gandhi too was not in favour of this reference but consented to it with reluctance and advised the modification of the draft. It was unfortunate--and Nehru was later deeply to regret it--that Mountbatten, who had no clear understanding of international

60. A. Campbell Johnson, *Mission with Mountbatten* (London, 1951), p. 224.

61. Sardar Patel's, *Correspondence* (Ahmedbad, 1973), V. 6, p. 386.

affairs, had succeeded in persuading Nehru to bring the United Nations into the picture.⁶²

By the reference to the Security Council India stood to suffer in every way. To the Indian request on December 31, 1947 that Pakistan be directed not to participate or assist in anyway in the invasion of Kashmir, Pakistan replied not only with a denial but with general allegation against India of hostility to Pakistan, 'genocide' against Muslims and securing the accession of Kashmir by 'fraud and violence.' The Security Council, under the guidance of the British delegate, Philip Noel-Baker, ignored the specific complaint of India and made clear its preference for Pakistan. It was assumed that India and Pakistan had an equal interest in Kashmir and therefore, whatever was done should seem fair to the Government of Pakistan and the tribesmen as well as to the Government of India. Further in virtual acceptance of Pakistan's general charges against India and ignoring the fact that the United Nations had been approached on a limited issue, the 'Kashmir Question' was replaced on the agenda by the 'India-Pakistan question.'⁶³

Conceding the folly of such a description Krishna Menon later told Michael Brecher that:

Technically it was wrong to call the Kashmir issue before the Security Council the 'India-Pakistan question'. It was a technical error to agree to it. But in our

62. Sarvepally Gopal, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

63. Sarvepally Gopal, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

idealism we thought that the United Nations would set it right. We went to the Security Council under Chapter 6 and not Chapter 7 for this reason. There is some historical truth about it, although I myself may not have agreed to this inscription. I would have thought it best to localise the question on the agenda and reduce it to the issue of the aggression that we alleged.⁶⁴

In Krishna Menon's view, our representatives in the United Nations were new to the Security Council proceedings and our government was overlaid by idealism in its relation to the United Nations.

To a certain extent the creation of Pakistan reflects our emotional not our political relations with Britain at that time. In my opinion the emergence of Pakistan was not a diplomatic or political move; it was largely a reflex action against British imperialism, or part of the attempt to get rid of the British at any price.⁶⁵

Krishna Menon believed that the partition was the handiwork of Britain. The Government of Great Britain was certainly acting against India's interest both at home and in the United Nations. The developments in the United Nation's Security Council continued to be upsetting. The British delegate Noel Baker informed the Indian delegation that from his own sources he was satisfied that Pakistan had provided no

64. Michael Brecher, *op. cit.*, p. 195.

65. *ibid.*, p. 196.

assistance to the raiders.⁶⁶ The British delegation was of the opinion that the crisis in Kashmir was the result of a conspiracy hatched by the Hindu Maharaja to massacre Muslims and persuaded the United States to insist on military policing of the state by Pakistan and refused to recognise Sheikh Abdulla's government.⁶⁷

The nationalist Chinese delegate introduced a resolution which the Indian Government accepted. The British Government promised Nehru that they would permit no material change in this; but their delegate suggested considerable alteration.⁶⁸

The resolution adopted by the Security Council was not acceptable to India as it implied India and Pakistan had equal status in Kashmir. Subsequently Security Council appointed a Commission whose scope included many subjects irrelevant to Kashmir. The Government of India, despite its objections to the terms of reference of the Commission co-operated with it. Commission's recommendations include, that there should be a cease-fire and withdrawal of Pakistan troops, nationals and tribesmen. India should begin to withdraw the bulk of her forces after Pakistan had withdrawn her tribesmen and nationals, and future status of the state should be determined by a

66. N.G. Ayyengar's Telegram to Nehru, Feb. 7, 1948.

67. Warren Austin, *Foreign Relation of United States* (Washington, 1975), Vol. 5, Part I, p. 276.

68. Sarvepally Gopal, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

plebiscite.⁶⁹

Nehru wrote to the Chief Ministers on December 6, 1948:

The Kashmir Commission report was presented to the Security Council and has been published. The report is a factual one, not unfavourable to us, but not making any particular recommendation. Subsequent developments on this issue have not been very satisfactory. An attempt is being made to find out some formula for a possible plebiscite in the distant future. Our position is that the first thing that should be done is to give effect to the commission's resolutions of withdrawal of Pakistan armies from Kashmir state. Till that happens, the other question can hardly be dealt with. We are of course committed to the future of Kashmir being decided by the people of Kashmir state and we shall stand by that.⁷⁰

The Kashmir question had been in suspense in the United Nations since 1952. India insisted that Pakistan should first vacate before holding out a plebiscite. Pakistan wanted a simultaneous action and was not very clear about its objectives. Both India and Pakistan had stakes in Kashmir. Whoever has Kashmir, has access to the vital strategic areas in the north-west.

India would have little independent role to play in the security of South Asia

69. *ibid.*, p. 29.

70. Jawaharlal Nehru, *Letters to Chief Ministers, 1947-64*, Vol. I, 6 Dec. 1948, p. 238.

without Kashmir for then her own security against an unfriendly China could not be adequately ensured. Secondly Kashmir provided the traditional link between Central Asia and the Indian sub-continent. Indian contacts with three important neighbours--the Soviet Union, China and Afghanistan--depended to a large extent as to who controlled Kashmir. The foreign policy that the Indian government adopted depended largely upon her capacity to develop intimate and friendly contacts with the Communist countries on the one hand and the Muslim West Asian countries on the other. For this purpose India needed to develop more diversified external contacts while retaining the old links. Kashmir's association with India was the key to her attempts to develop more intimate relations with Central Asia.⁷¹

Jawaharlal Nehru summed up the Indian interest in Kashmir thus: India's geographical position with her frontiers marching with three countries namely, the Soviet Union, China and Afghanistan, is intimately connected with the security and international contacts of India. Economically also Kashmir is intimately related to India. The caravan trade routes from Central Asia to India pass through Kashmir.⁷²

For Pakistan, the relative status of India and Pakistan would be changed in Pakistan's favour if the latter were to secure Kashmir. However, an analysis of party

71. Sisir Gupta, Issues and Prospects in Kashmir, *India Quarterly*, V. 21 (3), Jul-Sept. 1965, p. 255.

72. Nehru's speeches in the Constituent Assembly November 25, 1947. Ed. S.C. Popali, *Select documents on Asian Affairs*, N. Delhi, V. I, p. 389.

attitudes in India would reveal criticism (a) of the reference to the UN and the United Nation's role in Kashmir, (b) of the offer of Plebiscite and the delay in ending the uncertainty about Kashmir. But all political parties were fully in agreement with the policy of Government of India on Kashmir.⁷³

Special mention must be made in this connection of the attitude of Muslim political leaders in India.. A convention of Muslim legislators held in Lucknow on March 19 and 20, 1958, unanimously declared:

Kashmir is legally and constitutionally an integral part of Indian Union... Pakistan must vacate its aggression from that part of Kashmir which is illegally in its possession.⁷⁴

The resolution further stated that

The people of Kashmir had endorsed the decision to accede to India through their elected representatives, that the decision was final and irrevocable and that the convention regarded "the continued association of Kashmir with India as an essential feature of the secular character and ideology of Indian Union and any move made to weaken or damage this position as ill-advised and harmful."⁷⁵

Fundamentally both India and Pakistan think that they have the highest stakes in

73. Sisir Gupta, *op. cit.*, p. 265.

74. *ibid.*, p. 266.

75 *ibid.*, p. 265.

Kashmir in terms of their respective security and defence, their foreign relations, their domestic political and economic needs, their international status and prestige and their ideologies. The political arguments of Pakistan may be listed as follows. 1 Pakistan's security cannot be properly ensured, if Kashmir remains part of India.⁷⁶ 2 the rivers on which Pakistan depends for irrigation and water supply originate in Kashmir, and Pakistan would be under the threat of diversion of the water from those rivers.⁷⁷ 3 Pakistan Government cannot retain their hold over their Muslim brothers in Kashmir, if Kashmir remained with India.⁷⁸ 4 Pakistan feels a sense of incompleteness without Kashmir.⁷⁹ 5 the denial of the right of self-determination of Kashmir people, they feel; will lead to continued repression in the state; which will be a threat to the peace and tranquillity in the region.⁸⁰ 6 Kashmir if remains with India, will be a bone of contention between India and Pakistan which would affect the good neighbourly relationship between the two countries.⁸¹

The political considerations of India do not permit any concession to Pakistan on

76. Sir Zafnulla Khan, *Debates in the Security Council*, February 8, 1950 (SCOR), p. 4

77. Keith Callard, *Pakistan a Political Study*, London, 1957, p. 309.

78. Pakistan Pamphlet--Question about Kashmir, Facts and Implications, New York, 1958.

79. Z.A. Bhutto, *Speeches in the Security Council*, Feb 3, 1964, Press Information Dept. Pakistan.

80. *ibid.*

81. *ibid.*

Kashmir issue for the following reasons. 1. Since Indian Constitution does not permit de-accession; if permitted in Kashmir, would lead to fissiparous tendencies in other parts of India which will harm the integrity of the nation.⁸² As per the Sec 7 (I) (b) of the Indian Independence Act 1947, the Indian States regained absolute sovereignty and the rulers of the Indian States became unquestionably competent to accede either to the Dominion of India or to that of Pakistan, or even remain independent. Maharaja Hari Singh had sought the help of India when the State of Kashmir was attacked by invaders supported by Pakistan after executing an Instrument of Accession similar to the one executed by other Indian States. Accordingly, the State of Jammu and Kashmir was included as a Part 'B' state in the first schedule of the Constitution of India. We may, therefore, safely assert that the signing of the Instrument of Accession by the Maharaja and the acceptance of the same by the then Governor General (Lord Mountbatten) on the advice of Nehru, who treated Sheik Abdulla as the representative of the progressive and nationalist forces, satisfied the statutory requirement as desired in the Indian Independent Act of 1947.⁸³ Any unsettlement in Kashmir might open the 'Pandoras Box' in regard to many other matters and reintroduce issues like theocracy versus secularism into Indian politics, thus undermining the stability of the region.⁸⁴ The

82. The Future of a Sub-continent--*Editor Seminar*, N.Delhi, Jun 1964, p.58.

83. J.C. Johari, *op. cit.*, p. 464.

84. Sisir Gupta, *The Kashmir Question Today, International Studies*, V.6. 1964/65, p. 219.

safety and welfare of the whole Muslims of India might be very seriously affected by Kashmir's 'de-accession'. Kashmir's continued association with India is vital for India's defence efforts along the northern borders of India; it is an impossible military task to defend Ladakh without Kashmir. Pakistan's record in Azad Kashmir and the fate of the distinct cultural and linguistic groups in Pakistan would suffer immensely if the state were annexed by Pakistan. Pakistan's hostility to India has deeper roots and the solution of Kashmir question can be approached in a friendly spirit of mutual adjustment. Indo-Pakistan relations would take a much more difficult course, if a solution of the Kashmir question were followed by renewed attempts by Pakistan to sow discord and conflict in the sub-continent.

In spite of the fact that Jammu and Kashmir was included as Part 'B' state, all the provisions of the Constitution applicable to Part 'B' states were not extended to Jammu and Kashmir. This peculiar position was due to the fact that the Government of India had declared that it was the people of the state of Jammu and Kashmir who were to finally determine the Constitution of the state and the jurisdiction of the Union of India. The applicability of the Article 370 of the Indian Constitution regarding Jammu and Kashmir was to be in the nature of an interim arrangement. This provision of the Indian Constitution has been misinterpreted in interested quarters, overlooking the legal implications of the Accession of the State to India. In fact, the Instrument of

Accession signed by Maharaja Hari Singh on October 26, 1947 was in the same form as was executed by the rulers of the numerous other states which acceded to India following the enactment of the Indian Independence act, 1947. Therefore, by the accession; the State of Jammu and Kashmir became legally and irrevocably, a part of the territory of India and the Government of India is entitled to exercise jurisdiction over the State of Jammu and Kashmir.

Ever since the Kashmir issue was admitted in the Security Council a series of resolutions were adopted. Sir Gopala Swami Ayyangar and Bengal Narasimha Rao represented India and argued the Kashmir issue brilliantly but Zafarulla khan and Firoznoon of Pakistan have built up the issue, with the support of the west, in their favour that 'it was almost forgotten that it was India who came to the United Nations with a complaint about Pakistan's aggression.'⁸⁵ The extent to which Pakistan succeeded in the early years in convincing itself that the whole world stood behind its demand for Kashmir was indeed great, what made matters worse was that support extended to Pakistan on pure cold war calculations and for considerations of Western strategic interests in the area, was expressed in terms of a judgement on the rights and wrongs of the Kashmir question a such.⁸⁶ Had it been made clear to Pakistan earlier by

85. V.K. Madhavan Kutty, *op. cit.*, p. 113.

86. A student of Indo-Pakistan Affairs, *Tashkent and After*, V.22(1) Jan-Mar 1966, p. 5.

the cold war powers that its case was not very strong the Pakistan position might have been less rigid than it has been over the years.

That was the condition when Krishna Menon first touched upon the Kashmir question at the UN in 1954. Zafarulla Khan, Pakistan's Foreign Minister, an experienced and clever practitioner in United Nations dialectic, had almost made it appear that India had no case as a plebiscite in Kashmir agreed to as early as in 1949 was still being evaded, because India was not sure of an outcome in her favour.⁸⁷

The first session of the Security Council in January 1957 discussed the Kashmir question against the backdrop of the adoption of the constitution of Kashmir. Being the chief defender of India's policy on Kashmir, Krishna Menon defended the action of the Indian and the Kashmir Governments by arguing that:

During the first debate on the subject in 1948 and 1949, the plebiscite issue was considered as totally dependent upon a change on the ground in Pakistan-occupied territory. The resolutions did not give, according to India, any right to the Security Council or the UN Commission on India and Pakistan, to intervene in the actual situation on the ground. Apart from insisting upon the relevance of only two resolutions and no other pronouncement of the Security Council on the Kashmir problem the debate produced several discussions on general political issues in Kashmir and in India and Pakistan. The strength of the Indian case

87. V.K. Madhavan Kutty, *op. cit.*, p. 113.

was sought to be buttressed by Krishna Menon's exposition of the country's secular policy and the need for eschewing religious propaganda in elections. The narrower problem thus became a more general projection of India's policy from 1947 onwards after the division of the country. The refusal to accept the two-nation theory and the adherence to an actively tolerant policy towards minorities in all parts of India was projected as being relevant.⁸⁸

India went to the United Nation as a plaintiff to seek justice and was made an accused and the responsibility fell on Krishna Menon to bail out India. As he had remarked: "So many trees have grown, and a very considerable amount of undergrowth, that it is impossible to see the wood properly, and it will be my attempt to present it as best as I can."⁸⁹

Krishna Menon brought out a great deal of historical evidences to place developments, phases, incidents and events in their right perspective to enable the Security Council to understand the complex problems which had engaged, in the first instance, the attention of the two countries, and the attention of other parties, including the Security Council over the years. He said in the Security Council:

It was the Government of India that came here in the first instance. The Government of India came here on January 1, 1948. It is not usual for a Government of average ability and intelligence, as mine is, to come

88. E.S. Reddy and A.K. Damodaran, *op. cit.*, p. ix.

89. *idem.*

before the Security Council and to invite its attention to the wrongs it has done. In this particular case it has done nothing wrong, and in any case the matter is clear in itself.⁹⁰

He pointed out to the Security Council that the Government of India requested it to call upon Pakistan to put an end immediately to the giving of such assistance - which is an act of aggression against India.⁹¹ He reminded the members of the Council that India went to the Security Council on January 1, 1948 in order to file complaint, to ask for redress on charge of aggression.⁹² He further said:

The Security Council, even though it has sat on this for over nine years, cannot forget the facts of history and its obligation to the charter. . . We came here to complain to the Security Council under Article 35 of the charter, requesting that the Government of Pakistan be asked to prevent tribal and Pakistan nationals from taking part in the fighting in the state of Jammu and Kashmir and to deny to the raiders access to and use of its territory in operations against Kashmir, military and other supplies, and all other kinds of aid that might tend to prolong the fighting in Kashmir.⁹³

In Krishna Menon's views since Pakistan was a party to the tripartite agreement on Partition and Jinnah insisted that accession must be by Heads of States, the

90. *ibid.*, p. 4.

91. *ibid.*, p. 5.

92. *idem.*

93. *ibid.*, p. 23.

accession of Kashmir to India could not be called in question. Speaking in the Security Council on February 8, 1957 Krishna Menon asserted that: "As is well known Kashmir is - by accession, by the constitutional law of India, of Britain as things were then, and the recognised process of international law - an integral part of the Union of India."⁹⁴

He quoted Mountbatten, who said that the accession had indeed been brought about by violence, but the violence came from the tribe, for whom Pakistan and not India was responsible⁹⁵ Krishna Menon profusely quoted various published works to prove that no fraud or violence was used to accede Kashmir with India. Quoting Joseph Kirbel, Czechoslovak, writer who has recorded in his book, 'Danger in Kashmir' the speech of Lord Mountbatten before the East India Association⁹⁶ :

In the case of Kashmir I went up personally and saw the Maharaja. I spent four days with him in July, and every one of those four days I persisted with the same advice, ascertain the will of your people by any means and join which ever Dominion your people wish to join by August 14 this year. Had he acceded to Pakistan before August 14 the future Government of India had allowed me to give His Highness an assurance that no objection whatever would be raised by them. Krishna

94. *Krishna Menon's Speeches in the Security Council*, Feb 8, 1957, p. 127.

95. *idem*.

96. *idem*.

Menon told the Security Council, "in fact the phrase India used, in such an event, India would not regard as an act of unfriendliness."⁹⁷

To substantiate the argument that India had neither used fraud and violence nor arranged a previous plot, he quoted Lord Birdwood which is on page 59 of his book, "Two Nations and Kashmir" that there was no previous plot.⁹⁸

He had also circulated the document containing the joint statement by the chiefs of the Army, Air Force and Navy in August 1947, who were all British officers, categorically denying any 'prior arrangements'.⁹⁹ Krishna Menon through his numerous speeches in the United Nations in 1957 and 1962 defended the Indian case brilliantly and convinced the world the veracity of Kashmir issue. Kashmir soon became a non-item because of the Soviet Veto. Pakistan's hope of winning through alliances had the opposite effect so far as Kashmir issue was concerned. However, he believed in a clear and realistic fashion that we cannot expect these issues to be neatly sewn up and sealed. If they are deadlocked long enough, time will settle them.¹⁰⁰

According to Krishna Menon the leaders of Pakistan looked upon themselves as the natural and legitimate heirs of the Indian subcontinent; that the Muslims once

97. *ibid.*, p. 129.

98. *idem.*

99. *idem.*

100. A.K. Damodaran, *op, cit.*, p. xiv.

ruled the subcontinent; that the British, the foreign successors to the Mughal Raj, have now departed; that the Muslims assume a natural right to restored authority, that Pakistan is the agent for the pursuit of that historic goal, and Kashmir is but the first stage on the road to conquest.¹⁰¹

Menon stated this view in Dialogue on partition, Pakistan, Kashmir and Indo-Pakistan relations "My belief is that Pakistan leaders looked upon Pakistan as a first instalment, "take what you can and fight for more". They never seem to have accepted partition as final, as we did. Their main approach to the problem was that India was theirs. India was a Muslim country historically. The British had taken it away from them. Now the British had gone away, and it should be handed over to them."¹⁰²

According to Krishna Menon among other things, this challenges the oft-stated Pakistani view that it is the Indian leaders who have not adjusted to 1947. On the point Menon is emphatic:

We professed, and I think we did and do so honestly - that good or bad, we agreed to partition, and we do not want any of their territory. We have no 'arriere pensee' about it. It is not because we are virtuous, it is because we know why we did it.¹⁰³

101. Micheal Brecher, *op. cit.*, p. 319.

102. *idem.*

103. *idem.*

Krishna Menon's speeches on the Kashmir question were unique. The integral relationship between India's domestic and foreign policies was brought about forcefully by him in his exposition of the Indian case on Kashmir in the Security Council. Krishna Menon reiterated in his each speech that the Kashmir issue was not open to arbitration, and no resolution would make India shift her stand on Kashmir because on the basis of her complaint of aggression against Pakistan, the Security Council should first ask Pakistan to vacate aggression. Nehru wrote to the Chief Ministers on October 25, 1957 "In the United Nations we are having the debate on Kashmir in the Security Council. Our delegate Shri Krishna Menon, has represented our case with clarity and fullness."¹⁰⁴ He goes on to add "But where minds are made up, and where the yard stick of judgement has nothing to do with the merits of the problem, these arguments do not convert ."¹⁰⁵

Addressing the Security Council on which six of the members were allies of Pakistan in military pacts, Krishna Menon remarked that he had to fight his battles and that politics of power alignments, religious fanaticism and personal antagonism, take precedence over the fundamental principles of the charter.¹⁰⁶ He presented the Indian case on Kashmir almost for all-time bringing out trenchantly and with flashes of wit and

104. K.R. Narayanan, *op. cit.*, p. xv.

105. Jawaharlal Nehru, *Letters to Chief Ministers*, Vol. 4, p. 588

106. K.R. Narayanan, *op. cit.*, p. vii.

humour basic issues underling the question; conveniently ignored by the Council such as Pakistan's aggression, the need for vacation of aggression and the impracticability of the plebiscite approach to the question. To Krishna Menon, the policy choice on Kashmir was clear, and he had adhered to it consistently "India must stand fast on Kashmir and not yield an inch."¹⁰⁷

III

GOA

Little is known of the early history of Goa, although there are references to it in the epic poems, Ramayana and Mahabharata.¹⁰⁸ Its political history can be traced back to 200s B.C. when Goa formed a part of Maurya Empire. After the Maurya period (about 321 to 185 BC) a succession of small kingdoms ruled the area. They were the Satavahana, the Rashtrakuta, the Chalukya, the Shilahara and the Kadamba. The Kadambas ruled for more than three hundred years until they were defeated by the Jadavas of Devagiri in AD 1347. The Jadava rule lasted until Goa was annexed to the Bahmani Empire. For about 150 years, Goa was influenced by the conflict between the Vijayanagar and the Bahamani kingdoms. The political

107. *idem.*

108. *The World Book Encyclopaedia*, V. 8, p. 239.

control of Goa often changed from one kingdom to another. After the disintegration of the Bahamani kingdom, Goa came under the rule of the Sultan of Bijapur in 1482. By the end of 1400s, when the Portuguese reached India, Goa had become an important centre of trade. It had trade relations with almost all trading nations in the East.

In 1510, a sea-borne expeditionary force commanded by the Portuguese military leader Alfonso de Albuquerque captured Goa and it became the capital of the Portuguese empire in Asia.¹⁰⁹ The city enjoyed the same privileges as Lisbon, the capital of Portugal. Goa also became an important headquarters for Catholic Christian missionaries. The Franciscans arrived in 1517 and a member of their order was appointed as the city's Bishop in 1538. In 1542, St. Francis Xavier, the Spanish-born missionary known as the Apostle of the Indies, took over the college of holy faith. He renamed it in honour of St. Paul because it was to become a centre for training local converts as missionaries. From that time onwards, Jesuits in Asian countries were known as Paulistar. In 1557 Goa was made an archbishopric with authority over all India. By the early 1600s, it controlled bishoprics as far apart as Mozambique and Japan. But by then the city was past the peak of its development.

The Dutch blockaded the city in 1603 and 1639 but did not take it. Maratha

109. *idem.*

raiders almost captured the city in 1683 but were thwarted by the arrival of Mughal army. Goa was again saved from the Marathas in 1739 by the arrival by sea of the new Viceroy and his men.¹¹⁰

Portuguese rule actively supported the conversion of the local inhabitants to Christianity. That the Portuguese were intolerant towards the followers of other religions is evident from the inquisitions they conducted. Portuguese rule was so oppressive and exploitative that during 450 years of Portuguese rule, there were 40 armed revolts in Goa. Although these revolts were put down with a heavy hand, the urge for freedom could not be suppressed for ever. A movement for the liberation of Goa gained momentum in the 1900s. The liberation movement became stronger after Indian independence in 1947.

India's new government claimed Goa in 1948. In 1955 non-violent protestors attempted a peaceful annexation and the resulting casualties led to a break-down of relations between India and Portugal. Indian troops invaded Goa in December 1961 and Goa was made an Indian territory in 1962 and a state in 1987.¹¹¹

Among the issues agreed upon at Bandung was a unanimous condemnation

110. *idem.*

111. *ibid.*, p. 220.

of colonialism. Of this Goa is a flagrant example, for Goa is as much a part of India as Dover is British and Marseilles French.¹¹² It was naturally expected of Portugal to withdraw from Goa when Britain withdrew from India and France from her possessions of Pondicherry, Karaikal, Mahe and Yanam. In 1946 Mahatma Gandhi championing the cause of Goan people said:

In free India, Goa cannot be allowed to exist as a separate entity in opposition to the laws of a free state. Without a shot being fired the people of Goa will be able to claim and receive the right of citizenship of the free state. I would venture to advise the Portuguese government of Goa to recognise the sign of the times and come to honourable terms with its inhabitants.¹¹³

There was no rational explanation for the reluctance of Portugal to withdraw from Goa. Premier Salazar of Portugal said that Portuguese rule must remain in order that Goa “might continue to be a memorial to Portuguese discoveries and a small hearth of the western spirit in the East.”¹¹⁴ Portugal was a member of NATO. The Western powers supported her and opposed India’s interventions in Goa on the ground that such an action would lead to the violation of the UN charter. Those Western nations, who had forcibly seized colonies, wanted to turn the United Nations into a protective shield for the states whose imperial interest made them

112. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, *India's Foreign Policy, Foreign Affairs*, V. 34, 1954-55, p. 437.

113. V.K. Madhavan Kutty, *op. cit.*, p. 143.

114. Vijayalakshmi Pandit, *op. cit.*, p. 437.

eager to maintain the status-quo. However, India took a firm stand on the issue and did not take any action before exhausting all peaceful means for solving the problems.¹¹⁵

The Goans were tired of the Portuguese rule and there had been an increased desire for freedom. When almost all nations of Asia, Africa and Latin America have successfully thrown away the imperial yoke, it was an irony that the Goans were still groaning under the barbarous and cruel Portuguese rule. The government of Goa was being carried on by the Governor-General assisted by an Advisory Council of 12 members of whom seven were nominated and five elected by the wealthiest tax payers. A strict censorship both of internal and foreign mail was maintained and no criticism of the government, including of purely local issues, was permitted. All political activities were forbidden and constitution and executive personnel of even social associations required official approval.¹¹⁶

Goans are Indians. Racially they are indistinguishable from the people of neighbouring districts of Maharashtra state. The inhabitants of Daman and Diu are Gujaratis. According to the Portuguese census statistics of 1951, European settlers numbered 517, those of mixed blood, 562, and Indians 6,36,153. Their mother

115. Asit Kumar Sen, *op. cit.*, p. 591.

116. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, *op. cit.*, pp.438-39.

tongue is not Portuguese but Konkani in Goa and Gujarati in Daman and Diu. Not more than 8 per cent of the entire population has even a slight knowledge of Portuguese. Less than a third of the population is Roman Catholics and even they have more in common with the five million Catholics elsewhere in India who enjoy full religious freedom than the Portuguese. It is significant that whereas the Archbishop of Goa is a Portuguese the first Indian Cardinal is a Goan.¹¹⁷

In July 1954, there was an uprising and the Goans had succeeded in disarming the Portuguese police and taking over the administration of Dadra and Nagar Haveli in Daman. In the satyagraha that followed against the Portuguese authorities over 2500 Goans were arrested and many were subjected to brutal treatment. Again in August 1955 an unarmed group of Indians and Goans tried to cross the border to offer peaceful satyagraha. In the firing that followed, 24 people were killed and many injured. Subsequently 31 Indian nationals were sentenced to long term imprisonment. However, in spite of all these provocations the Government of India refrained from resorting to military measures. Addressing the Parliament the Prime Minister said that the problem of Goa would be tackled within the framework of India's peace policy, without resorting to military measures.¹¹⁸

117. *ibid.*, pp. 437-38.

118. *ibid.*, p. 439.

However, Nehru could find no obvious answer and continued to worry over the various aspects of the problem and to take refuge in postponing a decision. He was very much pained at the brutal treatment being meted out to the Goan prisoners in Portuguese prisons. Nehru announced that while the government were not contemplating any kind of military action in Goa and that any other type of action that might be feasible would be taken.¹¹⁹

Meanwhile the western nations were trying to intervene in this matter through UN with ulterior motives. However, the opposition of Soviet Union as well as the Afro-Asian states frustrated that move. Earlier Portugal had attempted in vain to get the intervention of The World Court for right of passage to Dadar and Nagar Haveli. But the Hague Court decided the case in favour of India and that fortified India's position. The situation in the world seemed to improve. It was realised by most of the nations, particularly the Afro-Asian states, that the Portuguese occupation of Goa, Daman and Diu was the product of conquest, and hence an aggression.¹²⁰ Whereas earlier Nehru had been aggrieved that such questions as Goa were not considered on merits but by cold war attitudes, he now felt that, for a variety of reasons, sympathy was much more with India than it used to be and

119. Sarvepally Gopal, *op. cit.*, V. 3, p.191.

120. Asit Kumar Sen, *op. cit.*, p. 592.

because of events in Angola, Portugal was being criticised bitterly almost everywhere.¹²¹ Nehru thought this situation was a developing one and India should be prepared to meet it. While addressing a gathering in Srinagar Nehru exuded confidence of pushing the Portuguese forces out of Goa within twenty-four hours. But he said the government would wait, for if they started a war, it would not remain confined to Goa.¹²² A close examination of the various stages of the development, culminating in the military action to liberate Goa in December 1961, reveals that for various reasons the government of India proceeded cautiously and patiently. Nehru had no doubt that Goa had to be unified with the rest of India sometime or other.¹²³

On the future of Goa, Nehru wrote:

A free India is not going to accept foreign rule in any part of India. There is, thus, no difficulty about framing our basic demand or objective, but that does not mean that we should officially put this forward at this stage. We should bear it in mind and raise it at an international level at an appropriate time.¹²⁴

The Consul General of Goa, Rashid Ali Baig, reported that the Portuguese State and Goan Church “formed two halves of an integral whole” and any

121. Sarvepally Gopal, *op. cit.*, p. 193.

122. *idem.*

123. S. Gopal, *Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru*, Second Series, Vol . 2, p. 559.

124. *ibid.*, p. 559.

movement for unification with India was considered anti-Catholic. Therefore, he advised Nehru that for the movement to be successful, the support of the majority of both Catholics and Hindus was needed; a divorce between the foreign state and the local church was necessary and possible.¹²⁵ Nehru felt the existing arrangements of the Catholic church with regard to its authority vis-à-vis the Portuguese was extraordinary and obviously not keeping with present political conditions and the spirit of the time. Nehru, therefore, suggested a new concordat and thought it necessary to exchange diplomats with the Holy Sea.¹²⁶

Nehru wrote to Rev. Jerome D'Souza regarding the extraordinary extension of the Portuguese Republic's authority over considerable part of India:

One of the matters relates to the peculiar arrangement where under only Portuguese are appointed as Bishops in purely Indian Districts such as Cochin and Mylapore and they are paid by the Portuguese Government. It appears also that the Portuguese Republic has to be consulted in regard to the appointment of Bishops of Mangalore, Quilon and Trichnopoly. I understand also that the Arch Bishop of Bombay has to be alternatively Portuguese and British, and the patriarch of the East Indies, i.e. the Arch Bishop of Goa, has jurisdiction over Poona, Belgaum, Dharwar, Mylapore and Cochin. . . I do not understand this mixture of the spiritual domain of the Holy Sea with the

125. *idem*.

126. *ibid.*, p. 560.

political authority of a foreign government . . . in the present circumstances any such arrangement comes into direct conflict with Indian nationalism and aspirations.¹²⁷

Subsequently the Apostolic delegate met Nehru on February 10, 1947 and assured him that the church wished to keep out of politics.¹²⁸ The government of India pursued the future of Goa joining with India and Nehru told Dr. Vasco Vieira Garin, the Portuguese Minister to India, that politically and economically Goa just could not remain apart from India.¹²⁹ B.P. Adarkar, appointed by the Ministry of External Affairs to look into the various problems concerned with the Portuguese possessions in India, submitted his report on May 17, 1949. The report stated that there was a complete disinclination on the part of the Portuguese to find an amicable settlement in India. It was feared that 'Great Britain and the United States of America might, as members of Atlantic Pact, utilise Goa for military manoeuvres. Propaganda and espionage might be carried out by the Portuguese government in India, which could affect the religious and social sentiments of the people.¹³⁰ According to a 'concordat' between the Vatican and Portugal, the latter could nominate Bishops to be appointed in India, and the entire Roman Catholic clergy in

127. *ibid.*, p. 565.

128. *idem.*

129. S. Gopal, *op. cit.*, second series, V. 9, p. 480.

130. *ibid.*, V. 13, p. 265.

India came under the administrative control of the patriarch in Goa. Asserting that the 'concordat' could be binding on India, the Government opened negotiations with the Vatican and Portugal to put an end to the system.¹³¹ Nehru thought that there was no difficulty about giving assurance on religious and linguistic freedom and treating Goa as a distinct entity.¹³² But he felt, in the then existing circumstances, that India had to go slow.¹³³ Meanwhile Portugal had been instigating Goans against India. Dr. B.V. Keskar, in his note on September 29, 1949, stated that majority of the one lakh Goans concentrated in Bombay were Christians and the Catholic Church held total sway over them. The Goan clubs, the main centre for social interaction of the community, were also centres of anti-Indian propaganda. The Portuguese Consul in Bombay was also indulging in anti-Indian activities.¹³⁴ Nehru had advised the Foreign Secretary to watch the activities of the Portuguese Consul in Bombay and if he indulged in anti-India activities, the matter should be reported to the Government.¹³⁵ The policy of the Government of India in regard to Goa had been one of almost complete inaction and passivity. Taking advantage of India's inaction and other pre-occupations of the Government,

131. *idem.*

132. *idem.*

133. *idem.*

134. *ibid.*, p. 266.

135. *idem.*

Portugal's attitude had been aggressive and insulting to India. In the course of a conversation with S.K. Banerjee, Deputy Secretary, Government of India, on November 12, 1949, the Portuguese Minister said that according to the Portuguese constitution, Goa was an integral part of Portugal. He cited the example of America and Spain who had never insisted that other colonial powers should leave the continents after liberation.¹³⁶ Early in 1950, the Government of India sent a note to the Portuguese Government in Lisbon, asking that the Portuguese possessions in India might be transferred to the Indian Union. It was also suggested that the method of transfer be through a plebiscite.¹³⁷ The Portuguese Government sent a reply refusing to discuss the question of transfer of sovereignty at all.¹³⁸ However, meanwhile, the Portuguese Government issued a decree freeing all political prisoners by an amnesty. The 'Padroado' system by which the Portuguese Government had rights of ecclesiastical patronage in India was also abolished.¹³⁹ Nehru now thought that it was time to frame a definite policy with regard to Portugal and Goa and the question of referendum or plebiscite would not be mentioned anymore.

136. S. Gopal, *op. cit.*, V. 14, p.553.

137. *idem.*

138. *idem.*

139. *idem.*

In a note to the Secretary General, Ministry of External Affairs, on February 5, 1950, Nehru directed him to send precise instructions to the Indian Minister in Lisbon. He wrote:

The time has come when a written note should be presented to the Portuguese Government making it clear that in the new order of things what is called Portuguese India must necessarily be incorporated in the rest of India and that we are prepared to initiate conversation on this subject. . . . In determining our general policy towards the Portuguese authorities in Goa, we should also consider the economic relations of Goa with the rest of India, so that in case of need, we may take such steps as might be felt by the Portuguese authorities.¹⁴⁰

Though negotiations for the settlement of the Portuguese possessions in India were begun by the Government of India in 1947, the Portuguese Government did not respond but went ahead with re-naming the colonial areas as overseas provinces. This was quite unacceptable to India and that the country's determination in this regard was declared by Nehru:

An independent India cannot have these islands and footholds of foreign authority adjoining or surrounded by her own territories. Apart from the necessity of any form of colonialism ceasing to exist in these and like territories, geographical, historical, cultural, political and economic necessity

140 . *ibid.*, pp.554-55.

lead to one conclusion, that is that these territories should become part of the Union of India.¹⁴¹

Besides these loud pronouncements, there was no development within Goa or outside, nor was the Government of India particularly active. However, Nehru brought the Goa issue at the conference of non-aligned countries in Belgrade. Although it was, to Nehru's way of thinking, absurd to tie up the problem of Goa with events in Africa, the growing crisis in Angola impinged increasingly on Indian policy. Goa and Angola had become parts of a single problem--that of Portuguese colonialism.¹⁴² Now, the Government of India had become more alive to the impending danger of Portuguese menace in Goa which prompted Nehru to declare a veiled threat that if the Government had so far desisted from forceful methods on the Goa issue, it was not solely for moral reasons and while their efforts would always be to settle the problem by pressure and action other than war, at no time had they in their minds or in action renounced recourse to a military solution.¹⁴³ In spite of his resolve to resort to military action if other conciliatory methods failed, he was still hoping for international intervention to force Portuguese to abdicate its possessions in India. But Nehru felt that in matters affecting the prestige of India or

141. *ibid.*, V.15, p. 663.

142. Sarvepally Gopal, *Jawaharlal Nehru: A Biography*, V.3, p. 194.

143. "Nehru's address at the Seminar on Portuguese Colonies" *National Herald*, October 2, 1961.

the interests of Indian nationals, a soft policy should not be followed with the Portuguese, whatever might be the economic or political disadvantage that such an attitude might entail.¹⁴⁴ The American Ambassador, Galbraith had been persuading Nehru to desist from the use of force against Portugal and to seek the support of the United Nations. To this suggestion Nehru replied :

Unless the Portuguese underwent a complete change of outlook and woke up to the fact that they were living in the middle of the twentieth century, there was no way of leaving matters as they were. Matters had reached a stage when there could be no half way approach to this problem, and the Portuguese should agree to quit Goa.¹⁴⁵

The tone of this letter suggested that Nehru had decided to press forward with military action; but, in fact, there was as yet no firm decision and, indeed, Nehru was struggling to avoid one and clutching at every hope however, faint of a settlement. He first looked to Brazil and some other Latin American countries for mediation and brushed off suggestions from Krishna Menon for fixing a date for intervention.¹⁴⁶

Krishna Menon believed that since all channels of negotiation had been exhausted India should move its forces and liberate Goa. He told Nehru :

144. S. Gopal, *op.cit.*, V.17, p. 563.

145. Sarvepally Gopal, *op.cit.*, p. 196.

146. *ibid.*, pp.196-97.

India should act. There are good reasons for it. The Portuguese will have to go out or we will have to say both in the Parliament and to our public that we cannot use force, that we have to put up with the Portuguese empire in India and shooting of our own people will take place.¹⁴⁷

Taking advantage of the uncertainty in India over the Goa issue, Pakistan decided to support Portugal, especially when India enforced economic sanctions against Portuguese territories in India, with a view to frustrating Indian efforts to evacuate Portuguese possessions. Nehru remarked in the Lok Sabha that in the context of the nature of Indo-Pakistan relations, he had not expected Pakistan to stand out as a crusader of anti-colonialism. They could well have remained silent over the issue. But they have gone out of their way to support Portuguese domination in Goa. . . . It is an extra-ordinary thing.¹⁴⁸

He said that "simply because of their hatred of India they should descend to such levels."¹⁴⁹ Pakistan gave the Portuguese authorities every aid and comfort to offset the Indian measures by permitting air services between Karachi and Portuguese enclaves, by supplying food and consumer goods and other measures. Non-governmental bodies, political leaders and the Press continually sought to

147. Micheal Brecher, *op. cit.*, p. 126.

148 M. S. Rajan, *India and Pakistan as Factors in Each Other's Foreign Policy and Relations, International Studies*, V. 3, 1961/62, p. 377.

149. *ibid.*, p. 377.

denounce India over the question, saying that the Indian demand for granting self-determination to the people of Portuguese territories in India was an instance of India seeking to replace 'white imperialism' by 'brown imperialism' of her own brand.¹⁵⁰ Krishna Menon realised that along with the western countries Pakistan too was playing against India as Pakistan had started talking about India's spurious claims to Goa. Goa was a bridgehead for foreign countries and the best harbour through which an alien invader could come.¹⁵¹ Therefore, Krishna Menon was aware that action was imminent, yet he was finding it difficult to act as Nehru was worried about world opinion. Krishna Menon from the beginning was very clear on what to do. At a public meeting in Bombay in October 1959 he declared:

Goa is our territory. It must be liberated by us ; that is part of our unfinished business. Whether the territory of Goa is liberated by means of force or by means of persuasion is a question we ourselves will have to decide.¹⁵²

Krishna Menon was not against negotiation with Portugal. Even when Nehru had told him that we must push these people out, Krishna Menon was prepared to negotiate. Krishna Menon told Michael Brecher :

150. *ibid.*, p. 378

151. Micheal Brecher, *op. cit.*, p. 125

152. V.K. Madhavan Kutty, *op. cit.*, p. 146.

They (Portugal) used the most offensive language in their correspondence, so much so that our people had begun to react in the same way. I had to stop it and guard against it myself. The Prime Minister would not have allowed insolvent or undignified language. We couldn't indulge in that sort of thing. It was most unseemly and undignified.¹⁵³

What was worrying India most was the British attitude to the Portuguese possessions in India. The British Government, instead of advising the Portuguese to relinquish its rule to Indian hands, chose to take up an irritatingly equivocal attitude to the question of Goa and once even intervened in the dispute on the Portuguese side--by implication at least. Two of the grounds on which the obscurantist Portuguese Government relied for its continued domination over its Indian colonial possessions were: firstly, that under the Anglo-Portuguese Treaty of 1642, Portugal was entitled to the assistance of Britain to protect her colonial possessions.¹⁵⁴ Secondly, that by virtue of the membership of the NATO, she was entitled to consult her military allies in the defence of her colonial possessions in case of threats to them.¹⁵⁵ Since the Government of India was not a party to these treaties, it was in no way bound by these directly or indirectly. It, therefore, sought

153. *idem*.

154. M.S. Rajan, "Stresses and Strains in Indo-British Relations," *International Studies*, V.2(2), Oct.-Dec. 1960, p. 166.

155. *ibid.*, p. 167.

clarification from the NATO countries as to their attitude to the Portuguese claims. While India got fairly satisfactory assurance of non-intervention from some, to her surprise, she did not get any clear and categorical reply from the British Government. The illogical attitude of Britain irritated India further when the Minister of State Selwyn Lloyd had told the Portuguese Ambassador that Britain very much regretted the state of tension now existing between a member of the Commonwealth and an ally of such long standing as Portugal.¹⁵⁶ He further said:

Recent events appear likely to intensify this tension and to result in violence and bloodshed. The British Government, therefore, expressed the hope that 'there will be no resort to force or to methods bound to lead to the use of force in settling the dispute.'¹⁵⁷

The British press featured the news under such headlines as: "India warned - Do not use force."¹⁵⁸ The British Government also conveyed the text of this statement to India with a covering letter. The Portuguese Foreign Ministry immediately expressed its appreciation of this demonstration of solidarity and co-operation of the British nation for the cause of respect for morality and right.¹⁵⁹ In a prompt reply, the Government of India emphatically repudiated the unwarranted

156. *ibid.* p. 168.

157. *idem.*

158. *idem.*

159. *ibid.*, p. 169.

implication contained in the British Government's statement. It was logically reasonable for the Government and the people of India to expect that Britain, having relinquished power over most of the sub-continent, ought also to advise Portugal who ruled over some small bits of Indian territory to do likewise.

Having finished all avenues of negotiation, India had no option but to mobilise her forces. The situation suddenly turned tense when a ship passing through sea channel was shot by the Portuguese forces and the crew and passengers were massacred. They also shot an Indian fisherman and buried him. All these sudden turn of events infuriated the Prime Minister and on December 7, 1961, he made a statement in the Parliament:

This is a deliberate attack by biggish guns on one of our ships. What the reason for it is in the minds of Portuguese authorities, I do not know. Whether it was deliberate provocation to us or something or not, I do not know. The least step is to send our ships and some of our armed forces by land to prevent this kind of thing from happening right under our nose. Now as to what all these will lead to I cannot at the moment say except that ultimately it must necessarily lead to the liberation of Goa.¹⁶⁰

However, Nehru still hesitated to take a decision. By this time Krishna Menon and the Defence Ministry had fixed a date for the entry of Indian troops into

160 . V.K. Madhavan Kutty, *op. cit.*, p. 147.

Goa, but again on the urging of Galbraith ordered postponement by two days.¹⁶¹

Krishna Menon thought that the Portuguese were adamant, obstinate and blind. He told Brecher:

In the final stage we even told them - I did this myself - that before entering into the question of who has sovereignty over it, they should just come into a room for talks. But they would not have it. And the way they talked and corresponded was most offensive. We failed to persuade them.¹⁶²

Meanwhile the situation in Goa was getting worse as about 30,000 strong Goan volunteers belonging to Goan Liberation Movement under the leadership of Aruna Asaf Ali were planning to go ahead and liberate Goa. And if they marched into Goa and the Portuguese showed fright, shot them, could our government sit back and survive?¹⁶³

Krishna Menon testified to the abortive attempts made by India to get the Portuguese evacuate Goa peacefully.

We would not and did not wage wars of aggression. The Goa business is in the same category as the completion of any national struggle for unity. We had told the U.N. - I had told them myself in the previous year - that India is not pacifist. We are a state, although individually some of us may be

161 . Sarvepally Gopal, *op. cit.*, p. 197.

162. Micheal Brecher, *op. cit.*, p. 122.

163. *ibid.*, p. 123.

pacifists. We had tried everything to achieve a peaceful evacuation of Goa. Ultimately a country must seek to establish its independence. They did not take our warning seriously. We had no animus against Portugal but against imperialism.¹⁶⁴

On December 16, 1961, Nehru received a message from John F. Kennedy-- the President of the United States of America-- expressing his general concern at the use of force in Goa and his particular concern that, with Indian troops playing a prominent role in Congo, a simultaneous use of force in Goa would give rise to an undesirable image of Indian belligerency.¹⁶⁵ Then Galbraith suggested that India sponsor a resolution on Goa in the General Assembly and request the Security Council to implement it with the despatch of a United Nations force to evict the Portuguese.¹⁶⁶

When the United States of America realised that India would not accept a UN mediation of the kind suggested by them -- with the examples of Kashmir and Congo before them-- they came up with a new proposal that India should postpone action for six months to enable the Government of the United States to help solve the Goa question. When Galbraith saw Nehru on the evening of December 17, 1961 to press this proposal and the Prime Minister was inclined to agree to a further

164. *idem.*

165. Sarvepally Gopal, *op.cit.*, p. 197.

166. *idem.*

postponement, Krishna Menon informed Nehru that it was too late as the troops had already been mobilised and the advance parties of the Indian army had already begun the move.¹⁶⁷

On the night of December 17, Indian troops moved into Goa and the whole operation was over in twenty-six hours. The Portuguese authorities had been threatening to fight to the end asserting that the Goans would stand by their imperial rulers and die after each of them had killed at least ten Indians. But the Governor-General of Goa, in defiance of orders from Lisbon, surrendered without a fight.¹⁶⁸

It was Krishna Menon's business as Defence Minister to accomplish the operation. He told Michael Brecher:

I told the people concerned to do it in such a way that there would be no kick-back, for otherwise it would be like Kashmir; we would get bogged down. I advised that it must be a quick sharp operation and not a war.¹⁶⁹

According to Krishna Menon, Goa fell like a ripe plum. The Portuguese forces did not offer any resistance and they ran away. Krishna Menon told Michael Brecher :

167. Michweal Brecher, *op. cit.*, p. 131.

168. Servepally Gopal, *op. cit.*, p. 198.

169. Micheal Brecher, *op. cit.*, p. 126.

It all happened simultaneously. The army moved from three different places; one column reached there far ahead of others. They telephoned me here in Delhi. I said you will not enter Panjim during the night. The army were a little angry with me. Internationally it would have looked bad entering a city at night and secondly we did not know what the Portuguese army would do to their own people. So they stayed three miles outside the city until the daybreak. And if the Portuguese had wanted to resist they would have done so. They had blown up all the bridges. There were no communications. There was very little fighting. I don't think there were more than a handful of people engaged on either side and on both sides equal numbers were killed; it could not have been more than ten or twelve on each side. These people were running like rats all over the place. It was a dismal affair that an old power could not even put up a token resistance.¹⁷⁰

Nehru claimed that this virtually peaceful take-over was the most striking justification of the military actions. It proved clearly the good will of the vast majority of the people of Goa and prevented much violence and looting.¹⁷¹ It seemed to Nehru that nothing that had happened since 1947 had so excited and thrilled the Indian people as the liberation of Goa.¹⁷² India called it a police action implying thereby that Goa was a part of India. Portugal called it an invasion.¹⁷³

170. Micheal Brecher, *op. cit.*, p. 129..

171. Sarvepally Gopal, *op. cit.*, p. 199.

172. *idem.*

173. Janaki Ram, *op.cit.*, p. 123.

However, the action of the Government of India was severely criticised in Britain, France and the United States. Mountbatten thought that Krishna Menon bounced Nehru into military action in Goa.¹⁷⁴ Krishna Menon had a firm conviction that colonialism was a permanent aggression and therefore he was not averse to using military force to drive out colonial power. He said:

It was only on account of our peaceful tradition and the position of the Prime Minister that people were prepared to wait patiently for so long before we ended Portuguese rule. Had we pushed them out in 1947 nobody in the outside world would have said anything at all. . . . When the British Empire had to go from here, why should the Portuguese Empire have remained?¹⁷⁵

Krishna Menon made it clear that India was not against Portugal but against imperialism. Indian action in Goa was described as 'naked aggression' by the West. To this criticism Krishna Menon answered that colonialism was a permanent aggression and that Portuguese colonial aggression had to be fought with military action. Doing that was in India's national interest.¹⁷⁶

Under the Constitution (Twelfth Amendment) Act 1962 Goa was included in the first schedule of the Constitution as a territory of the Indian Union. In 1966 the

174. Sarvepally Gopal, *op. cit.*, p. 198.

175. Micheal Brecher, *op. cit.*, p. 121.

176. Palmer and Perkins, *International Relations (USA)*, III Edition (Calcutta, 1997), p. 733.

Parliament enacted the Goa, Daman and Diu Opinion Poll Act (an opinion poll was held in January 1967) to ascertain whether Goa, Daman and Diu wanted to be a Union Territory or to merge with the adjoining states of Maharashtra and Gujarat. Goa, Daman and Diu voted to continue as a Union Territory. Goa attained full statehood on May 30, 1987 when Daman and Diu retained separate identity as a Union Territory. The Goa Government introduced Konkani as the official language in October, 1993. It is written in Devnagiri script.¹⁷⁷

It may be noted that in spite of the aggressive attitude of Portugal and lack of appreciation by the West in general, Goa could finally find its legitimate place as an integral part of India due to the bold initiative of Krishna Menon who was, of course, liberally supported by Nehru.

177. *Manorama Year Book*, 1995, pp. 622-624.

Chapter VII

FOREIGN POLICY CONTINUUM--THREE

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I

KOREAN CRISIS (1952-'54)

Korea is an ancient country with a rich cultural history which went back to a thousand year before Christ. In 1117 B.C. one Ki-tze, a refugee from China founded a dynasty known after him. The Ki-tze dynasty lasted till 116 B.C. and was followed by 'the three kingdoms', of which the most illustrious was the Silla dynasty, which survived the other two and ruled over a United Korea from AD 670 to 935. Then came the Koryu dynasty which was overthrown by the Yi dynasty in 1382 and it established its rule in Korea and lasted till the twentieth century. Korea had developed a civilisation of her own. Indeed, so sheltered was the growth of Korea, so immune was she from external invasion and internal revolution that in the 19th century she came to be known as the 'Hermit Kingdom'.¹

Towards the end of the 19th century the world suddenly broke in.² In 1876 Japan forced her to sign a trade treaty; and in 1882, the United States of America. There followed treaties with Germany, Russia, France and Great Britain.³ In 1895 after the Sino Japanese war, Japan became her protector. Russia could not tolerate the

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1. K.P.S. Menon, *Many Worlds Revisited: An Autobiography*, (Bombay, 1981), p. 251.
 2. *ibid.*, p. 250.
 3. *idem.*

Japanese influence in Korea and it resulted in the Russo-Japanese war in 1905, in which Russia was decisively defeated, and by the treaty of Portsmouth, Japan secured a political, military and economic stronghold over Korea.

Situated on the far eastern cross-roads, the Korean Peninsula could be either a corridor for the extension of Chinese and Soviet Power into the sea of Japan or a bridge head for Japanese penetration of the Asian mainland. By forming a strategic bridge between the Manchurian main land and Japan, it has become, time and again, a cockpit of Far Eastern power politics.⁴

In the Second World War Soviet Russia entered the war against Japan on August 8, 1945 and Russian troops were in Korea on August 12, while the question of the 38th parallel was still under consideration. In accordance with the US proposal, they accepted the surrender of Japanese troops north of the 38th parallel. The nearest American troops stationed in Okinawa reached South Korea on September 8, 1945 and accepted the surrender of the Japanese troops south of the 38th parallel the next day. Thus, while Japanese control over Korea came to an end, the country was cut in twain making no political, topographical, geographic, economic or military sense.⁵ The parallel cut right through the whole towns, and even, in one case separated one wing of

4. B. Shiva Rao and C. Kondapi, "India and the Korean Crisis," *India Quarterly*, V.7 (4) (New Delhi Oct-Dec 1951), p. 296.

5. *ibid.*, p. 295.

a factory from another.⁶ At that time the division of Korea seemed to be no more than a minor military expedient. No one suspected that the 38th parallel would harden into a frontier between the Soviet and American zones.⁷

In the Cairo declaration of December 1, 1943, the three great powers - USA, UK and China stated that 'mindful of the enslavement of the Korean people, they were determined that in due course Korea shall become free and independent.'⁸ India welcomed this declaration. The Cairo declaration was re-affirmed in the Potsdam declaration of July 26, 1945 in which the three great powers set out their terms for the settlement of the war in the Pacific.⁹ Attempts were repeatedly made by the United States of America and the Soviet Union to find a joint solution for the Korean problem. At the Moscow conference in December 1945, it was agreed that a joint United States - Soviet Commission should be created for the purpose of setting up a provisional Korean Government which should negotiate a Four Power Trusteeship not to exceed five years, with China, Great Britain, the Soviet Union and the United States of America.¹⁰ The very word 'trusteeship' was anathema to most Koreans. In 1947, the whole problems of Korean independence were brought before the General Assembly of the United Nations. At the General Assembly, again the Soviet Union and the United States took

6. *ibid.*, p. 258.

7. K.P.S. Menon, *op. cit.*, pp. 251-252.

8. B. Shiva Rao and C. Kondapi, *op. cit.*, p. 296.

9. *idem.*

10. K.P.S. Menon, *op. cit.*, p. 252.

different stands. The Soviet Union asked that the troops, both their own and those of the United States should be withdrawn by January 1, 1948, leaving the Koreans to work out their own destinies. The United States, on the other hand, insisted that the withdrawal of troops should be part of a general plan for the establishment of Korean independence under the supervision of the United Nations. The Plan found favour with the General Assembly, and in order to carry it out the U N created a Commission consisting of the representatives of Australia, Canada, China, El Salvador, France, India, the Philippines, Syria and Ukraine. Ukraine, however, refused to take part in the commission.¹¹ K.P.S. Menon, India's representative in the Commission, was unanimously elected its permanent Chairman.¹²

The initial objection of the Soviet Union to the General Assembly consideration and the position taken by the Soviet Union in the course of Assembly debates made it appear extremely doubtful that the Soviet Union would accept any recommendation made by the General Assembly, particularly when that recommendation was largely based on a United States' draft proposal.¹³ When it became an established fact that Soviet Union would not allow the temporary Commission on Korea to enter the Soviet Zone for the purpose of observing elections, the important question of policy arose as to whether the programme embodied in the November 14 resolution should be carried out

11. *idem.*

12. B. Shiva Rao and C. Kondapi, *op. cit.*, p. 298.

13. Leland Goodrich, "United Nation's and Korea." *India Quarterly*, Vol. (3), (July-Sept. 1951), p. 257.

in South Korea alone. Most of the members of the temporary commission were of the opinion that the establishment of a separate Korean Government in South Korea would not facilitate the attainment of Korean national independence, and that of election in South Korea were to be held under the terms of the resolution, and this should be done for consultative purpose only.¹⁴ Largely as a result of United States pressure, it was decided by the interim committee to advise the commission to implement the programme in such parts of Korea as were accessible to the commission. The temporary commission subsequently agreed to observe elections in South Korea. It reported the results of the elections held on May 10, 1948 to be a valid expression of the free will of the electorate in South Korea, bearing in mind the traditional and historical back-ground of the people of Korea.¹⁵ Subsequently on the basis of these elections, a 'constitution of Republic of Korea' was adopted and a national government was established which laid claim to being the lawful government of all Korea.¹⁶ At the third session of the UN General Assembly in Paris, the report of the UN Temporary Commission on Korea came up for consideration. The Assembly adopted a resolution recognising the Government of the Republic of Korea as the only lawful government in Korea and establishing a new Commission to bring about the peaceful unification of Korea. India supported this resolution and also accepted membership of the new

14. *idem.* For details see United Nations Doc (AAC 18/28) Feb. 19, 1948.

15. *ibid.*, pp. 257-58.

16. *ibid.*, p. 258.

Commission.¹⁷

In its report to the fourth session of the General Assembly, the Commission informed the Assembly that the withdrawal of the US forces from Korea had been completed on June 29, 1949.¹⁸ Reporting its failure in its mission of unification, the commission emphasised that the Korean problem was one phase of the world-wide cleavage between the US and the USSR and that without an understanding between the two powers on the problem, no substantial progress was possible.¹⁹ The Assembly passed a resolution continuing the Commission with the additional function of observing and reporting developments. India supported this resolution and also joined the new Commission in the hope that a peaceful solution of the problem might be reached through the efforts of the Commission.²⁰

On June 25, 1950 the US representative informed the President of the Security Council for that month, Sir B.N.Rao, that the North Korean armed forces had invaded the territory of the Republic of Korea and requested an immediate meeting of the Council. When the Security Council met the same afternoon, it had before it, besides the report of the US representative, a cablegram from the UN Commission on Korea, on which India was represented stating its wish to draw the attention of the Secretary

17. B. Shiva Rao and C. Kondapi, *op. cit.*, p. 299.

18. *idem.*

19. *idem*

20. *idem.*

General to the serious situation developing which is assuming the character of a full scale war and may endanger the maintenance of international peace and security.²¹ The Council adopted a resolution, finding that the attack by North Korea constituted a breach of peace and calling for the immediate cessation of hostilities and the withdrawal of the North Korean forces to the 38th parallel. India voted in favour of this resolution.²²

The Security Council met again in June 27, 1950. In the mean time, the UN Commission on Korea informed the Council that North Korea would not heed the Council's resolution nor accept the Commission's good office and the Commission thought that the Council's resolution might prove academic. At the meeting, the US representative informed the Council that his government had, in accordance with the resolution of June 25 decided to order her air and sea forces to give cover and support to the South Korean troops. He also presented a draft resolution noting that North Korean authorities had not complied with the resolution of June 25 and recommending that the members of the UN furnish such assistance to the Republic of Korea as might be necessary to repel the armed attack and restore international peace and security in the area. The Council adopted the resolution by seven to one. The Soviet Union was absent, while India and Egypt did not participate in the voting as their representatives

21. *ibid.*, p. 300.

22. For details see *Report of United Nation's Commission on Korea Covering the period from 15 December, 1949 to 4 December, 1950.*

had not received instructions from their respective Governments.²³ However, on June 30, when the Council met, Sir B.N. Rao announced India's acceptance of the resolution.²⁴

In January 1951 Commonwealth Prime Ministers met at London to consider the Korean problem. Krishna Menon thought that such a conference at this stage would prove merely a step nearer 'war-talk' than 'peace-talk'.²⁵ Instead, Krishna Menon suggested that irrespective of consideration of preoccupation, convention, protocol or notion of prestige, Nehru should go to Peking to confer with Chinese government before going to London for the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference.²⁶ However, Nehru thought that the step suggested by Krishna Menon would not be of much help at that stage. Therefore, he cabled Krishna Menon informing that his visit to Peking would only likely to produce certain harmful results and if so, any further step would be much more difficult. "I have given up the idea of going to Peking at present but I am prepared to go there as soon as I feel that such visit might produce results."²⁷ At the first session of the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference, Nehru stressed the importance of befriending China and the danger of becoming involved in war by following the United States in its unrealistic policy. He still believed that China and

23. *ibid.*, p. 300.

24. *ibid.*, p. 301.

25. Sarvepally Gopal, *op. cit.*, p. 134.

26. S. Gopal, *op. cit.*, p. 455.

27. *ibid.*, p. 458.

Russia wished to avoid war, and, therefore, thought it important to avoid action which increased tension.²⁸ However, most of the Prime Ministers were not prepared to go along with Nehru. On his return, Nehru cabled Krishna Menon on January 31, 1951 that "All our efforts to induce the UK, Canada, etc. failed in the end before the big stick of the USA. Well, we have the satisfaction of having done our job. The future will have to look after itself."²⁹

India, which voted for the earlier resolution in the United Nations on Korea, offered non-military assistance and undertook intensive diplomatic efforts to avert an extension of war and to secure a peaceful settlement.³⁰ Negotiations between the United Nation's command and the North Korean and Chinese Commanders began at Panmunjom in July 1951 for a cease-fire and armistice. After more than a year of negotiations both sides reached agreement, but there was a dead-lock on the provisions concerning the repatriation of Prisoners of War.³¹ Krishna Menon, who was sent as a member of the Indian delegation to the General Assembly in 1952 especially to deal with the Korean problem, presented proposals to break the dead-lock (A/C. 1/734).³² The draft was adopted by the General Assembly on December 3, 1952 as resolution

28. Sarvepally Gopal, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 134.

29. S. Gopal, "Nehru to Krishna Menon," Vol. 15, *op. cit.*, p. 500.

30. *vide*, *Krishna Menon Speeches at the United Nations*, 19 Nov, 1952, E.S. Reddy and A.K. Damodaran (Eds.) (Decolonisation, Peace and United Nations) (New Delhi, 1997), p. 333.

31. *idem*.

32. *idem*.

610 (VII).³³

The draft resolution submitted by the Indian delegation had several details. It was divided into two parts; the first part contained nine clauses, followed by seventeen headings of proposal. Krishna Menon pointed out that his government approached the Korean problem from total belief in the *bona fides* of both the parties to reach an armistice. He referred to the article 60 of the draft armistice which provided for a political conference to settle through negotiations the questions of the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Korea and stated that the solution of the political problems was the main objective, while the armistice was only a step towards that end.

To begin with, he proposed the constitution of a repatriation commission consisting of representatives of Czechoslovakia, Poland, Sweden and Switzerland as all the four nations were not participants in the war, as also the two of them were nearer to one side and two were presumed to be nearer to the other side. Before Krishna Menon had taken the initiative in the UN General Assembly to find a peaceful political settlement of the Korean crisis, the Armistice negotiations started in July 12, 1951 had agreed upon an agenda and that agenda included five items, one of which was the question of Prisoners of War. Four of these items were already settled and only the question of Prisoners of War still remained to be settled. Therefore, Krishna Menon thought that once the question of repatriation of Prisoners of War was settled, there

33. *ibid.*, p. 334.

would be no further obstruction to the achieving of cease-fire.

Krishna Menon had explained the draft resolution referring to each clause to the representatives of the UN General Assembly, pointing out the legal precepts and also the accepted precedents. Menon added that, in submitting the draft, his delegation was not prescribing a solution, but was indicating the way to a solution. He appealed to the Committee that while considering the resolution submitted by his delegation, its members would not only analyse its clauses, but would also analyse its effectiveness as a decision of this Assembly with all its moral authority and in view of all the urgency that the situation in Korea demanded.³⁴

On December 1, 1952 in reply to the debates on the Indian resolution concerning the repatriation of Prisoners of War in the first committee of the General Assembly Krishna Menon expressed happiness that the resolution had been debated by a large number of delegations. He, however, felt the absence of the representative of the People's Republic of China, as his delegation considered that the Korean question could not be fully and appropriately discussed without the participation of China. Similarly, since the committee had permitted the representatives of the South Korean authorities to take part in the debate, it was necessary also to invite representatives of

34. *ibid.*, pp. 334-342. Also see official records of the General Assembly Seventh Session First Committee, pp.111-115.

the North Korean authorities.³⁵ Referring to the debate on the Indian draft resolution, Krishna Menon stated that, it had revealed considerable common ground not only between delegations which were aligned one to the other but also between delegations representing different points of view. He thought, such differences as existed appeared to be very largely based on fears and doubts and possibly a lack of clarity on certain aspects of the Indian proposal. He assured the House, his delegation would, therefore, do its best to supply these clarifications. He reaffirmed the point of view of his delegation that, in submitting his draft resolution concerned with proposals for a Korean armistice, it believed that a settlement in Korea would lead to a general settlement in the Far East and to an improvement in the entire world situation.³⁶ With his pungent for argument basing on International law and knowledge of the legal decisions of United State's courts and the existing laws of other countries of the world, he presented the case in the first committee of the General Assembly and convinced the Assembly that the Indian proposal, represented a great advance towards reconciliation and a great advance also in the full implementation of the International Law.

He presented the Indian proposal and argued the case brilliantly in the various sessions of the General Assembly and succeeded in arriving at an Armistice Agreement though not fully covering the Indian proposal yet incorporating provisions which were

35. vide, *Krishna Menon's Speech in U.N.* on December 1, 1952.

36. *ibid.*, p. 343.

very similar to the Indian proposal.

In Krishna Menon's opinion neither North Korea nor South Korea committed aggression, as Korea was one country they were aggressing into each other.³⁷ Krishna Menon, on arriving at the UN General Assembly in autumn of 1952 met the representatives of various countries of Asia and Africa on the Korean crisis but they would not concur with his opinion. So he started his mission in finding a solution to the problem of repatriation of Prisoners of War basing it on Geneva Agreement. Krishna Menon observes: "I said in my speech in the U.N., in regard to the Prisoners, it should neither be 'push nor pull'. The Geneva agreement should be the basis."³⁸ The greatest contribution of Krishna Menon in finding a solution to the dead-lock on the repatriation of Prisoners of War was his proposal of creating a Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission (NNRC) in Korean imbroglio.

Krishna Menon told Micheal Brecher that he was responsible for the creation of the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission (NNRC). "I said there should be an equal number from both sides with a neutral Chairman, and the Russian view was always fifty-fifty, so that there would be a dead-lock or a bilateral solution."³⁹ The Armistice negotiations in Korea were resumed on April 26, 1953 and an Armistice

37. Micheal Brecher, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

38. *ibid.*, p. 37.

39. Micheal Brecher, *op.cit.*, p. 39.

Agreement was signed on July 22, 1953. It provided that Prisoners of War who did not wish to be repatriated to their home countries would be handed over by the parties to the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission - consisting of Sweden, Switzerland, Poland and Czechoslovakia with India as Chairman for disposition.⁴⁰

True, India contributed only a medical contingent, and no fighting forces, to the Korean war; but she fought vehemently and incessantly and contributed more than her quota, to Korean peace. It was Krishna Menon, who evolved a workable formula for Korean peace and fought relentlessly in the UN General Assembly and succeeded in the creation of a Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission with India as its Chairman. India accepted the Chairmanship of the Neutral Nation's Repatriation Commission with a genuine hope to ease tension and promote peace and good will in the world.

Speaking in the UN General Assembly Krishna Menon said :

the shadow of Korea is drawn long over the face of this Assembly and indeed over the world. It is a story of tragedy not only of the Korean people but of the peoples in China, the United States, the United Kingdom, France and every where else where troops have gone and engaged in war for purposes which their sides believed to be right--so far as United Nation is concerned, to resist aggression. It is our business to see that our efforts of this last three years, now became embodied in the terms of truce. We think that in the progress that we have made in Korea and in the winning of an armistice, we have reached one

40. *vide, Krishna Menon Speeches*, Ed. by E.S. Reddy and A.K.Damodaran, *op.cit.*, p.353.

milestone.⁴¹

Referring to the Indian Army he said.

The Indian army is charged with the onerous duty of dealing with the problems of law and order, but with very little material power. Our men and our officers have covered themselves with the kind of glory that is not usual in war. For the first time a peace army, on foreign territory, without arms, has been called upon to deal with turbulence, and has done so gallantly and well.⁴²

Indeed, Krishna Menon, had done an excellent job in UN regarding Korean negotiations. He cultivated individuals from both the sides, basing his proposal within the framework of Geneva Convention and other International laws. The acceptance of Menon's original proposal and the creation of Neutral Nation's Repatriation Commission had established Menon's reputation as one who would evolve a formula for almost any international problem within the frame work of international law.

II

INDO-CHINA (1954)

Indo-China is the eastern half of a long, curving peninsula that extends into the South China Sea from the mainland of South-east Asia. It includes Cambodia, Laos

41. Krishna Menon's Statement in the General Assembly on Sept 28, 1953, p. 26.

42. *idem.*

and Vietnam.⁴³ It has long been a crossroads of peoples and cultures. Most of the people of Indo-China originally came from the plains and mountains of Central Asia and from southern China. Some of the earliest tribes came from the islands now forming part of Indonesia. Over the centuries, the criss-crossing movements of many groups has created a complex chequered pattern of ethnic and linguistic groups. The people have never been able to develop much unity or uniformity among themselves.⁴⁴

When the peoples of southern China and the north-west sections of Indo-China peninsula moved southward, they encountered a mixed Indonesian Malay-population. The two groups fought. In most areas, the Indo-Malays were forced into the mountains as the invaders took the fertile plains along the rivers.⁴⁵ Indo-China originally consisted of five countries of which three were united in one. 1. The Vietnam (including Tonkin in the north, Annam in the centre and Cochin-China in the south) 2. Cambodia 3. Laos.

Independent tribes and states once made up the area. From the 900s to the 1700s, China and Thailand fought for control of Indo-China. France gained control of the region in the 1800s and held it until 1954. The French called the region 'French Indo-China.'⁴⁶

43. *The World Book Encyclopaedia*, Vol. 10, p. 190.

44. *idem*

45. *idem*

46. *idem*

In the last half of the eighteenth century a ruler of southern states of Annam, Gia Long, who had taken refuge in Siam (Thailand) after having been driven out from Hue, took the assistance of a French missionary and returned with a strong body of volunteers gathered by the missionary from among the French men in India, to reunite the two states under a single crown. This provided the opportunity for the French to conquer Annam. After the loss of her Indian possessions in the 18th century, France had begun to seek colonies and markets in the East. The location of Indo-China was excellent, since it would give the French a foothold in the China Sea and a base from which to develop commercial relations throughout the Far East especially with Siam (Thailand), China and the Philippine islands.⁴⁷ Thus, French influence began developing in the last half of 18th century in Indo-China. French missionaries had been very successful in converting Vietnamese to Roman Catholicism. Their success brought occasional reactions from the Vietnamese emperors. In 1858, Emperor Napoleon III of France sent an expedition to avenge the murders of some missionaries and to gain a foothold.⁴⁸

Forcing Vietnamese to give up parts of Cochin-China (Southern Vietnam), France, through treaties between 1874 and 1884, set up protectorates in Tonkin (northern Vietnam) and Annam (Central Vietnam). Cochin-China became a French colony. Meanwhile, France had occupied what is now Cambodia in 1863 and set up a

47. V.P. Dutt, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

48. *The world Book Encyclopaedia*, p.191.

protectorate. In neighbouring Laos, in the late 1880s French forces confronted Thai forces and had moved into Louanghrabang. By 1893 Louanghrabang was controlled by the French. In 1917 it was a Protectorate and Champasak Vientiane formed French Colony in French Indo-China.⁴⁹ Favoured by Japanese occupation and then by the capitulation of the Japanese, a political party, the Vietminh—a party in which the Bolshevik elements were the most numerous and the most active, took upon itself the nationalism of Vietnam.⁵⁰

When World War II started, the situation in Indo-China changed greatly. On June 22, 1940 France surrendered to Germany. Japan took advantage of France's defeat by moving forces into Indo-China. In March 1945, they interned all French authorities and military units. During the war, Japan persuaded Vietnamese Emperor Bao-Dai to declare Vietnam independent and to organise a government friendly to Japan. King Norodom Sihanouk declared Cambodia independent. King Sisavang Vong did the same for Louanghrabang.⁵¹

After the Japanese surrendered on September 2, 1945, the French returned to Indo-China in circumstances that made it difficult for them immediately to oppose the Vietminh. One of their first tasks was to expel the Chinese army, which occupied Tonkin. The French came to an agreement with the Vietminh. It was at this precise

49. *idem*.

50. Roger Levy, *op.cit.*, p. 32.

51. *The World Book Encyclopaedia*, p. 191.

moment that the interests of the Vietnam, the Vietminh and France coincided in March, 1946, to drive out one lakh Chinese soldiers.⁵²

In Vietnam Chinese nationalist troops accepted the Japanese surrender in the Zone north of the 17th parallel. British troops disarmed the Japanese in the southern half of the country. France persuaded King Sisavang Vong of Louangphrabang to declare himself King of a self-governing Laos. France also regained control of Cambodia, and made it self-governing. Both Laos and Cambodia became members of the French Union. However, another independent government was organised at the same time in Vietnam. This new ruling group was called the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. It was led by a communist-trained nationalist, Ho-Chi-Minh, then head of the revolutionary League for the independence of Vietnam. French and Vietminh leaders tried to settle their differences peacefully but failed.⁵³

Since the break-down of the negotiation between the Vietminh and the French towards the end of 1946, the latter were looking out for an Indo-Chinese leader whose prestige would satisfy the purely nationalist elements and who, at the same time, would be willing to retain substantial measure of French influence, both economic and political, in the affairs of Indo-China. They found the Ex-emperor of Annam, Bao Dai, and after protracted negotiations an agreement was signed on March 8, 1949 between

52. Roger Levy, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

53 . The World Book Encyclopaedia, p. 191.

Bao Dai and the French, and by the terms of this accord the three states of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia were set up as integral part of a federal union with France. But, however, no nationalist leader of any status had deserted the Vietminh as the terms of Bao Dai's Agreement with the French had not satisfied the nationalists who were fighting beside the Communists within the Vietminh.⁵⁴ The guerrilla warfare which resumed as a result of the break down of the negotiations between Vietminh and France in December 1946 had developed into a serious war between France and the Vietminh. From the second fortnight of December 1953, the tempo of fighting in Indo-China had steadily increased. The French enlisted the support of western countries on the plea that the Republic is Communist-dominated. Political line in Indo-China had been sharply drawn. The big powers were lined up on opposite sides of the fray.⁵⁵

In the face of the grave threat to the French forces it was natural that the attention of the western powers was to be drawn away from Korea to Indo-China. On March 29, 1953, Dulles dwelt at length on the danger inherent in the Indo-Chinese situation. Addressing the overseas Press Club at New York he said:

If the Communist forces were to win uncontested control over Indo-China or any substantial part thereof, they would surely resume the same pattern of aggression against other peoples of the same area. The imposition of South East Asia of the Political System of Russia and its Chinese Communist ally, by

54. V.P. Dutt *op. cit.*, p. 25.

55. *ibid.*, p. 27.

whatever means, would be a grave threat to the whole free community. The USA feels that the possibility should be met by united action.⁵⁶

During the next fortnight the U.S Government consulted the Ambassadors of the U.K., France, Australia, New Zealand, Thailand and Philippines. On 10 April, Dulles left for London and Paris to consult the British and the French Governments. After meeting Eden at London and M. Bidault at Paris, Dulles returned to USA and reported to the President the willingness of both the Governments to explore the possibility of establishing collective defence for South East Asia. The Times London wrote on May 4, Dulles had been preceded by rumours of an impending 'warning declaration' to be delivered to the Chinese Government by a coalition of powers, which, it was said, was being assembled on U.S initiative to form an anti-Communist front in South East Asia.⁵⁷ The public announcement which followed the two days of discussions before Dulles went to Paris reflected agreement between Great Britain and the United States on no more than "an examination of the possibility of establishing collective defence."⁵⁸

After hectic diplomatic confabulations, it was clear that USA and UK would not agree to fritter away the resources of the painfully built up NATO and embroil in Asia which was meant to strengthen the defences of Europe.⁵⁹ The British had refused to

56. S. L. Poplai, The Geneva Conference, Foreign Affairs Report, Vol. 3(No.8), August, 1954, p. 95.

57. *idem.*

58. *idem.*

59. *ibid.*, p. 96.

intervene in deference to British public opinion which would not countenance a military venture in South East Asia, and also because of the attitude of India which viewed Indo-China war as a colonial struggle.⁶⁰ British policy then, and later, insisted on waiting the course of the Geneva Conference before taking any steps towards the formation of a military alliance.⁶¹

From May to July 1954, Vietminh and French officials held meetings with representatives of the United States, Great Britain, China and Soviet Union in Geneva, Switzerland.⁶² On the third day of the Conference it was agreed that the Indo-China question should be discussed by a commission of nine nations, namely, the four Berlin Powers, China, the three associated states and the Vietminh. Earlier Chou-En-Lai had expressed surprise that a conference that was to discuss Asian matters should contain so few Asian nations. Molotov had mentioned Australia, Burma, India and Indonesia and Thailand as other participants.⁶³

Meanwhile the relationship between United States of America and India had been getting more and more strained due to the nature of American approach to world affairs. While recognising that the United States was not a committed foe of India, Nehru allowed his antipathy to its activities abroad colour his general attitude towards

60. *idem*.

61. *ibid.*, p. 95.

62. *The World Book of Encyclopaedia*, p.191.

63. S.L. Poplai, *op. cit.*, p. 98.

the United States. Nehru observed "I dislike more and more of this business of exchange of persons between America and India. The fewer persons that go from India to America or that come from United States to India, the better."⁶⁴ The period between the end of Berlin Conference and the beginning of Geneva Conference, witnessed intensification of conflict in Indo-China. India's interest in Indo-China increased further as its policy came into conflict with that of United States. While New Delhi was interested in extending the area of peace, Washington was keen on forcing a military solution for the Indo-China issue.⁶⁵ At this particular time, for reasons of their own, the two communist powers seemed eager for peace, while the United States, appeared to be willing to wage war, particularly in Asia, was busy connecting a holy alliance to protect feudal nations.⁶⁶ After the United States had carried out a nuclear test in the Pacific, Winston Churchill wrote to Nehru about his intense concern to which Nehru replied suggesting an immediate stand still Agreement on nuclear explosion and welcoming a conference of Commonwealth Prime Ministers. But Churchill contented that the American test had increased the chances of world peace, and a week later he wrote to Nehru that there was no need for meeting of the Commonwealth Prime Ministers.⁶⁷

64. Sarvepally Gopal, *Jawaharlal Nehru a Biography*, Vol. II., *op. cit.*, p. 189.

65. Bhavani Paul Raj, *India's Peace Keeping Mission in South East Asia. International Control Commission--A Case Study*, Ed. C.N. Somarajan, *op. cit.*, p. 87.

66. Sarvepally Gopal, *op. cit.*, p. 190.

67. *ibid.*, pp.190-191.

Nehru attributed Churchill's change of attitude to the pressure of the United States, and it, therefore, appeared all the more important to him that India should continue to oppose publicly the policy of the United States and muster as much support for this as possible.⁶⁸ India felt that the United States was forcing the issue politically and militarily on Indo-China.

In order to bring about a peaceful settlement on Indo-China Nehru proclaimed a six-point peace plan in the Lok Sabha. He called for promotion of a climate of peace and negotiation, cease-fire should be given priority, to proclaim complete independence of Indo-China, limiting the Indo-Chinese questions to direct negotiations between the parties concerned, 'an agreement on non-intervention denying aid, direct and indirect, and finally the United Nations to be requested to formulate a convention of non-intervention in Indo-China.⁶⁹ This six-point peace plan was drafted by V.K. Krishna Menon as desired by Nehru.⁷⁰ On the suggestion of Sir John Kotelawala, the Colombo Conference of Burma, Ceylone, India, Indonesia and Pakistan met from April 28 to May 2, 1954 to discuss matters of common concern. The most important item considered by the conference was the question of fighting in Indo-China. The basis of discussion was the Indian proposal of April 24 for a cease-fire in Indo-China.⁷¹

68. *ibid.*, p. 191.

69. Bhavani Paul Raj, *op. cit.*, p. 87.

70. Micheal Brecher, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

71. S.L. Poplai, The Colombo Conference of South East Asian Prime Ministers Foreign Affairs Report, Vol. 3, No. 7. July 1954, p. 82.

The Colombo Conference members were conscious of the deliberations at Geneva and had desired to help, not hinder, the Geneva negotiation. The link between Colombo and Geneva was brought out pointedly in one of the amendments to the Indian proposals on Indo-China.⁷² The main contribution of the conference was also on the Indo-China issue.

The voice of a lone India was now reinforced at least by the voice of Burma, Ceylone, Pakistan and Indonesia. And when Mr. Krishna Menon tried unofficially to bridge the gulf between the East and the West, these countries were kept continuously informed of developments by the Indian Government.⁷³

Armed with this resolution, Krishna Menon set off for Geneva. In the course of about three weeks he had about 200 interviews, each lasting nearly two hours, with the various heads of delegations. He had no specific proposal to present but informed the principal parties of the views and interests of India and the other members of the Colombo Conference in this matter, and the fact that, apart from China and Indo-China States, no Asian country was represented at Geneva, enhanced the importance of Menon's presence.⁷⁴ Since India was not invited formally to the Geneva Conference India's involvement was of a very different kind. Krishna Menon observed:

We did not stand on dignity; we just stood on the door step and tried to be helpful. We were not taken into the conference because the Americans would

72. *idem.*

73. *ibid.*, p.84.

74. Sarvepally Gopal, *op. cit.*, pp. 191-92.

not have us. . . There were complications; if we were in, then other people would also have had to be in. The USA did not want us at the [simultaneous] Korean Conference either.⁷⁵

Krishna Menon remained in Geneva for three months meeting different heads of delegation and helping to find a solution to the impasse in Indo-China. He thought that the difficulty at that time was George Bidault, French Foreign Minister who had a feeling that the French Empire was collapsing. But when the Government in France changed as a result of the fall of Laniel Government on June 12 and subsequent withdrawal of Bidault from the Conference, Mendes-France came over to Geneva and he was very friendly to Krishna Menon. Menon remembers: "I told him [Mendes-France] that the main thing was that there must be a time limit; so he announced on his own that this matter must be settled by the 20th of May" Having agreed to that he told me "we must come out" of Indo-China.⁷⁶ Krishna Menon was conscious of the fact that the escalation of cold war would involve other nations and he felt it inappropriate for non-Asian countries to be in the forefront of these problems and the attempts at solving them. Menon saw the implications of what was essentially a struggle against French imperialism, spilling over into the arena of the United States-Soviet Union conflict. For, it was the communists who were in the forefront of the movement against French presence in Indo-China. And because of this, the United States were against the French

75. Micheal Brecher, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

76. *idem.*

pulling out and were ready for direct involvement.⁷⁷

Krishna Menon who arrived in Geneva on May 21, 1954, served as a link between the East and the West. He played a benign role to remove the 'cold war' mentality and promote a degree of mutual understanding that would have been difficult to attain without the intermediary, trusted by both sides.⁷⁸ It was acknowledged by both sides that it was Menon who brought them face to face in private conversations in the first phase of the conference and in the final phase cleared-up misunderstanding and impressed one each the difficulties of the other.⁷⁹ Krishna Menon, whose presence in Geneva was not the result of any precise strategy or planning. Brecher "I got Nehru's permission or some how or other I went on a trip to Geneva as a visitor. I got a call from Anthony Eden and I met him in Paris at their Embassy for two or three hours."⁸⁰ Ever since then he plunged into the issue trying to find a solution. He began a series of meetings with participating delegates--Anthony Eden, Chou-En-Lai and others. Whenever a détente developed he acted as a mediator, thereby preventing any irretrievable situation from developing or the talks from breaking down as they so often threatened to.⁸¹ Krishna Menon carried with him no formula.

A formula was evolved by him taking all shades of opinion into consideration.

77. Janaki Ram, *op. cit.*, p. 103.

78. Bhavani Paul Ral, *op. cit.*, p. 88.

79. *idem.*

80. Micheal Brecher, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

81. Janaki Ram, *op.cit.*, p. 104.

He first worked towards the general acceptance of cease-fire.⁸² Once the cease-fire was accepted, he applied himself to the actual situation by persuading all the parties to accept Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam as independent, separate territories. No foreign troops were to be stationed there while a settlement was being worked out, thereby allaying Chinese fears that U.S bases would be established in parts of Indo-China.⁸³ Krishna Menon included a guarantee in this formula that there would be no reprisals against political opponents by either of the opposing parties. He also steered the way, in spite of great deal of disagreement to the composition of a neutral commission.⁸⁴ Finally, this commission was constituted with Poland, Canada and India. Menon's next task of getting all the countries to agree to the demarcation lines and other formalities, including the holding of election, was worked out.⁸⁵

Krishna Menon had succeeded in evolving a formula and getting it accepted by the parties concerned with a great degree of mastery in diplomacy. This he has achieved by talking to the various leaders informally and ignoring the rigidities of the conference procedure to help in smoothening over issues of differences. Britain and the Soviet Union were keen on a settlement, while the United States stood angrily aloof and China appeared edgy.⁸⁶ Menon, representing a country with no formal standing at

82. *idem.*

83. *idem.*

84. *idem.*

85. *idem.*

86. Sarvepally Gopal, *op. cit.*, p. 192.

the conference, suggested possible ways of meeting such objections as were raised. Opinion on Geneva has converged on India.⁸⁷ After a long and separate discussion with Eden, Chou-En-Lai and Molotov, Krishna Menon contrived an agreement on Laos and Cambodia. The decision to withdraw foreign troops from these two states marked the successful conclusion of the first phase of the Geneva Conference.⁸⁸ Finally, on July 21, a 13-point declaration was issued after 75 days of negotiations. When the joint communiqué was issued, the USA refused to subscribe to it and, instead, issued a unilateral declaration to the effect that she would not upset the agreements arrived at. The Bao Dai Government did not sign the cease-fire agreement.⁸⁹ The declaration included: 1. Three cease fire agreements had been signed for the three associated states. In North Vietnam the cease fire would come into force on July 27 and in Laos and Cambodia on August 7. 2. The demarcation line would run close to the 17th parallel, 12½ miles north of colonial route No. 9. This would leave 12 million people under Vietnam. 3. A period of 10 months had been allowed for the regroupings of troops. 4. Elections for the two zones of Vietnam are to be held in July 1956; in Laos and Cambodia, in 1955 under their constitutional requirements. 5. The International Commission for the Supervision and Control of the Cease-fire will also supervise the elections in Vietnam. It shall consist of Poland, Canada and India, with India as its

87. *idem.*

88. *idem.*

89. S.L. Poplai, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

chairman. 6. No foreign base in any of the associated states; no military alliance with any state which might threaten the cease-fire or might be incompatible with the U. N. Charter. 7. All prisoners to be freed within 30 days. 8. No punishment of persons who had collaborated with the other side. 9. Complete freedom for the people of Vietnam to settle in any zone they desire; and 10. The International Commission was to make a reference to the nine-nation committee in certain cases.⁹⁰

The Geneva settlement was hailed the world over as a success of Indian foreign policy. Krishna Menon became the unofficial go-between from behind the scene. He succeeded in finding a solution to break the dead lock. His presence in Geneva acted as a catalyst in the Indo-China peace movement.⁹¹ Krishna Menon himself had testified this to Micheal Brecher:

I had great difficulty in persuading Chou-En-Lai to accept Canada on the Commission. Ultimately in Geneva he agreed after my talks. I had further difficulty of not being able to tell Canada this, because they would have been very upset and would not have joined the Commission at all. And there was no

~~time during which the other side would have~~

It was at his instance that Britain and Russia were made co-chairmen of the Commission.

90. *ibid.*, p. 150.

91. V.K. Madhavan Kutty, *op. cit.*, p.100.

92. Micheal Brecher, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

This co-chairman idea was my invention—the only way to get this thing going was to get the Russians and British to be co-chairmen. It all sounds simple today, but it was very difficult in those days.⁹³

In India, the Geneva settlement was hailed as a signal success of Indian Foreign Policy. In essence the Geneva Agreement closely resembled the recommendations of the Colombo Powers, which, in turn, were a minor modification of Nehru's six-point proposal.⁹⁴

Summing up Krishna Menon's contribution in Geneva Conference Jawaharlal Nehru told the News Chronicle, London:

Last year's Geneva conference, the Indo-China one, clearly succeeded because both Eden and Molotov wanted it and so also Mendes-France. Nevertheless, it was greatly helped by the presence of V.K. Krishna Menon, who did nothing but go about correcting things and breaking up impasses.⁹⁵

Speaking at the United Nations General Assembly Krishna Menon said:

As a result of Geneva, we have today in Indo-China hope of independence, that is to say independence in the sense that the French Government is committed to the Indo-Chinese people, to itself and to the four great powers to grant independence to the Indo-China states, and to withdraw its forces.⁹⁶

93. *idem*.

94. Bhavani Paul Raj, *op. cit.*, p. 90.

95. V.K. Madhavan Kutty, *op.cit.*, p. 100.

96. *Krishna Menon's speeches at the United Nations*. p. 52.

Krishna Menon agreed that it was mentioned in the course of the debate that Vietnam was partitioned. Nothing is farther from the truth.⁹⁷ He further added:

The conference recognises that the essential purpose of the agreement relating to Vietnam is to settle military questions with a view to ending hostilities and that the military demarcation line is provisional and should not in anyway be interpreted as constituting a political or territorial boundary. The conference expresses its conviction that the execution of the provisions set out in the present declaration and in the agreement on the cessation of hostilities creates the necessary basis for the achievement in the near future of political settlement in Vietnam.⁹⁸

He concluded the Indo-China issue in United Nation's General Assembly:

I thought I would mention these facts in regard to Indo-China, because my country bears witness to the patience and arduous labours of these men who have, for the first time after the conclusion of Second World War, achieved a result that may be called a substantial contribution towards peace.⁹⁹

Krishna Menon firmly believed that whatever the merits or origin of a dispute, it was capable of being settled by peaceful means. If the parties to a dispute could find a basis for negotiation, it was possible to at least postpone conflicts. He observes:

Today international relations of the major powers are governed by fear. 'When fear walks in reason walks out.' The elimination of this fear is the main problem

97. *idem.*

98. *idem.*

99. *ibid.*, p. 54.

of the world. This is a slow process, and one should not expect startling or quick results. Conciliation is patient, gradual and unceasing endeavour.¹⁰⁰

Krishna Menon's role in the successful resolving of a complex situation, threatening the world to plunge into another war, was lauded the world over. And never had India's and Nehru's reputation stood higher in the world.¹⁰¹

Reporters noted that during the first phase of the Conference, Krishna Menon met Antony Eden sixteen times, Chou-En-Lai eight times, Molotov more than twenty times, Phan Van Dong five times, Bedell Smith six times and Mendes France twice.¹⁰² Krishna Menon was the one who interpreted each side to the other, cleared up misunderstandings, and persuaded each of the participants to take into account the problems of the others. The formula he produced was the basis of the joint declaration signed by all the powers except the US, thus bringing to an end an eight year war.¹⁰³

The conference at Geneva had been a peculiar one in many ways. For one thing, it was convened to settle the Korean tangle and is being hailed for having settled the Indo-China question. For another it started as a sixteen nation conference and ended as a 9-10 nation conference - as the French Premier Mendes-France remarked: Nine nations at the table and India. Rarely has a nation not formally represented at a conference contributed so much to its success as India did at Geneva.¹⁰⁴

100. Krishnan Menon's speech at Bombay. *The Hindu*, Sept. 8, 1956.

101. Sarvepally Gopal, *op.cit.*, p. 192 .

102. Harish kapur, *India's Foreign Policy 1947-92* (New Delhi, 1994), p. 128.

103. *idem*.

104. S.L. Poplai, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

III

BANDUNG CONFERENCE (1955)

On the initiative of Dr. Ali Sastroa Midjojo, Prime Minister of Indonesia an Afro-Asian Conference was held in Bandung, Indonesia in the year 1955 which was a landmark in the growth of co-operation among the Asian-African peoples. The first expression of an Asian sentiment can historically be traced to August 1926, when the Asian delegations to the non-official international conference for peace held at Bierville declared in a memorandum that Asia must have its rightful place in the consideration of world problems.¹⁰⁵

There is one thing, they said, which cannot fail to strike any one who studies the peace movements of Europe. It is the fact that when European people think of peace they think of it only in terms of Europe. In the imagination of European thinkers the world seems to be confined to the areas inhabited by European races. The vast continent of Asia, containing, as it does, some of the most ancient civilisations, and holding the vast majority of the world population, and Africa, with its particular problems, do not come into the picture at all. This, we submit with all humility, is a wrong point of view.¹⁰⁶

It is true that, to the people of Asia there seems to be a clear division of the world into two blocs—with the European, American and Australian continents on the

105. A. Appadorai, "The Bandung Conference." *India Quarterly*, VII(3), July-Sept 1955, p. 207.

106. *idem*.

one hand, and Asia and Africa on the other. Europe, America, Australia, all spring from common roots; the factors and forces which shaped them, made them what they are and determined their development have been indeed common, and are foreign to Asia and Africa.¹⁰⁷ The growth of Asian sentiment and co-operation was reinforced by the mid-fifties, when Asia had shaken off the European imperial yoke and emerged as full-fledged nations. Burma, Sri Lanka (Ceylon), India, Pakistan and Philippines have achieved freedom by the mid-forties.

The second expression of an Asian sentiment can be traced to the Asian Relations Conference, which met in New Delhi in March-April 1947 under the auspices of the Indian Council of World Affairs. 'To that conference came representatives from practically all the countries of Asia, except Japan but including the Soviet Republic of Central Asia, to consider the common problems which all Asian countries had to face, such as national movements for freedom, racial problems, colonial economy, industrial development, intra-Asian migration, the status of women and cultural co-operation.'¹⁰⁸

One of the most vocal and persistent exponents of Asian consciousness was Jawaharlal Nehru even in Pre-Independent India. It was on his initiative that the Asian Relations Conference met in New Delhi under the auspices of Indian Council of World Affairs in April 1947 and again in 1949, to consider the grave situations that arose from Dutch,

107. Roselan Abdul Gani, "The Asian African Conference in Retrospect." *Foreign Affairs Report*, Vol.4, (No.8) August 1955, p. 97.

108. A. Appadorai, *op. cit.*, p. 207.

police action in Indonesia.¹⁰⁹ The proposal for an Afro-Asian Conference was mooted at the Colombo Conference in which, Burma, Sri Lanka (Ceylon), India, Indonesia and Pakistan participated. The joint statement issued at the end of the conference on May 2, 1954 stated that the Prime Ministers had discussed the desirability of holding a conference of Asian-African Nations and favoured a proposal that the Prime Minister of Indonesia might explore the possibility of such a conference.¹¹⁰

Between May 1954 and December 1954, the Bogor Conference finally took the decision to convene an Asian-African Conference. On September 25, 1954 Prime Ministers of Indonesia and India issued a joint statement which stated that they discussed also the proposal to have a conference of representatives of Asian and African countries and were agreed that a conference of this kind was desirable and would be helpful in promoting the cause of peace and common approach to these problems.¹¹¹ It was in the light of the realisation that the international and political structure of the world had grown progressively complex, Dr. Ali Sastroa Midjojo felt impelled to put the historic question "where do we stand now, we the peoples of Asia, in the world of ours today?"¹¹² The Asian-African conference was convened to seek an answer to that question.

109. Aloo J. Dastur, India at Bandung and Belgrade, *Foreign Affairs Report*, V.5 (No.3), 1955, p. 100.

110. A. Appadorai, *op. cit.*, p. 208.

111. *idem.*

112. Roeslan Abdul Gani, "The Asian - African Conference in Retrospect," *op. cit.*, p. 99.

This question was considered basic by the Prime Ministers assembled at Colombo and the purpose of Asian-African Conference was defined as:

1. To promote goodwill and co-operation between the nations of Asia and Africa, to explore and advance their mutual as well as common interests, and to establish and further friendliness and neighbourly relations.
2. To consider social, economic and cultural problems and relations of the countries represented.
3. To consider problems of special interest to Asian and African people, e.g. problems affecting national sovereignty and of racialism and colonialism.
4. To view the position of Asia and Africa and their peoples in the world of today and the contribution they can make to the promotion of world peace and co-operation.¹¹³

The five Colombo powers decided to invite all the independent countries of Asia and Africa barring South Africa and Israel. 'The first was an obvious omission, but Nehru conceded that the second was an illogical surrender to Arab susceptibility.'¹¹⁴ Krishna Menon wanted to extend the invitation to Israel with an explanation to the Arab States that the presence of Israel committed them to nothing. But Nehru, wishing to avoid dissension even on the question of the composition of the conference, agreed with reluctance that an invitation to Israel should be extended, only if the Arab countries

113. *ibid.*, p. 104.

114. Sarvepally Gopal, *op. cit.*, p. 233.

agreed to it.¹¹⁵

The influence which the decision of the Colombo powers had on the Geneva Conference and the realisation by the world that Colombo decisions had a real influence in shaping the Geneva agreement probably helped in the ultimate decision that an Asian-African conference, be convened. In April 1955, for the first time in history 29 countries, Afghanistan, Burma, Cambodia, China, Ceylon, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Japan, Jordan, Laos, Liberia, Libya, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philipines, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria, Thailand, Turkey, North Vietnam, South Vietnam and Yemen representing 1.4 billion of the then worlds 2.5 billion people of Africa and Asia came together to discuss matters of mutual interests.¹¹⁶

The participating countries were urged to send in their suggestions for inclusion in the agenda, and it was decided that the agenda and the procedure of the Conference were to be decided by the Conference itself. The various items suggested by the participating countries were grouped under five heads: 1) Economic Co-operation, 2) Cultural Co-operation, 3) Human Rights and Self-determination, 4) Problems of Dependent Peoples, and 5) Promotion of World Peace and Co-operation.

The Conference appointed two committees to consider economic co-operation and cultural co-operation. The committees, after completing their work, presented their

115. *ibid.*, p. 232

116. Roselan Abdul Gani, *op. cit.*, p. 106.

report to the heads of delegations which adopted them with some modifications. The heads of delegations considered items like human rights and self-determination, problems of dependent peoples and the promotion of world peace and co-operation.¹¹⁷ To expedite its work the meeting of the heads of delegations also appointed three committees, one on racial discrimination and racial problems and another on weapons of mass destruction and disarmament and the third on some aspects of the united nations and also five drafting committees to draft appropriate resolutions.¹¹⁸

The Asian-African Conference at Bandung was a milestone in the annals of the history of Afro-Asian nations. Nehru observed :

For long years, the countries of Asia and Africa were non-entities in political, economic and international affairs. Their destinies were controlled by others. Asia was an outer fringe of Europe. Much more so was Africa. The decisions about Asia and Africa were made by other people in other countries. Now a change has come about. The nations of Asia or most of them are now free and independent... They did not think in terms of isolation but they thought in terms of self-respect, self-determination, self-reliance and self-progress, which they desire to achieve in peace and friendship with other countries. It was the common desire of the people and countries which was bringing them together in Bandung.¹¹⁹

117. A. Apadorai, *op. cit.*, p.212.

118. *ibid.*, p. 213.

119. *The Hindustan Standard*, Delhi, April 14, 1955.

“Taking an overall view of the picture, it seems to me that the [Bandung] conference was a remarkable success”--observes Nehru. Quite apart from the joint communiqué issued, it represented the coming together of all these varied and differing nations, their delegates getting to know each other and learning something from each other and finding ultimately that, in spite of so many differences, they had much in common.¹²⁰ But the conference was not without problems. Even the five sponsoring countries were not in accord with each other. Krishna Menon told Michael Brecher, “at Bogor things nearly broke down. It was only at 4 O’ clock in the morning that we got an agreement. Pakistan raised some obstruction and I put formula after formula to meet them.”¹²¹ Krishna Menon had played a very crucial role in the Bandung conference from the very conception of the idea to its close. It was really the Colombo powers, as they were called at that time, with Indonesia, that took the initiative for what became Bandung. The basis of Geneva accord was the resolution of the Colombo Conference, which was a modified version of the six-point formula presented by India in Colombo conference drafted by Krishna Menon as desired by Nehru. At the Bandung conference on April 18, President Sukarno observed thus:

I think it is generally recognised that the activities of the Prime Ministers of the sponsoring countries which invited you here had a not unimportant role to play in ending the fighting in Indo-China. Look, the people of

120. Jawaharlal Nehru, *Letters to Chief Ministers, 1947-64*, Vol.4, April 28, 1955, p. 165.
121. Michael Brecher, *op. cit.*, p. 51.

Asia raised their voice and the world listened. It was no small victory and no negligible precedent.¹²²

When, at Bogor things were breaking down due to Pakistan's obstinacy, Nehru said "we cannot go on like this."¹²³ He thought that Pakistan was obviously obstructing as they wanted to run the conference themselves. Krishna Menon prevailed over Nehru and advised him to move an adjournment for a couple of hours. Krishna Menon then talked to U Nu, Prime Minister of Burma, and asked him to speak to the Pakistanis. While the conference adjourned for two hours, the Pakistanis and Burmese had a talk and came to an agreement.¹²⁴ Krishna Menon was India's representative in the main drafting committee of the political committee. It became the responsibility of Krishna Menon to soothe the hard feelings of delegations representing various nations of Asia and Africa and also to devise formulas to break the impasse at every stage of the conference.

The year 1955 was the year when the Indian political atmosphere was thick with cries of "Punch Sheela" Nehru had unwittingly queered the pitch when in the parliament during a debate he had remarked that all nations must reveal their attitude towards it. This was misconstrued at Bandung as an attempt at forcing a vote on the issue. He had no such intention. The invited nations, like Thailand and the Philippines, had challenged the idea of co-existence, because they were pledged to contain and oppose communism. Ceylon and Pakistan

122. A. Apadorai, *op. cit.*, p. 210.

123. Michael Brecher, *op. cit.*, p. 52.

124 *Ibid.*, p. 52.

launched a concerted attack asserting that before they could accept co-existence China must renounce aggression. Since the expression 'co-existence' was anathema to several delegations, V.K. Krishna Menon soothed the ruffled feelings by substituting for it an acceptable phrase--'promotion of peace and co-operation.'¹²⁵

Pakistan, while opposing 'Panch Sheel', produced its own 'seven pillars of peace', one of which was collective defence.¹²⁶ Nehru's reaction to this was sharp and he rightly interpreted this as an effort by Pakistan to justify its membership of military pacts. The Panch Sheela emerged mutilated from the deliberation with five principles doubled to ten and absolutely unrecognisable. Even on vital issues of disarmament and weapons of mass destruction there was opposition to India. Only Krishna Menon's threat, that India would withdraw from the sub-committee, resulted in quick agreement recommending the prohibition of production, use and exploitation of thermo-nuclear weapons.¹²⁷

Krishna Menon told the General Assembly of the United Nations about the deliberations and decisions of the Asian-African Conference and reminded that august gathering that despite the praise in support of the Asian-African conference, little attention had been paid to the considerable work that was done at the conference and the considerable amount of thinking and constructive results that had ensued in the

125. Aloo, J. Dastur, *op. cit.*, p. 103.

126. *ibid.*, p. 106.

127. *idem.*

economic and cultural fields. He referred to some of those vital points in regard to the economic field so that at least they might go on record.

First of all the Asian-African Conference recommended the early establishment of the special United Nations Fund for Economic Development and the early establishment of the International Finance Corporation. The Asian-African Conference, which represented two third of the world's population coming from twenty nine countries, recognised the vital need to stabilise commodity trade in the region.¹²⁸

He had also drawn the attention of the United Nations for more equitable approach towards the problems of world shipping and told them that the Asian-African Conference attached considerable importance to shipping and expressed concern that shipping lines from time to time reviewed their freight rates, often to the detriment of the participating countries. He also dealt at length about the arrangements made by the Asian-African Conference concerning the machinery of international co-operation and the exchange of information and also the recommendations of the committee concerning the peaceful uses of atomic energy.¹²⁹ He had successfully presented the important decisions of the Asian-African Conference in the United Nations so that concerted efforts might be initiated by the United Nations to achieve the desired results. The tangible results of Bandung was the emergence of Asian unity and power, besides effectively reducing the possibility of the area becoming a stage for Super Power

128. vide, Krishna Menon's Speech at U.N. *op. cit.*, p. 77.

129. *ibid.*, p. 79.

conflict. Bandung, though essentially an Asian affair, also led to the setting up of an Afro-Asian committee, the outcome of which was the emergence of Afro-Asian countries with both an individual as well as group identity, based on geographical considerations. Krishna Menon had persuaded the Afro-Asian countries to support the UN and argued in favour of getting them enlisted into the United Nations. He has successfully elaborated in detail the principles of non-alignment and helped in securing the acceptance of Peoples Republic of China by the participating nations. Nehru wrote to the Chief Ministers on April 28, 1955:

The main burden of work on our side in these drafting committees fell on Krishna Menon and Dutt. I am grateful to them for the ability and the restraint with which they conducted this work, often in the face of considerable provocation. Krishna Menon more specially deserves credit for this work.¹³⁰

In Nehru's and Krishna Menon's understanding of the world situation, crisis had been mounting which could escalate into conflagration. The chronic crisis in East Asia had escalated to the verge of war. Tension had increased in West Asia with the formation of the Baghdad Pact with Britain and Pakistan linked with it. The formation of South East Asia Treaty Organisation (SEATO) had added to the problems of South East Asia. In this context the very fact of meeting of the representatives of the people of Asia and Africa was of enormous importance to both Nehru and Krishna Menon. To them, therefore, it was vital that the

130. Jawaharlal Nehru, *op. cit.*, p. 160.

conference should not end in a failure.

Krishna Menon had seen the danger of pushing the colonial powers too intemperately, while demanding with all the vehemence at his command for the freedom of the subject people and therefore had taken the wise course of counselling moderation to his Afro-Asian colleagues. In Bandung Conference Krishna Menon's role was to tone down the climate of suspicion and mutual antagonism and to change the atmosphere to one of amity.¹³¹ Krishna Menon's major contribution to the Bandung Conference was that he had succeeded in establishing that it was not a rival to the United Nations. As he himself put it "the Bandung Conference had established the personality of Asia and Africa without isolating itself from the rest of the world."¹³² He had ceaselessly toiled to keep the cold war out of Africa. His own assessment conveyed in a letter to Emily on April 3, 1955 was "the conference was a success, more than people now realise we had some hard and sharp corners to win, but we made it. It had done something substantive for greater co-operation."¹³³ Krishna Menon was treated as a minister at the Bandung Conference Jamal Kidwai recalls, and remembers hordes of journalists, especially lady reporters from United States, listening wide eyed to every word Menon said.¹³⁴

131. V.K. Madhavan Kutty, *op. cit.*, p. 102.

132. *ibid.*, p. 103.

133. Janaki Ram, *op. cit.*, p. 107.

134. *ibid.*, p. 108.

The one great achievement of the Bandung Conference was that the representatives of the countries of the East had the opportunity to understand and appreciate each other's views on the problems which affected them vitally. Not only that, on questions like economic co-operation, they were able to work out ways and means of co-operation for mutual benefit, and on such questions as colonialism and racialism they expressed their views unequivocally.¹³⁵ The conference also was successful in promoting the unity of Asia and Africa which was conspicuous in the joint communiqué issued by the twenty nine participating nations defining their attitudes to the various problems afflicting them including particularly promotion of world peace. The conference could also focus attention on certain vital issues which were out side the agenda. In a private talk Nehru had with Chou-En-Lai, the latter made a statement about Formosa and hinted at their desire for peaceful settlement and informed Nehru of his willingness to have direct talk with the United States. Nehru wrote to the Chief Ministers on April 28, 1955:

As I was saying good bye to Premier Chou-En-Lai he mentioned to me that he would like to have further talks with Krishna Menon and had invited him to go to Peking for this purpose as soon as possible. I welcomed this proposal and told him that Krishna Menon would go there within the next two weeks or so.¹³⁶

Chou-En-Lai had discovered in Krishna Menon a fine negotiator and a brilliant

135. A. Appadorai, *op. cit.*, p. 233.

136. Jawaharlal Nehru, *Letters to Chief Ministers*, Vol. IV, *op. cit.*, p. 169.

communicator with corrosive logic and pungent phrases and thought of him as the right person to solve some of the crucial problems in the international sphere. Nehru was only acknowledging the great and valuable contributions V.K.Krishna Menon had made towards the success of the Bandung Conference.

IV

SUEZ CRISIS (1956)

The Arab world had been in great ferment in the fifties and Cairo was the hub of its activities. On July 23, 1952, a blood-less military coup was staged in Egypt under the leadership of a young military officer, 34 year old Colonel Gamal Abdel Nasser. The coup ousted the corrupt and luxury-loving King Farouk, and set in train a series of radical changes in Egypt.¹³⁷ Egypt had many problems which included, among other things, the shocking poverty of the masses and the depressing conditions of the peasants under big landlords. Egypt's nationalist ambitions were: 1. to expel the British forces from the Suez Canal base, 2. to attain the unity of the Nile Valley by incorporating Sudan, 3. to make Egypt and Arabs strong against Israel, and 4. to assume the leadership of Arabs.¹³⁸

137. J. C. Kundra, Suez Canal Nationalisation . *Foreign Affairs Report*, New Delhi, Sept. 1956, V. 5, No.9, p. 91.

138. *idem*.

Egypt was able to attain some of these objectives without offending the West. By the Anglo-Egyptian Agreement of July 27, 1954 the British agreed to evacuate the Suez Canal base within two years. Most of the Arab countries had accepted Egyptian leadership in their relations with the outside world, and in their common opposition to Israel. Egypt successfully led the Arab countries of Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Saudi Arabia away from the Anglo-American sponsored Baghdad Pact. Sudan could not be united with Egypt, but Sudanese independence had for the time being satisfied Egypt.¹³⁹

With a view to strengthening Egypt against Israel, Nasser concluded an arms deal with Czechoslovakia. West was greatly infuriated against Egypt for its arms deal with Czechoslovakia and its opposition to Baghdad Pact. In addition, France had been blaming Egypt for her troubles with the Arab nationalists in her North African possessions.

In order to ameliorate the hardship of the peasants and to tackle the economic problems of Egypt, Nasser introduced land reforms which could not achieve the desired end as there was no irrigation facilities in the desert fields of Egypt, which prompted Nasser to embark on an ambitious project of constructing the Aswan High Dam in the Nile. As the proposed Aswan High Dam on the Nile would cost a huge amount, Nasser approached the United States of America, United Kingdom, besides Soviet Union, for financial assistance. The

139. *idem.*

construction of Aswan High Dam was estimated to cost 1,300 million dollars, including 400 million dollars in foreign exchange.¹⁴⁰ Though they had all agreed to finance the project, on the pretext of Egypt's leaning towards the Soviet Union the offer of aid was withdrawn by the United States of America, United Kingdom and the World Bank. Hopes of aids from the Soviet Union were also dampened when the Soviet Foreign Minister, Shepilov said that Russia had not planned to help Egypt in building the dam, although she would consider other requests of aid from Egypt.¹⁴¹ Left with no other option, Colonel Nassar conceived the idea of nationalising the Suez Canal Company with its properties and assets. Speaking at the top of his voice at Alexandria Colonel Nassar said:

This money is ours. The Suez Canal belongs to us. It was built by Egyptians and 120,000 Egyptians died in building it... 35 million Egyptian pounds has been taken from us every year by Suez Canal Company. We shall use this money for building the high dam. We shall rely on our own strength, our own muscles, our own funds¹⁴².

The Suez Canal is an artificial maritime highway lying entirely in Egyptian territory. It lies at the cross-roads of two continents, separating Asia from Africa. The Canal links the Mediterranean and Red Seas together and is about 103 miles long. Ships with a draft of 35 feet can easily pass through the Canal. It is

140. *ibid.*, p. 92.

141. *idem.*

142. *idem.*

about 180 feet wide at the bottom and about 500 feet wide on the surface at each of the 13 curves in its course. The Canal brings areas east of Suez thousands of miles closer to European ports and gives to the European and Indian Ocean powers access to West Asia.¹⁴³

The Suez Canal was constructed by Campagnie Universelle du Canal Maritime de Suez between 1859 and 1869. It was opened on November 17, 1867.¹⁴⁴ The construction of the Canal was a great tribute to the tenacity and organising ability of Mide Lesseps who had to surmount the stiff political opposition of Britain and physical, technical and financial difficulties in the way of the construction of the canal.

Before President Nasser announced its nationalisation, the Canal was under the management and lease of the compagnie universelle du canal maritime de Suez which in turn was owned by the shareholders of the company. Most of the private ordinary shareholders were French and about 44 per cent shares were owned by the British Government. The company enjoyed no political rights and the Canal formed an integral part of the territory of Egypt. The company started work under two concessions of November 30, 1854 and January 5, 1856. These concessions were willingly granted by the then Viceroy of Egypt, Said Pasha. Historically, it is clear

143. *idem.*

144. *idem.*

that it was the friendship of Said Pasha with M. de Lesseps, on the one hand, and the conviction of the Egyptian Viceroy that the Canal would be beneficial to Egyptian interests, on the other that had induced the grant of the concessions.

By the two concessions M. de Lesseps was authorised to form an international company under his direction to be called 'Compagnie Universelle du Canal Maritime de Suez' to construct the Canal, which would connect the Mediterranean and Red Seas and would be under a 99-year lease to the company from the date of the opening of the Canal. During this period the company was allowed to maintain and exploit the Canal. The company was to work as a private joint stock company registered in Egypt. After the expiry of the 99-year lease, the Canal was to revert to Egypt, which would pay only for the working stock, appliances, stores etc. of the company—the amount having to be amicably settled. It is estimated that out of a total cost of about 16 million, Egypt contributed nearly \$11.5 million by way of ordinary shares bought by Egypt, compensation as per award of Napoleon III, expenses in connection with the construction of Sweet Water Canal and other expenses.¹⁴⁵ Egypt was under obligation to make available all necessary public lands for the purposes of construction of maritime canal and ancillary freshwater canal.

It is astonishing to contemplate the extend to which Said Pasha had

145. *ibid.*, p. 94.

committed himself to the company. Not only had he alienated a strip of potentially cultivable land extending into the heart of Egypt, but he had pledged that the Egyptian state would provide an unlimited quantity of manpower for the construction of the maritime and sweet water canals. He had in fact undertaken to provide almost everything required for the construction of the canal in return for a promise of 15 per cent of the net profit.¹⁴⁶

It is quite clear that as compared with the shareholders of the company, the Egyptian government had made a far larger investment in the project. Due to a series of disastrous financial deals, Ismail Pasha, who succeeded Said Pasha in 1863, had been rendered bankrupt and he sold the Egyptian stock in 1875 to Great Britain. Similarly, the 15 per cent royalty of the Egyptian government had also been disposed of secretly into the hands of the Anglo-French controllers. Ever since the opening of the Canal, Egypt had been subject to international rivalries which had constantly endangered her freedom and had resulted in foreign interference. However, it was clear that the Suez Canal Company was legally entitled to the lease and operation of the Canal and the benefit accruing from it till 1968.

On the night of July 26, 1956 Col. Nasser addressed a massive rally at Alexandria. At the end of his three-hour speech, he announced the nationalisation

146. John Marlow, *Anglo-Egyptian Relations*, London, 1954, p. 66.

of the Suez Canal Company with its properties and assets.¹⁴⁷

Nasser defended his action on the grounds that the refusal by Western countries to contribute financially to the construction of a High Dam at Aswan left him with no alternative source of finding necessary funds and since the Canal company lease was in any case to expire in the next twelve years, he was perfectly within his right to promulgate its nationalisation.¹⁴⁸ The most important fact in connection with Suez Canal nationalisation was that the Suez Canal Company was an Egyptian registered company and subject to Egyptian laws.

The Egyptian action was highly resented by both France and Great Britain. As a first step, both Britain and France froze all Egyptian government's and private assets in these countries. The USA also froze the Egyptian government's and the country's assets.¹⁴⁹ India also was taken aback by the sudden Egyptian action. Nehru, immediately denied any previous knowledge of impending nationalisation of the Suez Canal Company. Neither at Brioni, where Nasser, Tito, and Nehru had met, nor later at Cairo, to which city Nehru and Nasser had travelled together did Nasser mention to Nehru that he was considering the possibility of nationalising the Suez Canal.¹⁵⁰ Nationalisation of the Suez Canal came, therefore, to Nehru as an

147. J. C. Kundara, *op. cit.*, p. 92.

148. V.K.Madhavan Kutty, *op. cit.*, p. 103.

149. *ibid.*, . 100.

150. Sarvepally Gopal, *Jawaharlal Nehru: A Biography, op. cit.*, . 277.

unpleasant surprise. He said:

I feel that Egyptian government is undertaking more than it can manage and is being pushed by some extremist elements and by angry reaction to American and British refusal to help the Aswan dam project.”¹⁵¹

On August 8, 1956, Nehru made the much awaited statement on the Suez Canal in the Lok Sabha explaining the stand taken by India in the Suez crisis. Nehru’s statement was clear that India would support Egypt’s claim to sovereignty over the Canal and would not favour international control over the Canal but would support an advisory international body to be associated with the Egyptian Suez Canal administration for ensuring the efficient running of the Canal.¹⁵²

In August 1956, a conference was convened in London at the initiative of U.K., U.S.A. and France being the main users of the canal. Twenty four other countries who were users of the Canal were invited to this conference.¹⁵³ Nehru announced that India would attend the London Conference on the basis of Eden’s assurance that participation need not imply acceptance of the British demand for an international authority.¹⁵⁴ Nehru wrote to the Chief Ministers on August 16, 1956:

You will observe that, whether we wish it or not, a heavy burden has again fallen upon us, and many countries look to us for help in finding

151. *Jawaharlal's Telegram to Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit in London, July 37, 1956.*

152. J.C. Kundra, *op. cit.*, 102.

153. V.K. Madhavan Kutty, *op. cit.*, p. 103.

154. Nehru’s Statement in the Parliament, August 8, 1956, *The Hindu*, August 9, 1956.

peaceful solution. We have sent a strong team to the London conference, led by Shri. V.K. Krishna Menon. Apart from his great ability, he has a remarkable capacity for dealing with situations of this kind. It was partly due to his efforts that success came in the Geneva conference on Indo-China and in the earlier Korean negotiations. But we must realise that this is far the most difficult task that we have undertaken in international affairs.¹⁵⁵

Nehru informed S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike, Prime Minister of Sri Lanka (Ceylon), on August 8, 1956:

It seems to me that London Conference cannot possibly come to any settlement as Egypt will not be there. Our main purpose at this conference has, therefore, to prevent any dangerous steps being taken and to leave the door open for further conference or consultations in which Egypt must necessarily play an important part.¹⁵⁶

Nehru directed Krishna Menon to break his journey at Cairo on his way to the London Conference to explain to Nasser that it did not follow from Egypt's refusal to attend that it would be best for her friends also to stay away, for they might be able to prevent foolish decisions being taken.¹⁵⁷ At Cairo Krishna Menon found Nasser more mellowed but, while appearing to realise in his mind that perhaps he was precipitate, unyielding on such issues as international control. At the

155. Jawaharlal Nehru, *Letter to Chief Ministers*, August 16, 1956, p. 401.

156. Sarvepally Gopal, Vol. III, *op. cit.*, p. 280.

157. *idem.*

conference in London Menon sought to persuade the western powers to negotiate with Egypt on the basis of her sovereignty, and was embarrassed by the Soviet Union taking the same line.¹⁵⁸ Krishna Menon's compromise formula provided for minority representation of international user interests, without ownership rights on the Egyptian corporation for the canal, a consultative body of user interests, and transmission by Egypt to the United Nations of the annual reports of the canal corporation.¹⁵⁹ But these formulas found favour with neither Britain and France nor Egypt. Therefore, Nehru directed Menon to formulate some more constructive proposals¹⁶⁰

The London Conference on the Suez Canal began on August 16, 1956 with 22 out of the 24 invited nations attending. Though Egypt rejected the invitation to the conference, Col. Nasser had deputed his advisor Wing Commander Sabry to London to be available to friendly countries for consultations. Greece was the only other invitee who did not join the conference.¹⁶¹ On the eve of the conference, three different positions on how to maintain the freedom of navigation in the canal clearly emerged. On August 12, 1956 Col. Nasser made a statement in which, while firmly rejecting international control of the Canal as 'Collective Colonialism', he offered to call an alternative conference of all users of the Canal, including

158. *idem.*

159. *ibid.*, pp. 280-281.

160. *Nehru's telegram* to Krishna Menon 21, August, 1956.

161. J.C. Kundra, *op. cit.*, 102.

signatories to the 1888 convention to reconsider the Constantinople Agreement and reach an agreement confirming and guaranteeing the freedom of navigation through the Suez Canal.¹⁶²

Among the different proposals put forward, one point of view--the tripartite view of the U.K., France and the U.S.A was that international confidence in the freedom of the Canal could only be restored and maintained by international control of the Canal. The opposite stand was that of Egypt, supported by the Soviet Union, that Egyptian guarantee to maintain the freedom of the Canal was sufficient. The third point of view championed by India was that users' interests should be associated with the Egyptian administration of the Canal in an advisory and consultative capacity.¹⁶³

Indian reactions to the Suez crisis was determined by its interest in the Middle East and also by its relations with Egypt and Britain. The Suez Canal was a major artery of trade for the Indian sub-continent, as the Persian Gulf was the major source of its oil requirements.¹⁶⁴ Besides as an exponent of the idea of non-alignment, India was anxious for the Middle East to belong to that area of peace which she had been trying to fashion since her independence. She was suspicious,

162. *ibid.*, pp. 102-103.

163. *ibid.*, p. 103.

164. Jitendra Mohan, India-Pakistan- Suez and The Commonwealth, *International Journal*, 1960, V. 15, p. 185.

therefore, of any developments possibly involving it further in cold war.¹⁶⁵ In fact, India's reactions to the Suez Crisis were largely conditioned by her relationship with Egypt. Egypt enjoyed a privileged position in the eyes of Indian statesmen basically for two reasons. The Egyptian leader's persistent refusal to respond to the slogan of Pan-Islamism bore a certain surface resemblance to India's secularism and against the background of their common opposition to military alliances had served to bring the two countries nearer.¹⁶⁶ The relationship between India and Egypt became very close and intimate which was consummated at the Bandung Conference of 1955. Despite Nasser's intimate relationship with Nehru, he preferred to hold his intention from Nehru of nationalising the Suez Canal which surprised the Indian Government. Nehru expressed his Government's disapproval of the Egyptian method. But when reports of Anglo-French military measures against Egypt started pouring in, the Prime Minister defended the Egyptian right to nationalise the Canal Company, though without committing himself to its wisdom, and castigated Britain and France for their nineteenth century reactions and antics.¹⁶⁷

Krishna Menon, supporting Nehru, told Brecher:

The Egyptians said that it was nobody else's business. It was an Egyptian waterway. But, they always admitted there was an

165. *idem.*

166. *ibid.*, p. 186.

167. *ibid.*, p. 187.

international factor in it and we put up the formula for them--that they would carry out the obligations of the convention 1888.¹⁶⁸

Krishna Menon made it clear in London during the first conference on Suez in August 1956, that India was equally concerned with the convention of 1888, as it was a part of the British Empire, when the convention was signed. As a successor state to Britain's Indian Empire, India was as much a signatory to 1888 as Britain or anybody else. So he proposed certain things at different times, on the basis of the convention. One of his proposals was the recognition of the right of ships to go through the Canal in accordance with the convention of 1888. Secondly, that Egypt would do its best to improve the Canal. A third was no discrimination.¹⁶⁹

Nasser nationalised the Suez Canal and the question arose, would it be by expropriation or otherwise Krishna Menon, sensing the then prevailing international situation, told Nasser "whatever you do, do not do it that way [expropriate], the world won't take it."¹⁷⁰ Krishna Menon had successfully convinced Nasser of the implications and Nasser said "we will pay the shareholders at the current rate - the market rate."¹⁷¹ So Krishna Menon proclaimed to the world that Egypt would pay compensation and brought forth his proposals to solve the Suez Crisis. Those proposals were:

168. Micheal Brecher, *op.cit.*,p. 63.

169. *idem.*

170. *idem.*

171. *idem.*

There would be compensation, there would be something said about the Canal in good condition; there would be mention of 1888 - there would be no discrimination, Egyptians would work the canal, there might be a Canal Authority, but without prejudice to Egypt's sovereign rights as under 1888. The Egyptian Government would set-up a corporation; it would not be a Government Department.¹⁷²

Egyptians agreed to that. Krishna Menon went on devising formula after formula whenever there was an impasse. It may be noted that regarding the Suez Crisis there emerged two divergent views at the London Conference which were then known as "The Dulles Plan" and the "Menon Plan."¹⁷³

The main principles which Krishna Menon asked the conference to accept for a peaceful settlement were: 1. recognition of the sovereign rights of Egypt, 2. recognition of the Canal as an integral part of Egypt and a waterway of international importance, 3. free and uninterrupted navigation for all nations in accordance with the 1888 convention, 4. equitable and just tolls and charges without discrimination with regard to Canal facilities, 5. the Canal being maintained at all times in proper condition in accordance with modern technical navigational requirements, and 6. the interest of the users of the Canal receive due recognition. Krishna Menon also presented a five-point proposal for the implementation of these principles. The proposal provided: 1. that the 1888 convention be reviewed to reaffirm its

172. *ibid.*, pp. 64-65.

173. V.K. Madhavan Kutty, *op. cit.*, p. 104.

principles and to make such revisions as are necessary today, and more particularly incorporating provisions for just and equitable tolls and charges and maintenance of the Canal, 2. all steps to be considered--not excluding a conference of the representatives of the signatories to the 1888 convention and all user nations, 3. consideration to be given, without prejudice to Egyptian ownership, to the association of international user-interests with the Egyptian corporation for the Suez Canal, 4. Consultative body of user interests to be formed on the basis of geographical representation and interests charged with advisory, consultative, and liaison functions; and 5. the Egyptian government to transmit to the United Nations the annual report of the Egyptian corporation.¹⁷⁴ As these proposal did not provide for international control over the Canal, they were not acceptable to the western nations and the matter was taken to the United Nations.

At about this time Egypt and Israel had their armed forces stationed facing each other in Sinai Peninsula where Egypt-Israel conflict was in full swing. On November 24, 1956, United Kingdom in conjunction with France issued an ultimatum to both Israel and Egypt to withdraw 10 miles from their respective positions.¹⁷⁵ War, now seemed possible and India stepped up its efforts to find an amicable settlement. Nasser requested Nehru to get negotiations started on the basis

174. J.C. Kundra, *op. cit.*, p. 104.

175. V.K. Madhavan Kutty, *op. cit.*, p. 104.

of the legitimate concerns of user interests but without acceptance of international control. Nehru agreed to help, but dissuaded Nasser from approaching the United Nations.¹⁷⁶ So the Egyptian government announced their proposal for the formation of a negotiating body representative of all views among the user nations, and Nehru pressed Eden to react constructively.¹⁷⁷

Krishna Menon sought to persuade the Egyptian Government to be a little more co-operative even though the plan for users association was totally unacceptable.¹⁷⁸ Krishna Menon, meanwhile worked out a fresh set of compromise proposals, providing for an Egyptian Canal authority whose annual report would be forwarded to the United Nations, a broad based users' association with advisory functions and an agreement to settle all disputes in accordance with the United Nations Charter. He thought that he had persuaded Eden and Lloyd to accept these proposals and requested Nehru to persuade Nasser to accept these new proposals. Krishna Menon telegraphed Nehru from London on September 19, 1956: If we can get over one or two smaller hurdles in Cairo, which should be possible with the weight of your backing, we would have turned the corner. Subsequent stages are largely methodological problems.¹⁷⁹ Negotiations, now shifted to New York. Krishna Menon arrived in New York two days later and in the meantime Dag

176. Sarvepally Gopal, *op. cit.*, p. 281.

177 *ibid.*, p. 282.

178. *Krishna Menon's Telegram from Cairo to Nehru*, Sept 19, 1956.

179. *Krishna Menon's telegram from London to Nehru*, Sept. 29, 1956.

Hammarskjold, who intervened had objected to Krishna Menon's five point proposal and had put up a further one.¹⁸⁰ Krishna Menon thought that the situation had worsened with Dr. Mahmoud Fawzi, Egyptian Foreign Minister accepting the intervention of Hammarskjold and firmly believed that, had he reached New York at the same time as Selwyn Lloyd, this development could have been averted. Krishna Menon drawing from his experience in earlier situations and with his knowledge of international law suggested to Nasser that "if you have accepted 1888 convention and have not shifted from it and therefore any question arising about the convention should go to the World Court."¹⁸¹ To his great surprise Nasser accepted this proposal and said "let the World Court decide."¹⁸² Regarding his efforts to impress upon Nasser the necessity of assuming such a stand Krishna Menon observes:

The best I could get on the Israel question in the Suez negotiations was the agreement about the reference to the World Court. And I am quite certain that Nasser agreed to this knowing its implications. I told him if they have any sense they won't go even if you go because their case is weak; besides they would consider it an infringement of their sovereign rights. But you must admit the acceptance of international law. I said you can not do it in any other way. But in those decisions

180. Michael Brecher, *op. cit.*, p. 66.

181. *ibid.*, p. 68.

182. *idem.*

Nassar did not question my judgement or rectitude.¹⁸³

Throughout the negotiations on Suez, Krishna Menon could find some way out of the impasse. Nasser was sceptical about a treaty. He said “why should I sign a treaty about my own territory.”¹⁸⁴ So Krishna Menon christened the word ‘instrument’, and Nasser accepted the distinction and agreed to deposit it at the United Nations as treaties are deposited.¹⁸⁵

The matter was taken to the Security Council and this ultimately resulted in the creation of the UN Emergency Force to keep peace in the disputed area and an immediate cease fire. For the first time in the history of United Nations, Soviet Union and United States, joined together in condemning an aggression and England and France had no option but to withdraw. India agreed to contribute in the composition and leadership of the United Nations Emergency Force.¹⁸⁶ Speaking at the General Assembly of United Nations on October 6, 1959 Krishna Menon clarified the stand taken by India in the settlement of Suez crisis. He said:

We have always said that the right of free navigation under 1888 Constantinople Convention must be accepted by all parties. We have never moved away from that position and we were completely in favour of the development of the ‘instrument’ that was deposited with the Secretary

183. Michael Brecher, *op. cit.*, p. 82.

184. *ibid.*, p. 68.

185. *idem.*

186. V.K. Madhavan Kutty, *op. cit.*, p. 105.

General by the Government of Egypt.¹⁸⁷

He went on to add that:

Now the instrument is deposited with the Secretary General of the United Nations, and, if there is a violation of any legal rights, intra-national or international, they are today justifiable. Therefore, if the existing situation is something that militates against the interests of the parties concerned, or of international behaviour, I think that we should follow the advice of the Secretary General and invoke the operation of the Court.¹⁸⁸

The contributions of Nehru and Menon for the maintenance of peace over the whole period from the time of the nationalisation of the Suez Canal had been massive and won the praise and appreciation of the leaders of the world over. Krishna Menon's contribution to the settlement of the Suez crisis so much endeared him to the Egyptian people, it was said that many boys born in Egypt during the crisis were named after him.¹⁸⁹

While the negotiations to settle the Suez crisis were still on, Philip-Noel-Baker wrote to Nehru on October 26, 1956, conveying the gratitude of the people of Britain to Nehru and Krishna Menon for their unstinted efforts in finding a solution:

187. V.K. Krishna Menon's speeches at the United Nations--*India and the World*--Ed. E.S. Reddy and A.K. Damodaran, *op. cit.*, p. 203.

188. *ibid.*, p. 204.

189. V.K. Madhavan kutty, *op. cit.*, p 105.

I want to help in letting you know how large a volume of support you have in this country, and deeply grateful. Most people here are for the stand you have made from first to last....Krishna's work all through the conference and ever since has been of immense value, and if in the end your solution of the Canal problem is adopted, as I hope and believe it will be, not only Britain but the whole world will owe you very much.¹⁹⁰

Krishna Menon firmly believed that India should play the role of conciliator, using her good office. For Menon mediation was a natural extension of non-alignment. He felt this world must either revolutionise itself or be faced with the peril of death. There is no half-way house between peace and war--'you cannot establish peace by the method of war'. But he thought humanity can remove the instruments of war and resist war in order to make peace. True to his belief, he had immersed himself in the various international situations capable of plunging the world into wars and tried his best to find solutions to maintain international peace and security; Suez being one among such where his ingenuity found the fullest expression.

V

HUNGARY (1956)

Hungary, a small, landlocked country in Central Europe, was a large, independent and powerful kingdom until the late 1400s. From the early 1500s to the late 1600s, the Ottoman Turks ruled much of Hungary. The country then became part

190. Sarvepally Gopal, *op. cit.*, 282.

of a huge Empire ruled by the Austrian branch of the Habsburgs, a powerful European dynasty. The Empire of the Habsburgs collapsed after the world war I ended in 1918. Hungary then lost about two-thirds of its land but regained its independence. In the late 1940s Hungarian communists gained control of the country's government. They adopted a constitution similar to that of the Soviet Union and began to restrict the freedom of the people and manage the entire economy. In 1956 the Hungarian people revolted against their Communist Government and Soviet domination.¹⁹¹

Hungary, like most of the other states of Eastern Europe, was profoundly affected by the process of de-Stalinization which began to sweep through the Communist world after the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU in 1956. Inspired by the success of the Poles in resisting Soviet pressure Hungarian students and intellectuals in Budapest organised demonstrations of sympathy for the Poles, and of protest against Soviet domination of their own country and against repressive domestic policies. They demanded the appointment of Imre Nagy, who had been Premier from 1953 to 1955 and who was regarded as champion of more liberal policies and a variety of other concessions and reforms. On October 23, 1956, the state security police opened fire on a crowd of demonstrators, killing many of

191. J.C. Kundra, "Suez Canal Nationalisation." *Foreign Affairs Report* (New Delhi, September, 1956), V 5, No. 9, p. 91

them. Within a few hours Soviet troops appeared in the streets of Budapest, and fighting spread through out the country and soon developed into a struggle between the majority of the Hungarian people and the Soviet troops. On October 24, Imre Nagy was appointed the Premier, but on the following day, this action was balanced by the appointment of Soviet dominated Janos Kadar as first Secretary. When Soviet troops quickly moved in to crush the revolt in Hungary, Nehru came round to the view, despite diverse and confusing reports, that a powerful and widespread national uprising was being suppressed with large scale slaughter on both the sides.¹⁹²

The situation in Hungary was brought before the United Nation's Security Council by France, the United Kingdom and the United States in October 27, 1956, following intervention by Soviet Military forces to repress the uprising in the country. The Council could take no action because of a Veto by the Soviet Union, and an emergency special session of the General Assembly was convened in November 4 to consider the matter.¹⁹³ On the same day, on the proposal of the United States the General Assembly adopted resolution 1004 (ES II) calling upon the Soviet Union to desist forthwith from all armed attack on the people of Hungary; and requesting the Secretary General to investigate the situation and report with suggestion on methods to

192. Sarvepally Gopal, Vol. II, *op. cit.*, p. 291.

193. Krishna Menon Speeches at the UN Decolonisation and Peace. *op. cit.*, p. 318.

bring the foreign intervention in Hungary to an end.¹⁹⁴

Krishna Menon who was representing India in the United Nations as the head of the delegation abstained in the voting on the resolutions. In Krishna Menon's view the usefulness and function of the United Nations had been that action should be taken there and that the U.N should concern itself with such matters and such ways as would lead to some helpful results. The U.N should not be used as an instrument of the Cold War.¹⁹⁵ Krishna Menon held that the Hungarian uprising in the beginning was a national revolt, and that it should be met by as conciliatory and just methods as were possible. Since Soviet Union had already intervened and the Americans had condemned the Soviet intervention, he felt it was serious and desired that the issue should not be allowed to develop into or lead to a world war. But he was not prepared to isolate the Hungarian crisis from other questions in respect of using foreign forces and demanded that all foreign occupying forces should be withdrawn from Europe. Further he thought that, such issues in the first instances should go to appropriate committees of the General Assembly rather than being discussed in the General Assembly. Krishna Menon told Michael Brecher that the basis of his approach was: first, our background in regard to national sentiments and the maintenance of foreign forces; second, our desire not to use the U.N. for 'fist cuffs'; and third, we were against

194. *idem.*

195. Michael Brecher, *op. cit.*, p. 85.

the use of force.¹⁹⁶ On November 8, 1956 Krishna Menon gave an explanation in the plenary session of the General Assembly, of India's abstention on the resolution:

The draft resolution that was before the Assembly on November 4, contained many parts which, if they had been put individually to vote, we would have supported. But since the draft, contained a number of other matters to which we were not able to lend our support, we abstained on it. Therefore, our position in this matter is that we do not regard the issue of freedom as conditioned by distance from our capital or by the race or complexion of the people involved, we regard this issue as universal.¹⁹⁷

Krishna Menon found that the entire Western opinion and facts were derived from refugees and nobody had gone to Hungary to personally see what was happening there. Besides the facts on which charges were made and debates rested were news paper accounts. Therefore, he proposed that Hammarskjold, the Secretary General should make inquiries. The Assembly agreed that the Secretary General should make a report on peoples feelings and conditions in Hungary.¹⁹⁸ After the meeting was adjourned, Krishna Menon kept in touch with the various delegates, including the Hungarians to ascertain what was going on in Hungary. He had also been continuously in touch with the Secretary General. When a statement to the Assembly was made that he was in no position to report as he needed more time, Krishna Menon took the view that since the Secretary General was to report the matter after making

196. *ibid.*, p. 86.

197. Krishna Menon Speeches in the UN *op. cit.*, p. 319.

198. Michael Brecher, *op. cit.*, p. 87.

inquiry, the Assembly could not pass resolutions on the substantive issue until he had reported. He said 'we have asked the Secretary General to report; then let him report and when he has reported, then we can say whatever we like and take, whatever action we want.'¹⁹⁹ Nehru had also refused to place Hungary tactically on a par with Suez and he was put to severe criticism both in India and abroad. Nehru held the view that, in the Suez crisis, the issues were clear, but on Hungary the main source of information was the western press agencies, who were perhaps exaggerating. Therefore, Nehru thought that the best way of assisting nationalist forces in Hungary was to bring pressure on the Soviet government in private. He, therefore, directed India's Ambassador in Moscow to let Soviet authorities know informally the reaction in India and to point out that sympathy naturally went to those who represented the national desire for freedom.²⁰⁰ Krishna Menon observed that the western tactic and objective at the United Nations was turning on the position that somebody must get into Hungary and desired that India should use whatever influence she had with the Hungarians direct; not through the Russians to enable the Secretary General to go to Hungary. Krishna Menon had with great difficulty made the Hungarian Foreign Minister to agree to invite the Secretary General to go there and see things for himself. He told Michael Brecher, "I had introduced the Foreign Minister to a number of our U.N. colleagues and he said ' in view of the Indian position we will agree, but the Secretary

199. *ibid.*, p. 89.

200. Sarvepally Gopal *op. cit.*, p. 291.

General should come on our invitation.²⁰¹ Then Krishna Menon spoke to the Secretary General and to the American delegation but informed them that Hungarians would fix the date of the visit and let them know in due course. That was not agreeable to the leader of the American delegation Cabot Lodge. He insisted that the Hungarians must say here and now when the Secretary General can go. They must announce a date and there is no question of negotiation.²⁰² And the American delegation announced their support to 'Pakistan-Cuba' resolution which was prepared with mala fides to embarrass India. Meanwhile, Krishna Menon also placed his resolution; and both the resolutions were put to vote and Indian resolution was passed by two votes more than the Pakistan-Cuba joint resolution. India voted against the resolution moved by 'Pakistan-Cuba' because it contained a provision for conducting an election in Hungary by the U.N without the Hungarians being a consenting party.²⁰³ India also voted against a resolution moved by the United States of America in regard to sending Red Cross assistance. Krishna Menon contented that Red Cross could not go there without the Hungarian Government's consent. He felt that, that resolution was only a political stunt. Krishna Menon's defence was that he had left no doubt that India desired and expected the withdrawal of foreign troops and he had supported continuing consideration of the item. But no judgement was possible till the report, which the

201. *ibid.*, p. 292.

202. *ibid.*, p. 89.

203. *idem.*

Secretary General had been asked to make on the situation in Hungary had been received.²⁰⁴

He also had spoken strongly about violence in Hungary and India's grave concern at the events. Krishna Menon telegraphed Nehru:

To do more would be to put ourselves in a sheer opportunist and somewhat dishonest position even though we might gain some temporary applause. I feel unable to do this and don't feel you would approve either.²⁰⁵

Krishna Menon advised Prime Minister Nehru that India should help towards a settlement and while making clear her anxiety about the situation and her dislike of violence and foreign intervention, should not get drawn into vilification or the power politics of the two blocs.²⁰⁶ Menon now had Nehru's full support. The Prime Minister agreed that election under United Nations were not only contrary to the provision of the Charter but also likely to come in the way of the very thing desired, which was the withdrawal of Soviet troops.²⁰⁷ speaking in the plenary meeting of the General Assembly on November 9, 1956 Krishna Menon reiterated the considered opinion of India.

Having considered the position in Hungary, the Assembly passed a resolution

204. *ibid.*, p. 293.

205. *Krishna Menon's Telegram to Nehru*, November, 1956.

206. Sarvepally Gopal, *op. cit.*, p. 294..

207. *idem.*

which requested the Secretary General to make certain investigations and report to it. We are told that the Secretary General has informed that he is not in a position to make that report. It appears to me in the normal course of things entirely an unusual proceeding to go on to other decisions. The decision of the Assembly on November 4, is, on the face of it, a clear indication that the Assembly wants information. The Assembly wants to know what the Secretary General is able to do in these matters.²⁰⁸

Krishna Menon further emphasised that India was aware of the fighting, suffering, unsettlement and the political instability in Hungary. Therefore, he desired that any decision that was adopted in the Assembly should be directed to the improvement of those conditions. He was of the opinion that as far as Indian government was concerned we made efforts to solve these problems and exhorted the House not to take any decision merely out of emotion or other reactions or out of political predilections, forgetting the interests of the Hungarian people and of the Hungarian state.

On November 16, the Secretary General appointed a three-man group, including Ambassador Arthur Lall of India to investigate the situation caused by foreign intervention in Hungary. During the discussion in the Assembly, India, together with Ceylon (Sri Lanka) and Indonesia presented a draft resolution urging the Hungarian Government to accede to the request of the Secretary General to permit observers designated by him to enter the territory of Hungary and travel freely therein. It was

208. Krishna Menon speeches at the UN op. cit., p. 322.

adopted on November, 21 1956, as resolution 1128(XI).²⁰⁹ Krishna Menon stated in the plenary meeting of the General Assembly that:

We stand, without any reservation, for the right of a people to have the form of government they desire and order their own affairs in their own way, without any external pressure from whatsoever quarter they may come. We do not believe that the basis of any modern government, of any civilised government, can rest on the power of arms from outside. We ourselves have had a long experience of the capacity of the people to resist that intervention, and when the people of a country, irrespective of the amount of physical force that is applied against them, are determined to say 'no', those people are bound to succeed.²¹⁰

Both Nehru and Krishna Menon had in mind the possibility of election in Hungary supervised by the United Nations serving as a precedent in discussion on Kashmir. 'A government', as Nehru commented 'may follow a broad line of policy, but usually its policy is the resultant of various pulls and urges, sometimes one pull is greater than the other.'²¹¹ However, Krishna Menon told Brecher that Kashmir was not dominant in his mind. "Other people told me about it. But I revolted against the idea of the United Nations intervening in elections, as well as against the suggestion that the position I took was because of Kashmir."²¹² The Prime Ministers of India, Burma, Ceylon(Sri Lanka) and Indonesia then meeting in Delhi reiterated that Soviet troops should be

209. *Krishna Menon Speeches in the UN op. cit.*, p. 325.

210. *Krishna Menon Speeches in the UN*, November 22, 1956.

211. Sarvepally Gopal *op. cit.*, p. 295.

212. Michael Brecher, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

withdrawn speedily from Hungary and the people of that country left free to decide their future and make whatever democratic changes they desired in their political system. But this could not justify any proposal for elections under the supervision of the United Nations or even the despatch of observers by the United Nations. Krishna Menon surprisingly adopted a more flexible attitude on this issue and advised the Soviet delegation that it was in the Soviet interest to permit observers to go into Hungary, if only because it would allow them time for things to settle down.²¹³ However, Nehru's attitude to the Hungarian issue changed all on a sudden and he sent a strongly worded message to Bulganin, Kadar and Tito urging acceptance of the resolution and an invitation at least to Hammarskjold to visit Hungary. The consequences of rejection, Nehru cautioned Bulganin, Kadar and Tito, could be disastrous and might even lead to war, while to deny Hammarskjold this courtesy would create serious misgivings in the minds even of those friendly to the Kadar regime and virtually confirm reports about deportation.²¹⁴ Indeed, Nehru now felt so strongly about Hungary that Krishna Menon thought it necessary to caution him against intervention. Quite understandably, Krishna Menon telegraphed Nehru:

The best we can do at the moment is to press the visit of the Secretary General and also hope that our Ambassador will get there quickly. I do not think we shall make any progress by our telling the Soviet Government in public what to

213. Krishna Menon's Telegram to Nehru, November 17, 1956.

214. Sarvepally Gopal op. cit., p. 296.

do.²¹⁵

Nehru approved of Krishna Menon's offer to lapse into silence. Nehru telegraphed Krishna Menon:

None of us can control events. All we do is to try our best and avoid any step which might aggravate the situation. At the same time we do not improve a situation by saying or doing something which we cannot easily justify and we have to adhere to our broad principles. If war comes it will come in spite of us.²¹⁶

On the abduction of Imre Nagy and deportation Nehru authorised Krishna Menon, politely if possible but firmly to state India's disapproval both of the arrest and deportation of Nagy and of the Hungarian refusal to receive Hammerskjold. He also directed general support to a resolution on Hungary which was being tabled by the United States. But the situation in the General Assembly was precarious because of the cold war rivalry of the power blocs and Krishna Menon offered to remain silent because he felt that it was wholly difficult to maintain any sense of integrity in any statement without causing offence to both the sides. Nehru approved of Menon not speaking and instructed abstention on the vote.

The UN General Assembly adopted nearly fourteen resolutions relating to different aspects of the Hungarian problem, including Soviet intervention and violation

215. *idem.*

216. *Nehru's Telegram to Krishna Menon*, November 23, 1956.

of the Charter. But, UN could not enforce any of the decisions because of the commanding position of both the powers. India considered that the Hungarian episode was a 'civil war', a national uprising which failed to gain success owing to the intervention of the Soviet Union. India desired above all to institute a proper investigation and withdrawal of foreign troops from Hungary. India disapproved the presence of foreign troops in Hungary. Speaking in the United Nations General Assembly Krishna Menon repeatedly deplored the situation in Hungary:

We believe that the overwhelming majority of Hungarian people desire the withdrawal of the Soviet Union forces from their intervention in Hungary. We believe that the existence of foreign troops in any country is inimical to its freedom, is a danger to world peace and co-operation.²¹⁷

When India voted in the General Assembly against the proposal of election being conducted under United Nations auspices, she did so in keeping with the policy of non-interference in the domestic affairs of other countries which is the avowed policy of India. Hungary was a foreign country and supervising her election without her consent would amount to interference in the internal affairs of that state. Secondly, Krishna Menon emphasised that India had always followed a consistent policy of non-condemnation. He thought the resolution condemning Soviet Union would only aggravate the situation in Hungary, and therefore, chose to abstain from voting. Krishna Menon believed that national interest is basic to any foreign policy formulation

217. V. K. Madhavan kutty, *op. cit.*, p. 107.

and its practice and he had been only spelling out the policy being pursued by his government at home.

VI

CONGO (1960)

Congo, a hot, humid country in West Central Africa, was once a territory in French Equatorial Africa. A small part of what is now Congo probably was part of the Congo Kingdom, which flourished during the 1400s and 1500s. Portuguese explorers who reached the Congo coast in the 1400s and other European traders bought slaves and ivory along the coast in the 1400s to the 1800s. But Europeans did not explore the interior of what is now Congo until the late 1800s. Pierre Savorgnan de Brazza, a French explorer reached the area in 1875.²¹⁸

In 1880 Brazza and Makoko, the Bateke King signed a treaty that placed the area north of the Congo (Zaire) river under French protection. This area, then called Middle Congo, became a territory in French Equatorial Africa in 1903. In 1910, it was linked with the territories of Gabon, Chad, Ubangi-Shari (now the Central African Republic). Middle Congo gained internal self-government in 1958, and independence on August 15, 1960.²¹⁹

218. *The World Book of Encyclopaedia*, Vol. IV, p. 28

219. *idem*.

According to the 1985 Census, the total population of Congo was 1,843,421 in which 58 per cent live in rural areas and the remaining 42 per cent in urban areas. It has an area of 342,000 square kilometres and the greatest distances, north-south is 950 kilometres east-west 829 kilometres and it has a coast line of 160 kilometres. The people belong to four main groups. 1. the Congo 2. the Beteke 3. the M'Bochi, and 4. the Sangha. Each group includes several sub-groups.²²⁰

About half of the people practise 'fetish' religion. They believe that all things, even lifeless objects such as stones, have spirits. There are about 45000 Muslims and most of the rest are Christians. Congo remained under the Belgian rule for eighty years. After the withdrawal of Belgium, the Congo was divided into conflicting tribes, rival political parties and self-styled leaders. The population lacked any common bond either linguistically or culturally. The country with its rich deposit of copper, cobalt, diamond and uranium became immediately a prey to neo-colonialism of western nations which took advantage of the internal dissensions among its leaders.

Independent Congo had two prominent leaders, Joseph Kasavubu and Patrice Lumumba. Joseph Kasavubu was the undisputed leader of the Association Des Bakongo (ABAKO) founded in 1950. Patrice Lumumba was a staunch nationalist and became the leader of Movement National Congolese (MNC) Lumumba was in favour of a unified Congo under a strong Central Government while Kasavubu was

220. *ibid.*, p. 280.

entertaining the idea of a federal Congo with local autonomy.²²¹

Election to the Congo National Assembly was held in May 1960 and MNC emerged as the strongest party. Patrice Lumumba became the Prime Minister and Joseph Kasavubu was elected as the president of Congo. Soon there was a revolt against the Belgian officers, and the rebellious troops destroyed life and property of white settlers. Belgium immediately despatched five thousand paratroopers to protect the white settlers and they soon occupied vital strategic centres of Congo. Subsequently, Belgium entered into an agreement with Mose Tshombe who was planning of setting up an independent regime at the province of Katanga.²²²

Lumumba, now broke off Congo's relation with Belgium and approached United Nations to drive out the Belgian paratroopers. Anarchy descended in Congo. On July 11, Tshombe decided to secede from the Central Government.²²³ Meanwhile there were differences of opinion between the President and the Prime Minister which culminated in the dismissal of each other, invoking their respective powers which decision was cancelled by the Congolese Senate. Taking advantage of this difference of opinion between the President and the Prime Minister, Col. Mobutu, the Chief of Staff of the Army seized power in September. In alliance with Kasuvubu, Mobutu placed Lumumba under house arrest. By February 1961 all semblance of order disappeared

221. Asit Kumar Sen. *International Relations Since World War I* (New Delhi, 1995), .p.479.

222. *idem*.

223. *ibid.*, p. 480.

and there was no central authority in Congo.²²⁴

In this situation, the only statesman who could have brought order out of chaos was the Lumumba whose MNC stood for a United Congo and enjoyed a majority in the Assembly. UN, influenced by the Cold War, did not extend its helping hand to Lumumba. In the meanwhile, on December 2, 1960 Lumumba was captured by Mobutu's troops and was handed over to Mose Tshombe and was cruelly murdered. The murder of Lumumba caused universal disgust and anger throughout the Afro-Asian world.²²⁵

This turn of events had grave repercussions in the United Nations. Tshombe had agreed to attend a meeting at Tanarive to reach an understanding with the Central government and the prospects of a confederation of Congo. It seemed to receive the support of all but Gizenga.²²⁶ But another meeting at Coquilhatville in April, 1961 ended in failure. Negotiations in the meanwhile with Gizenga and the Central Government resulted in the formation of a Government of national unity. The UN forces in their attempt to end the secession of Katanga found Tshombe's white mercenaries well-equipped and well-supplied with arms.²²⁷ To stop further blood-shed, the UN Secretary General Dag Hammarskjold flew to northern Rhodesia for peace

224. *idem.*

225. *idem.*

226. *idem.*

227. *idem.*

talks. He was killed in an air crash on September 18, 1961. On September 20, a cease-fire agreement was signed between the UN forces and Katanga troops.²²⁸ An attempt to end Katanga's secession by the Central Government forces in November, 1961 ended in failure.²²⁹

However, the advent of a new administration in the United States of America headed by John F. Kennedy, and growing world public opinion had a positive effect on the Congo issue. On February 21, 1961 the Security Council was able to adopt a resolution providing for stronger action by the United Nations to avert civil war, secure the withdrawal of Belgian and other military forces and promote a peaceful settlement.²³⁰

As the United Nations force became depleted by the withdrawal of several countries, the Secretary General made an urgent appeal for additional troops. India made the largest contribution by sending a brigade to Congo early in April.²³¹

The situation was again discussed in the resumed session of the General Assembly in March-April 1961. India co-sponsored two draft resolutions (A/L 339 and A/L 347) which were adopted on April 15 as resolutions 1599 (XV) and 160 (XVI). The Assembly also adopted another resolution 1600 (XV), sponsored by 17 Asian-

228. *idem.*

229. *idem.*

230. E.S. Reddy and A.K. Damodaran (Eds.). *Decolonisation Peace and the United Nations* (New Delhi, 1997), p. 209.

African countries.²³²

Under these resolutions, the Assembly again called for the withdrawal of all Belgian and other foreign military and paramilitary personnel and political advisors not under the United Nations command, urged the release of all political leaders under detention, and the convening of parliament with safe conduct and security extended by the United Nations; and established a commission of four jurists to investigate the assassination of Lumumba and his colleagues.²³³

Forceful action by the United Nations, in accordance with the Security Council, including military action by the United Nations Forces in the Katanga, in which the Indian brigade was assigned the primary role, helped avert a disaster in the Congo and a grave threat to the United Nations.²³⁴

The UN involvement in Congo began with the appeal made by Patrice Lumumba for military assistance to both the United States and the Soviet Union and sought the help of the United Nations in maintaining law and order. Since the United States was not likely to take action against Belgium; and the Soviet Union made no immediate response, Dag Hammarskjöld promptly secured the Security Council's

231. *idem.*

232. *idem.*

233. *idem.*

234. *idem.*

sanction for intervention by the United Nations.²³⁵

The Secretary General was authorised to provide such military and technical assistance as was required till the Congolese security forces were able to function effectively on their own. Nehru welcomed this decision and spoke appreciatively of the vision and wisdom which Hammarskjold had shown.²³⁶ To an extent support of the United Nations was to Nehru a personal act of faith; even Krishna Menon was lukewarm:²³⁷ ‘personally I think it was very wrong to send army troops to Congo from the beginning and as an untried step.’²³⁸ But Nehru had his full sympathy for the Congolese. He wrote:

The Congo, as a result of Belgium’s policy in the past, is almost wholly lacking in educated and trained personnel. One might almost say that there is a vacuum and mere enthusiasm cannot fill the vacuum. It will be a long and arduous journey before the Congo can look after its own affairs adequately.²³⁹

Nehru was hopeful that the United Nations could bring a measure of balance into the situation and prevent, to some extent, the ambitions of outside powers to take advantage of the local crisis. As a token of support, India despatched non-combatant troops as requested for distribution of supplies, for signalling duties and for running a hospital.²⁴⁰

235. Sarvepally Gopal, V. III, *op. cit.*, p. 145.

236. *ibid.*, p. 146.

237. *idem.*

238. Michael Brecher, *op. cit.*, p. 98.

239. Nehru to Chief Ministers, July 30, 1960.

240. Sarvepally Gopal, *op. cit.*, p.146.

Nehru wrote to the Chief Ministers:

At the request of the Secretary General of the UN we have supplied to the Congo some trained personnel especially from our Air services. There is possibility of our sending some medical aid teams. We have also made a gift of some wheat.²⁴¹

However, Krishna Menon was critical of United Nations and the Secretary General for sending troops to Congo. He treated the Congo issue as a civil war as it eventuated. He thought it was proper for the United Nations to try various other things in Congo before sending the troops. He observes:

I would have first exhausted all machinery in the way of negotiation. No Asian or African countries were involved; we were not in it at that time. It was purely a Security Council action which really meant it was Hammarskjold's position.²⁴²

But Krishna Menon defended the decision taken by India to send a contingent of non-combatants to Congo on the ground that without assistance, since the UN had already committed, its position in Congo would have been difficult. Yet, he was critical of Nehru. Krishna Menon told Brecher:

I think the Prime Minister thought Hammarskjold had taken a step which, whether wise or not, had to be supported. I think he was mistaken in the wisdom part because he had no personal acquaintance with the Secretary

241. Nehru to Chief Ministers, p. 35.

242. Michael Brecher, *op. cit.*, p. 98.

General except when he came here.²⁴³

Menon was also at variance with the United Nations in its handling of the Congo issue. He felt that the chaos of Congo would have perhaps been better avoided by other means, like negotiations and conciliatory process, without ambivalence rather than sending the UN forces.

The UN errors of omission and commission in the Congo were largely responsible for the developments which culminated in the murder of Lumumba. We should have stood behind the nationalist forces instead of weakening them.²⁴⁴

During the discussion in the General Assembly on the crisis in the Congo, India along with seven other non-aligned countries presented a draft resolution (A/L 331).²⁴⁵ The United Kingdom and United States submitted another draft resolution (A/L 332). On December 20, 1960 the Assembly rejected both the draft resolutions.²⁴⁶ Speaking at the plenary meeting of the General Assembly Krishna Menon said:

We are discussing probably one of the most critical situations that has emerged in our time, which may affect the question of order or anarchy on the continent of Africa, the prestige of the United Nations, and what the Secretary General himself has described as the problem of peace and security. . . . The fact does stand out that while war threatens the world and while civil war threatens to tear

243. *ibid.*, p. 100.

244. *ibid.*, pp. 101-102.

245. *Krishna Menon's speeches in the UN*, December 16, 1960, p.210.

246. *ibid.*, p. 210.

up Africa, and while other events in South East Asia, on account of the intervention of the great powers of the world, threatens to shake the peace of the world, the Security Council has been stultified. . . we have before us a document from the special representative of the Secretary General which says armed forces of Congo led by a person who is a product of a 'Coup d' 'etat', had challenged the authority of the United Nations and committed aggression against the U.N.... I think that is the worst challenge, the worst humiliation, that the United Nations ever suffered, that there should be a person in charge of armed forces with no authority from his people, or even the head of his government personally, and no authority from Parliament, who dares to challenge the authority of the United Nations, sanctified by resolutions of Security Council and this Assembly, which is not in Congo for imperial occupation and, as one representative unfortunately once tried to say, for joint imperialism.²⁴⁷

He further added:

There is danger not only of civil war, which is practically taking place in a small way, but of a civil war spreading of foreign intervention on a bigger scale because as things are in the world, if one major power intervenes as indeed it has done its opposite number or some others would want to intervene also and claim to come to create some kind of balancing intervention.²⁴⁸

Krishna Menon had used all the resources at his disposal to find a just solution for the Congo Civil war which was escalating into a world crisis because of the activities of Belgium in Congo. He had co-sponsored resolutions, spoke to individual member

247. *Krishna Menon Speeches in UN*. Dec 16, 1960, p. 211.

248. *ibid.*, p. 212.

delegates of various nations, and spoke forcefully at length to make clear the position of his government and to settle the issue at the earliest so that the people of Congo would live in peace. Again in a speech delivered on December 1960, in the plenary meeting of the General Assembly Menon replied to statements by the delegates of Belgium, Canada, Congo, and United Kingdom and dealt with the Anglo-American draft resolution as well as the revision to the non-aligned draft resolution sponsored by India.

He dealt at length on the various facets of the Congo crisis and said: history should not be allowed to repeat itself. The second world war was preceded by a similar situation in Europe and this time it is in Africa.²⁴⁹ He submitted the resolution exhorting the honourable members to allow the draft to go through and it will be proclaimed to the world that the United Nations mission is not going to fizzle out, will not be allowed to fizzle out. In the interest of Africa and in the interest of the world I submit this resolution.²⁵⁰

Again in a speech delivered on April 5, 1961, in the plenary meeting of the General Assembly, Krishna Menon reviewed in detail the legal basis of the United Nations operation in the Congo and the difficulties it encountered, and introduced a draft resolution for more vigorous action by United Nations. He concluded his speech on an optimistic note:

249. *Krishna Menon's Speech at U.N.* Dec 19, 1960, p. 240.

250. *ibid.*, p. 240.

We were glad to be able to respond to the resolution adopted by the Security Council on February 21, 1961, and moved by our sister countries--Ceylon, Liberia and United Arab Republic--in which certain responsibilities were placed upon members. We think it is the equal responsibility of all members to contribute according to their strength and capacity and their understanding of the situation. We have no doubt that, by virtue of the support of the permanent members of the council for the resolution, an understanding of the policy will lead from now on to greater efforts to obtain the withdrawal of the Belgian and other foreign forces from this area.²⁵¹

Krishna Menon gave United Nations and particularly to its Secretary General unstinted support on crucial matters concerning Congo even at the risk of offending friendly nations.²⁵²

251. *Krishna Menon's Speeches in UN*. April 5, 1961, p. 263.

252. *The Hindu*, 7 January, 1962.

Chapter VIII

CHINESE DEBACLE

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India's relations with China date back to some 2000 years. It had been maintaining cultural relations with China from time immemorial and the Buddhist missionaries had been going to China across Central Asia hazarding the dangers inherent in the travel across ice-clad mountains primarily for spreading the message of the Buddha. These missionaries had established monasteries and translated Buddhist Scriptures into the Chinese language. Pilgrims from China, the most well known of them, Hiuen Tsang, visited India, studied at Buddhist centres of learning and wrote invaluable accounts of social, economic and political conditions in India.¹ Ladakh, bordering Sinkiang and extending even further north than Tibet, forms the eastern half of the Wedge that Peninsular India thrusts into the heart of Central Asia.² For centuries great caravans of trade, tides of culture and sometimes waves of conquest passed through Ladakh and its capital Leh, as part of more-or-less continuous intercourse between India and Central Asia.³ It was by this route, through what is now the State of Jmmu and Kashmir, that Buddhism travelled to China from India via Sinkiang, becoming the universal religion in the entire region in between and as far as

1. A. Appadorai, Chinese Aggression and India, *International Studies*, V.5, 1963, p. 4.

2. Kusum Nair, Where India, China and Russia Meet. *Foreign Affairs*. V. 36, 1957/58, p. 330.

3. *idem*.

the shores of the Caspian in the west.⁴ Before the arrival of Vasco da Gama, these regions which are now so remote were cross-roads of the civilised world.

The Independent India was not unconscious of the far-reaching implications of Sino-Indian relations. With the recognition of China by India begins the first important phase of Sino-Indian relations and it may be said to have continued up to 1954, when the Sino-Indian agreement on Tibet was signed. This phase was characterised in the beginning by the hostility and contempt of China for India's non-communist leaders and later by several international developments necessitating closer contacts between the two countries. Thus, Nehru in 1949 was labelled as a "running dog" of "imperialism," to be soon overthrown by Indian Communists.⁵ Mao-Tse-Tung wrote to the Communist leaders of India:

I firmly believe that relying on the brave communist party of India and the unity and struggle of all Indian patriots, India will certainly not remain long under the yoke of imperialism and its collaborators. Like free China, a free India will one day emerge in the socialist and People's Democratic family; that day will end the imperialist reactionary era in the history of mankind.⁶

But India's concern for Chinese friendship was so great that , on the issue of the Korean crisis, India performed a commendable job by using whatever influence she had, to solve the Korean problem in co-operation with China. From the very

4. *idem.*

5. Mahendra Kumar, Sino-Indian Relations, 1950-59, *International Studies*, V.5, 1963/64, p. 21.

6. K.P.Karunakaran, *India in World Affairs 1947-50* (Calcutta, 1952), p. 101.

beginning, India realised that Korea was of great strategic significance to the Chinese and, therefore, in spite of the fact that she had endorsed the United Nations resolution condemning North Korean invasion and her support to UN intervention, she advised the West that any advance across the 38th parallel might lead to China's entry into war. When the United Nation's forces did, in fact, cross the 38th parallel and marched on to the Yalu river border of China, India condemned it. When People's China actually intervened early in November 1950 in the Koren war and drove back the UN forces, India opposed the UN resolution branding China as an aggressor.⁷ In April 1954 the Government of India signed with the Government of the People's Republic of China an agreement for trade between India and Tibet. By accepting the term 'Tibet region of China,' India recognised the full Sovereignty--not mere suzerainty--of China over Tibet.⁸ This was the first time that any country had clearly recognised Chinese sovereignty over Tibet.⁹ While it should be remembered that no power or authority was exercised by China over Tibet between 1894, when the 13th Dalai Lama assumed the reins of government, and 1950 when the Chinese forces marched into Tibet under the orders of Chinese Government. This fact is clearly admitted by the People's Government of China in the Agreement of 1951, which was drafted by the Chinese Government (PRC) and thrust upon Tibet under threat of further military action against

7. Mahendra Kumar, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

8. Jayantanuja Bandyo Padhyaya, China, India and Tibet, *Foreign Affairs Reports*, V. XI, No. 12, December 1962, p. 103.

9. *idem.*

her people.¹⁰ Besides India consistently supported the question of representation of the Central Government of the People's Republic of China in the United Nations replacing the Government of the Republic of China (Formosa). India was the second non-communist country to accord recognition to the Government of People's Republic of China. It was hoped that this would further strengthen, the immemorial friendship between India and China and be conducive to the stability of Asia and the peace of the world.¹¹

India's mediatory role in the Korean crisis and the surrender of her special interests in Tibet inherited from the British contributed a great deal to the relaxation of the irritation over the Tibet question between India and People's Republic of China. It must be said to the credit of the Government of India that even as it took all possible steps to win the Chinese friendship and get China a proper place in the comity of nations, there was a clear awareness of the most important aspect of Sino-Indian relations i.e., national security. India signed a treaty with Bhutan on August 8, 1949 whereby Bhutan agreed to be guided by the advice of the Indian Government in regard to its external relations.¹² It signed another treaty with Sikkim on December 5, 1950 by which the later's foreign affairs and defence were put under India's control.¹³ On

10. Dalai Lama, *The International Status of Tibet 1950-54*, *India Quarterly*, V. 12 (1), Jan-Mar. 1956, p. 215.

11. A. Appadorai, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

12. Mahendra Kumar, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

13. *idem*.

July 31, 1950 India signed a treaty with Nepal providing, inter-alia, that the two countries would inform each other of any serious friction or misunderstanding with any neighbouring state likely to affect the friendly relations between India and Nepal.¹⁴

India shares 2500 miles of boundary in the north with China and it has been a quiet border for centuries past. The Indian case is that this traditionally quiet border except in the west, runs along the main crest of the Himalayas; the southern slopes of ridges constitute the Indian side including the independent Kingdom of Nepal and the protectorate kingdoms of Sikkim and Bhutan.¹⁵ In the west the boundary starts from the Karakoram Pass along the watershed between the Shyok and the Yarkand, runs through Qara Tag Pass, and ascends the main Kuen Lun Mountains. It leaves the main crest of the Kuen Lun mountains, at a point 80° 21'E and descends in a south westerly direction.¹⁶ According to the Chinese, in the Middle and the East, their territory extends also to the southern side of the Himalayan ridge. In the West Chinese territory includes an area of about 15000 sq. miles from Ladakh, in the middle, the Spiti area, the Shipki Pass, the Nilang, Jhadang and Brahoti areas in the East, the whole of

14. *idem*

15. Sikkim presently is a state in the Indian Union. It has an area of 7,096 sq. km and a population of 403,612. It became a state of the Indian Union under the constitution (Thirty-eighth Amendment). Act 1975 which came into force with retrospective effect from 26th April 1975 when the amending bill was originally passed by both Houses of Parliament.

16. R.K. Patel, India China border dispute, *India Quarterly*, V. 18 (4), Oct-Dec 1962, p. 156.

NEFA covering about 35,000 sq. miles.¹⁷ No previous Chinese Government ever claimed this portion from Ladakh; as for the NEFA, though the Chinese did not accept the Mac Mahan Line, the precise extent of their claim has never been clear because they never seriously pressed them.¹⁸ China managed to occupy a considerable portion of Ladakh unnoticed and undetected by the Government of India.

While China had been planning and, in fact, occupying the Indian territory in Ladakh, evidences of India's desire to cultivate friendship with China was available in

1. the repeated resolution¹⁹ sponsored by the Indian delegation to the General Assembly of the United Nations urging that the People's Government should represent China in the United Nations,
2. the exchange of state visits of the Prime Ministers of India and China²⁰,
3. visits of numerous cultural delegations from India to China and vice-versa,
4. the trade agreement between India and China,
5. participation in industrial and other exhibitions,
6. the visits of technical experts to China from India to study such subjects as agrarian conditions and the like; and
7. the establishment and promotion of India-China Friendship Association in both countries.²¹

The frontier of China starts at a tri-junction with Afghanistan in the West and

17. *idem.*

18. *idem.*

19. *Ibid.*, October 7, 1950, November 14, 1951, October 25, 1952, September 28, 1953, Sept. 21, 1954, Sept. 20, 1955, Nov. 10, 1956, Sept 13, 1957, and July 14, 1958.

20. Chou En-Lai visited India during 25-28 June, 1954. Nehru visited China during 18-28 Oct 1954.

21. A. Appadorai, *op. cit.*, pp. 4-5.

runs along the Himalayan ranges bordering Ladakh. Punjab, Utter Pradesh, Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan and the NEFA ending at the tri-junction with Burma in the East. The first official repudiation by the Government of China of the traditional boundary between the two countries was on January 23, 1959, when replying to Nehru's letter of December 14, 1958 in which he had drawn the Chinese Prime Minister's attention to the wrong delineation of the Sino-Indian boundary in an official Chinese journal. Chou En-Lai contented that the Sino-Indian boundary had never been formally delimited and that there were certain differences between the two sides over the issue, the Government of China had not raised the issue in 1954 because "conditions were not then ripe for settlement." He added that the Mac Mahan line had never been recognised by the Government of China. As for Chinese maps, Chou-En-Lai claimed that the boundaries drawn on them were consistent with those on earlier maps and laid a claim to about 50000 sq. miles of Indian territory.²² There is little doubt that 1. India's northern boundary is essentially a product of environmental and historical factors operating over the centuries. 2. that although some sections of the boundary had already become traditional even before the British took over the administration of the country, other sections took their present shape under the impact of new threats from inner Asia in the 19th and early 20th centuries and the new concepts of security which the British brought with them and 3. that the end product was, by and large, the formulation of the principle of the highest crest watershed line of the stupendous

22. *ibid.*, p. 6.

northern mountains as the logical expression of the boundary for political purpose. It is well to remember that the crest watershed line boundary, as claimed by India, is in consonance with international law and practice.²³

Thus the 'boundary dispute' between India and China stems from the Chinese demand for over 50,000 sq. miles of territory adjoining the frontier, which is, and has always been, a part of India.

If one examines the real motive behind the claim of China for over 50,000 sq. miles of territory in its 2500 miles long border, with India, one can discern that the "primary objective was to secure the frontiers of Tibet and to make the first tactical move of their series of eventual manoeuvres within the Asian triangle."²⁴ Also the Maoist theory of communism is relevant to the Chinese invasion of India. The theory:

that when India attained independence peacefully in 1947, it was not truly independence, that is liberation of the masses which can be brought about only by the elimination of class contradictions through a revolutionary war. As a matter of fact the entire communist world believed that what had happened in India was that the Indian big bourgeoisie and the landlord classes had combined with their Anglo-American counterparts with a view to exploiting the Indian masses under the camouflage of a fake independence and that they had put up Nehru and other members of the Government, who were stooges. In this belief,

23. P.C. Chakravarty, Evolution of India's Northern Border, *India Quarterly*, V. 24 (1), Jan-Mar 1968, p. 6.

24. China and Asian Triangle, An Appraisal of the Sino-Indian Border War. *India Quarterly*, 1, 23 (2) Apr-Jun, 1967, p. 88.

leaders of several communist countries issued a call for revolution in India, in response to which the communist party of India staged the insurrection of Telengana 1948-49.²⁵

There is yet another important theoretical aspect of the Chinese invasion. According to the Marxist-Leninist view the world is divided into two opposing ideological camps--the imperialist and the communist. China's future position in this two-camp view, of the world was clearly defined by Mao Tse-Tung as early as 1926 in the following words:

The present world situation is a situation where the two forces, the revolutionary and the anti-revolutionary, are engaged in their final struggle. On one side is the Third International signalling to all the oppressed classes of the world to assemble; on the other side is the League of Nations signalling to all the anti-revolutionary elements of the world to assemble. . . . Classes in between must undergo rapid disintegration, scampering perhaps to the left to join the revolutionary faction or perhaps to the right to join the anti-revolutionary faction. There is no spare independent ground for them.²⁶

According to this view, non-alignment by the Government of India is theoretically impossible. From the view point of Communist China, the precipitating of the bi-polar power-conflict and the final show down would be facilitated, if countries like India, which were sitting 'on the fence', could be forced to give up their apparent neutrality

25. Jayantanuja Bandyopadhyaya, China-India-Tibet, *India Quarterly*, V. 18 (4), Oct-Dec. 1962, p. 383.

26. *ibid.*, pp. 383-84.

and to join the imperialist camp openly.²⁷ However, the immediate provocation for China to resort to aggression was due to many other factors such as:

1. China had internal difficulties; failure of the Great leap forward, famine and the like, and, as has so often happened in history, dictatorial rule tries to divert attention and hold their people's continuing faith in itself by adventures abroad.
2. intent on showing to the world the effectiveness of their own system of government and economic development.
3. China wanted, by an attack on India, to thwart the plans of India's economic development and to discredit her democratic structure and
4. China wanted to show to the Soviet Union in particular that India's non-alignment was a myth, that India was in reality a camp follower of the west and that, therefore, the Soviet Union's policy of befriending non-aligned India was a mistake.²⁸

Chinese had been advancing and building further roads after completion of the road from Sinkiang to Tibet in 1950, in spite of India's protests. From the beginning of 1960 India adopted a forward policy in this region and established her own posts. But this area is particularly uninhabited, and is much more easily accessible from Tibet than from India. The Chinese were in a much more advantageous position after their conquest of Tibet, and had been fully exploiting their advantageous situation.²⁹

The war in Kashmir and the military alliance between the United States and Pakistan did not come as a surprise to many people in India. But very few in India

27. *ibid.*, pp. 384-85.

28. A. Appadorai, *op. cit.*, pp. 15-16.

29. R.K. Patel, India-China Border dispute. *India Quarterly*, V. 20 (2), Apr-Jan 64, p. 177.

were prepared for a conflict with China, and particularly to its taking the shape of major armed clashes.³⁰ India was not strong militarily then, and the defence preparedness was at a low ebb for various reasons. The first Indian Defence Minister Sardar Baldev Sing's talents did not merit this important portfolio. He was not equipped to take long-term steps to visualise and anticipate the Chinese threat which started in his time, when China annexed Tibet in 1950.³¹ Sardar Baldev Singh was succeeded by Gopaldaswami Ayyangar but died in office only a few months after his appointment as Defence Minister. After Gopala Swami Ayyangar's death Dr. Kailash Nath Katju, who was then Home Minister in the Central Government, was shifted over to Defence and remained there till 1957. There was very little that he knew about Defence matters, having spent most of his life in the domestic political spheres.³² Mahavir Tyagi, after serving a short uneventful stint as the Defence Minister was replaced by V.K. Krishna Menon in April 1957. Nehru was aware of Krishna Menon's knowledge of military aspects as he had submitted many papers on defence matters which were very authentic. Besides, Nehru thought that while he handled the Foreign Affairs, it was good that Defence was handled by some one close to him, as these two portfolios were closely interlinked. This apart, Krishna Menon's long years at the United Nations had provided him with the necessary insight into relations between

30. K.P. Karunakaran, *op. cit.*, p. 99.

31. Brig. J.P. Davi, *Himalayan Blunder*, (Dehra Dun, 1957), p. 449.

32. *Ibid.*, p. 450.

nations and Nehru thought that this would be a help in evolving a defence policy that suited the country.³³ As Defence Minister Krishna Menon sought to completely overhaul the system and change the concept of defence as it existed at that time.

Starting from scratch, Menon began by ascertaining free India's defence requirements, keeping in mind India's foreign policy and the situation with regard to her neighbours—Pakistan and China. Once this was done, he set about building up the armed forces, equipping, training the men and promoting intra-forces co-ordination. The Defence Research and Development Organisation was set up in 1958. The Chief Controller of Defence Research and Development became a very important person. On a parallel level with him was the Controller General, Defence Production.³⁴

Krishna Menon's appointment as Defence Minister in April 1957 lent a new colour and dimension to that Ministry. In his maiden speech in Parliament as Defence Minister he outlined the parameters of his new job and declared that "self-sufficiency in defence" would be the touch-stone of his commitments to the new task entrusted to him.³⁵ There was exhilaration everywhere, in the Ministry and among the officers and men of the armed forces. For the first time after independence a capable and knowledgeable person on Defence matters and Defence Production was placed at the helm of affairs of the Defence Ministry. Brig. J.P. Dalvi observes the elation of the Army at the news of the appointment of V.K. Krishna Menon as the Defence Minister

33. *idem*.

34. Janaki Ram, *op. cit.*, p. 116.

35. V.K. Madhavankutty, *op. cit.*, p. 138.

in 1957.

The news coincided with the news of the appointment of Gen. K.S. Thimmayya as the new Chief. For the first time since independence, we could have a brilliant, alert and powerful Defence Minister to work with an equally brilliant General.³⁶

For Menon self-reliance was the catch phrase and he went about setting up industries in defence production which make India less dependent on imports from other nations.

Krishna Menon firmly believed that there is little that we can't make in this country.

But self-reliance, for Menon, did not mean doing "every thing ourselves."³⁷ Krishna

Menon remarked:

I once told Lord Beaverbrook, Britain can't grow bananas in Birmingham. Self-reliance does not mean there is no collaboration with other nations. All nations that have achieved self-reliance--Soviet Union, Japan--have collaborated with other nations. They have bought, borrowed, often just copied designs, know-how, equipment from others.³⁸

He had drawn up a well-thought out plan for modernisation and indigenisation of the armament industry with the introduction of modern techniques of manufacture emphasising the need for research and development. But the Finance Ministry as well as Menon's detractors could not appreciate his efforts in developing indigenous

36. Brig. J.P. Dalvi, *op. cit.*, p. 452.

37. V.K. Krishna Menon, *Self Reliance, Yojana*, New Delhi, November 21, 1965, p. 3.

38. *idem.*

production of defence related materials. Notwithstanding the constraints Krishna Menon set down the objectives of Defence Production as:

1. maximum utilisation of existing ordnance factories by working round the clock
2. introduction of modern techniques of manufacture.
3. accelerating the commissioning of new projects which had been sanctioned during the last few years.
4. planning for setting up of new ordnance factories and
5. induction of the civil sector for the manufacture of components, etc.³⁹

Delivering a Krishna Menon Memorial Lecture in 1983, R. Venketaraman testifies to the efforts made by Menon for laying a firm foundation for defence production in India:

Krishna Menon had taken pains to study literature on military subjects and could surprise even the experts with the depth of his knowledge. For the first time we had a Defence Minister who evinced a deep interest in the armed forces and the defence production base of the country. His stewardship of the ministry was marked by path-making endeavours and approaches hitherto unknown to the cast-iron structure of the defence services.⁴⁰

Krishna Menon had great ambitions and dreams about the defence of our nation. Agha Hilaly, Pakistan High Commissioner in London, spoke of India's ability to produce 80 per cent of our defence requirements. Commenting on it Krishna Menon said:

Tell me what we can make—and I may tell you how and where it can be done.

39. V.K. Madhavan Kutty, *op. cit.*, p. 139.

40. *ibid.*, p. 138.

There is practically nothing we can't make. We have technical competence. Our defence science organisation is quite something. It has the required ability to design and innovate. After all the Gnat which we now make, isn't the Gnat we bought. We have so improved it.⁴¹

But he laments that the Defence Ministry was the only one that did not have financial autonomy. The setting up of a nuclear power plant in Ladakh and the micro-Hydel project on the river Indus were Menon's projects that did not take off due to administrative hold-ups as well as restraints from the Finance Ministry.⁴²

Long before the Chinese attack in 1962, Krishna Menon knew the necessity of 'colonising' the barren and sparsely populated border areas. The Indus froze in winter, cutting off power in the area. The nuclear plant was to take care of this and to aid in future developmental activities in the area.⁴³

But for Morarji Desai, the then Finance Minister who represented the right wing in the Congress party, with whom Krishna Menon had serious ideological and personal differences, who caused the Defence Ministry starve of vital funds, particularly foreign exchange; Menon might have been successful in realising many such plans. Morarji Desai considered Krishna Menon, a rootless anarchist who could just as well be extreme Right as extreme Left.⁴⁴ He is also reported to have characterised Menon as a

41. V.K. Krishna Menon, *Yojana*, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

42. Janaki Ram, *op. cit.*, p. 117.

43. *idem.*

44. J.P. Dalvi, *op. cit.*, p. 463.

“political non-entity with no following of his own and no ability to attract any one.”⁴⁵

Ultimately Chinese troops crossed the Mac Mahan Line in NEFA in the eastern sector on September 8, 1962, and occupied a good part of Indian territory. Nehru told the media on October 12, 1962 at Palam Air Port that his Government had asked the army to throw the Chinese out.⁴⁶ This provoked the Chinese. Lt. Gen. B.M. Koul observes:

No General who knew the serious situation confronting us in NEFA and Ladakh at the time could have advised him to do so. . . . It is my surprise that Nehru took up a posture of ‘courage’ when he knew that we were militarily weak, in the hope that with this bold statement the Chinese might be deterred from attacking India. . . . The Chinese would have struck us anyhow; if not then, perhaps later, but, I wonder if Nehru’s statement did not precipitate their attack.⁴⁷

The Chinese launched a massive attack on October 20, 1962 in NEFA as well as in the Ladakh sector. Two important Indian posts were captured within 24 hours. According to Krishna Menon, the attack was so massive that it appeared that locust had unleashed its fury on the Indian frontiers.⁴⁸

By October 25, Chinese were inside India about 16 miles south of Mac Mahan Line. After about two weeks of less vigorous fighting the Chinese began attack on a very large scale on November 15 in both NEFA and Ladakh sectors. By

45. *idem.*

46. Micheal Brecher, *op. cit.*, p. 171.

47. Lt. Gen. B.M.Koul, *The Untold Story*, (New Delhi, 1967), p. 357.

48. V.N. Khanna, *op. cit.*, pp. 111-112.

November 16, the Chinese had crossed Bomdila and reached the plains of Assam. the entire area in Ladakh that China was claiming was captured by its army. The victorious Chinese, in the eastern sector, reached a spot in Aassam overlooking river Brahmaputra, plains of Assam and the Bay of Bengal.⁴⁹

Krishna Menon told Michael Brecher that “their warriors were not superior, actually fighting number apart, they were not.”⁵⁰ It is like a man standing on top of a house dropping bricks on you.⁵¹ Krishna Menon elaborating the Chinese debacle told Michael Brecher:

Indian Policy was to defend our frontiers as best as we could, not to wage war. Certainly no one would say, that this country could have taken on a major war and been successful. At the same time, there comes a stage in a country’s life when, whether you have the strength or not, you fight. . . I think it is to our credit that we did put up a lot of resistance. We decimated a lot of Chinese. In the end they went back.⁵²

Suddenly on November 21, 1962 the Chinese announced a unilateral cease-fire. V.P.

Dutt remarks:

Nehru’s policy towards China lay in shambles, even though the postulates on which it was founded were not wrong. Nehru had not realised the full intent of the change in Chinese foreign policy and its implications. And public opinion in

49. *idem.*

50. Micheal Brecher, *op. cit.*, p. 172.

51. *idem.*

52. *ibid.*, p. 174.

India had been left totally uneducated by the mass media in this regard.⁵³

Indian policy makers were under the illusion that non-alignment necessarily meant keeping a relatively weak military establishment, presumably under the impression that augmenting a peace time military establishment might provoke our neighbours and tarnish our world image as a peace-loving nation. That this need not be so has been amply demonstrated by non-aligned, but militarily strong Switzerland, Yugoslavia and Egypt. In the minds of some of our Congress leaders, non-alignment seems to have been confused with non-violence. M.S. Rajan observes in this regard:

Our foreign policy makers seem to have confused non-alignment, which is merely an instrument of our policy, for the very goals of our foreign policy, or to treat it as a moral imperative from which no deviation is permissible except under moral obloquy. The ultimate goal of our foreign policy, like that of any other country, is to promote our enlightened national interests, and we sought to achieve it by following the policy of non-alignment among others.⁵⁴

China emphasised that 'peaceful co-existence of states did not imply renunciation of the class struggle. This was among the doctrinal contribution of the Chinese communist party in Moscow in December 1960. It reads:

The co-existence of states with different social systems is a form of class struggle between socialism and capitalism. In conditions of peaceful co-existence favourable opportunities are provided for the development of the class

53. V.P. Dutt, *India's Foreign Policy* (New Delhi, 1968), p. 279.

54. M.S. Rajan, Chinese Aggression and Future of India's non-alignment policy, *International Studies*, V. 5, 1963/64, p. 127.

struggle in the capitalist countries and the national liberation movements of the peoples of the colonial and dependent countries. In their turn, the success of the revolutionary classes and national liberation struggle promote peaceful co-existence.⁵⁵

In India, co-existence between states with differing social system is an end in itself. But to China, co-existence is only a stepping stone towards ideological conversion by internal subversion or external pressure.⁵⁶ Because of India's adherence to 'panch sheela' and good neighbourhood, till events over took, India believed that China desired a settlement and would not dare a show down with India. On Nehru's part he had no wish to see India entangled in a war anywhere, least with China.

These developments drove Nehru to question himself and his policies, to wonder whether he had placed too much faith in the goodwill of nations and in the intrinsic superiority of the ways of peace.⁵⁷ He conceded that "we were getting out of touch with reality in modern world and we were living in an artificial atmosphere of our own creations."⁵⁸ Nehru candidly admitted the fact that the Chinese debacle was due to a colossal negligence on the part of the Government of India and no single person could be held responsible. Nehru acknowledged past failures in this respect.

I do not know how I shall explain to parliament why we have been found lacking

55. B.G. Varghese, A Re-assessment of Indian Policy in Asia. *India Quarterly*, V. 17 (2), Apr-Jun 1961, p. 122.

56. *idem*.

57. Sarvepally Gopal, Jawaharlal Nehru: A Biography, V. 3, *op. cit.*, p. 223.

58. *idem*.

in equipment. It is not much good shifting about blame. The fact remains that we have been found lacking and there is an impression that we have approached these things in a somewhat amateurish way.⁵⁹

Krishna Menon told Michael Brecher "our defence policy until the Chinese invaded us was intended to resist an attack from Pakistan."⁶⁰ He further said:

It should not be forgotten that India had no Indian Army before independence. The new Army of India emerged—or began to emerge—only in 1957. Generally any army is not interested in 'self-sufficiency' or industry; they just say get this. As a rule they do not relate their needs to the general economy of the country. It is quite true that in relation to the new conditions that have been imposed on us, the army and its resources are not sufficient.⁶¹

Notwithstanding the truth; succumbing to the pressure of anti-Menon Lobby; on October 31, Nehru took over the Defence portfolio with Krishna Menon continuing as a member of the Cabinet in charge of Defence Production.⁶² Krishna Menon was aware of the financial constraints of independent India and conscious of the exorbitant cost of arms being imported from foreign markets. Therefore, he favoured indigenous production to attain self-sufficiency within the parameters of Indian economy. It should be remembered that the Finance Minister turned down whatever proposal Menon put forward on grounds of economy, budgetary deficit, shortage of foreign

59. Nehru's letter to Krishna Menon, October 28, 1962.

60. Micheal Brecher, *op. Cit.*, p. 167.

61. *idem*.

62. Sarvepally Gopal, *op. cit.*, p. 225.

exchange, etc.⁶³ A classic example was the Finance Minister's reaction to Krishna Menon's plans to modernise the Ishapore factory. The request for sixty-five lakh required for this effort was firmly turned down by Morarji Desai and so was the amended amount of forty-eight lakh.⁶⁴

However, Krishna Menon went ahead with the setting up of ordnance factories. Development of a major Army Vehicle Depot at Jabalpur marked the beginning of an era in self-sufficiency in transport vehicles during Krishna Menon's tenure as Defence Minister.

A major expansion of Hindustan Aircraft and Bharat Electronics Ltd at Bangalore, Avadi Tank Factory, HAL Kanpur, HAL factory at Nasik, Electric Cable factory at Chandigarh were some of Menon's pet projects.⁶⁵

Despite all his efforts, the anti-Menon Lobby went about campaigning against him accusing him of anti-Indian out-look and working against the interests of Indian Industrialists. It may be noted that due to the pioneering efforts made by Menon the Indian Air Force and Indian Navy registered substantial progress during his tenure:

India's first supersonic HF 24, Transport Air Craft HS 478, 4 seater Kushak, 2 seater Pushpak—all rolled out of Air Craft factories during his tenure. Work on HF 24, MK 2 capable of flying at twice the speed of sound, jet trainer HJT-1 and Alouette Helicopters were at an advanced production stage at the time of

63. V.K. Madhavan Kutty, *op. cit.*, p. 140.

64. Janaki Ram, *op. cit.*, p. 120.

65. V.K. Madhavan Kutty, *op. cit.*, p. 140.

his exit. Air Force also had received during his time Hunters, Ilyushins and Antonov 12. The first aircraft carrier Vikrant joined the Indian Navy in 1961. Also the first squadron of anti-submarine frigates, INS Mysore marked the achievements of Navy. But the major achievement of Menon is the acquisition of Mazagon Dock Bombay and Garden Reach Workshop, Calcutta.⁶⁶

Notwithstanding the great strides the armed forces made during Krishna Menon's tenure as Defence Minister, the Chinese debacle was attributed to Krishna Menon and he decided to resign quietly.

I resigned quietly...The Prime Minister never asked for my resignation. Except for the Prime Minister I never told anybody I was resigning, because I think it was a matter between him and me. It was not a hurried decision.⁶⁷

Analysing Krishna Menon's image of China; Michael Brecher observes: Menon's image on China differs from all other components of his view in two respects:

It reveals the impact of unanticipated behaviour on thought and attitude, and it lacks the rigidity displayed in his perception of global politics, notably of American Imperialism, and of Pakistan during the past two decades. There are, indeed, constant and variable elements in his outlook on China, the break-point being the trauma of 1962.⁶⁸

Brecher observed that from the outset Menon viewed the New China as a progressive state, secular, socialist and modern. Menon was drawn to New China for other

66. *ibid.*, p. 141.

67. Micheal Brecher, *op. cit.*, p. 174.

68. *ibid.*, p. 321.

reasons, which lie in the realm of spiritual kinship. He perceived a natural affinity to India—two great civilisations that have asserted their national independence after a century or more of alien rule. They share as well a secular outlook and a commitment to anti-colonialism. Menon's fundamental orientation to China, had a strong emotional flavour rooted in his experience and ideology of thirties.⁶⁹ The tone of Menon's revised image of China was regret, not anger as displayed in his comments on Pakistan and 'American Imperialism'.

It is rather a feeling of hurt, a sense of dismay, even of surprise, a mood of disenchantment. India had championed Peking's claims at the UN, had introduced her to Asia at the Bandung Conference, and had defended her interests in Korea, Vietnam and elsewhere—and now the reward was betrayal. Menon takes great pains to deny this element of personal affront and to place the idea of betrayal in a broad context.⁷⁰

R. Venketaraman former President of India analysing Menon's life and activities, observes that it is quite unfair to thrust the responsibility for our rout at the hands of the Chinese in 1962 on him,

Controversy dogged Krishna Menon all through his life and it did not leave him alone in Defence. He ultimately resigned the post of Defence Minister following Chinese aggression in November 1962. The reasons for our failure in that tragic war have already been gone into and the lessons noted with the perspective afforded by time. It is now possible for us to realise that attempts to

69. *idem*.

70. *ibid.*, p. 322-323.

pin the responsibility for our 1962 reverses on Krishna Menon were grossly unfair.⁷¹

Speaking at the Krishna Menon memorial lecture R. Venkitaraman stated that:

the reverses of 1962 were the result of earlier policies, whereas the true evidence of success of Krishna Menon's efforts is really available in the results of the 1965 and 1971 conflicts when our troops firmly met and repulsed aggression.⁷²

71. R. Venkitaraman, *V.K. KrishnaMenon* (Forward), p. xv.

72. *idem.*

Chapter IX

CONCLUSION

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Since no nation is sealed in Isolation, the process of development of any nation is fundamentally conditioned by the international environment. India too occupies a position of international dependency. Geographically India is placed in a very strategic part of the globe, set in the centre of the Indian Ocean with close connections with West Asia, South East Asia and the Far East, besides its link with other nations of the world. Naturally, therefore, we have been interested in the future of the resurgent Asia, on the one side, and world peace, on the other. Since international events affect every one, India had to formulate a foreign policy cautiously to suit her national interest within the parameters of the global environment.

The Indian National Congress had hardly any foreign policy input in its agenda till Nehru came to occupy a position of importance in the helm of affairs of the party. It was in 1920 that Nehru made a reference to the foreign policy of India and in late 1930s the AICC established a separate department to formulate the foreign policy. V.K.Krishna Menon had been interacting with the foreign affairs department of the AICC ever since its inception and had contributed substantially towards its formulation. A cursory look at India's foreign policy reveals that it is rooted in our tradition and history with scrupulous regard for our

national interest. Besides its concern for the territorial integrity and security, it focuses attention on the problems of world peace, anti-colonialism and anti-racism. The means it adopted to achieve these objectives were non-alignment. Many people in the West use the terms like 'neutrality' or 'neutralism' for non-alignment. But these appellations do not correctly explain the concept of non-alignment. Krishna Menon observes:

We have as a third aspect of our policy sought to extend our adherence and the partiality for the independence of our national will and the concern for our own and world interests to international affairs. Non-alignment may appear negative or sought to be dirided as such.¹

To Krishna Menon, non-alignment is independence in external affairs and external affairs are only a projection of internal or national policy in the field of international relations. He continues:

Non-alignment is the logical extension of nationalism and of conflict between nationalism and military blocs, the fact that we had little in common with the 'raison detre' of the blocs; with the west because to us the west meant Empire²

Non-alignment essentially consists in retention of a substantial measure of freedom of policy and action in international affairs, especially in relation to the

1. V.K. Krishna Menon, "Democracy, Socialism and Emergency," *Link*, January 27, 1963, p. 21.

2. *idem*.

policies and postures of the two super powers. In Krishna Menon's perception, Indian foreign policy must be broad based and global as the issues of war and peace are being decided and its impact felt at the global level and he thought it necessary to keep away from the cold war rivalries of the power blocs. He believed, therefore, non-alignment was certainly reasonable and its would benefit India and the world at large. This belief shared by Nehru paved the way for the evolution of India's foreign policy of non-alignment, supplemented by the doctrine of 'Panch Sheel' as the cardinal principle. To quote Michael Brecher:

Krishna Menon's image of world politics is not confined to the two super power-blocs, though he acknowledges their dominant role in shaping events. There is a third world, a vast and amorphous community of states which cross the boundaries of geography, race and culture. Like Nehru, he calls this an 'area of peace' to distinguish it from the arena of bloc politics which is, by inference, an area of war though the latter term never appears in Menon's speeches or statements³

There are several points of concentration in Krishna Menon's perception of world politics. One is the struggle between the two power blocs. Another is the notion of 'area of peace'. A third is the United Nations.⁴ In Krishna Menon's view non-alignment is good and constantly viable as a basis of foreign policy despite his

3. Michael Brecher, *India and World Politics* (Bombay, 1968), p. 304.

4. *idem.*

argument that progress itself demands that policies shall be flexible and subject to modifications in the interest of the nations. For Krishna Menon policy whether domestic or foreign must be:

Broad based in the perspective of national growth and development calculated to meet the requirements of national objectives and in reality related to the common interests of mankind in the preservation of peace and to make for tolerable equilibrium, so that the economic, social or political imbalances do not rock the nation to its detriment.⁵

In the field of foreign relations Krishna Menon scrupulously followed his conviction that the maintenance of world peace as the most necessary condition for preserving national self-interest. His conviction found expression while devising formula for ending various crises the world over, which threatened to plunge the world into greater holocaust. His erudition and manoeuvrability in the conduct of foreign relations is exemplified by his diplomacy devising formula that enabled India as a Republic to be admitted to the Common Wealth of Nations, making Bandung conference on Asian-Africa a reality and success, finding solutions for the settlement of issues in Korea, Indo-China, Suez, Hungary, Congo etc. Michael Brecher observes an admixture in Krishna Menon's personality and outlook-militancy and pacifism or non-violence. The first is inherent in Menon

5. V.K. Krishna Menon, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

the man; the second derived partly from the prevalent attitude of the British left in the thirties and partly from Gandhi's practice and creed.⁶ This first trait is revealed when he justified the use of force in Kashmir, Goa and elsewhere. His second strand is very conspicuous when he dealt with international issues which threatened world peace and in his advocacy of disarmament.

When question of admission of new members were discussed in the United Nations, the two blocs had tried to add to their numerical strength. This led to an impasse and then Krishna Menon stepped into the fray and evolved a compromise formula. The proposal was accepted. Then all of a sudden, without any explanation, the Russians backed out, and a fresh deadlock developed. Finally Nehru intervened with the Soviet Prime Minister, Marshall Bulganin. Marshall Bulganin finally sent instructions to his delegation to accept the agreement. Jose Mosa, the then President of the General Assembly told reporters about the efforts of Krishna Menon in reaching an agreement on this issue thus:

After the Security Council meeting all the representatives were discouraged... Then that night Prime Minister Nehru's great gesture came. . . Prime Minister Nehru, following the inspiration of Krishna Menon, this tremendous representative representing India here, whose capacity is unique and extra-ordinary, whose intelligence is awe-inspiring and who has great common sense, according to his inspiration that night

6. Michael Brecher, *op. cit.*, p. 313.

the negotiations were carried. . . The next day we were all astounded that the Soviet Union proposed the admission of sixteen countries.⁷

To Krishna Menon goes the credit of formulating a genuine defence policy for independent India on a strong foundation of self-reliance notwithstanding the oft-repeated criticism of Krishna Menon for the Chinese debacle. However his role as a Union Defence Minister has been assessed variously.

Despite his great contributions to the evolution of India's defence policy on a firm footing of self-reliance, Krishna Menon had been subjected to a searching criticism for India's defeat in Chinese aggression and had to resign from the Government and later from the Congress Party itself. While it remains a fact that the Chinese debacle was the result of the colossal ignorance and indifference of the Government of India of the intentions and motives of the Chinese Government, it was most unfortunate, that Krishna Menon was destined to bear the brunt. As it was the failure of the collective wisdom of the Union Cabinet, it would have been fair to own the responsibility collectively rather than shifting the whole blame on the Defence Minister. Nehru, though fully conscious of the fact, accepted his resignation under duress. It should be noted that Nehru himself admitted the fact that his government had made certain mistakes and that they had not made a realistic appraisal of some of the problems facing the country. To India

7. Harish Kapur, *op. cit.*, pp. 128-129.

and the newly independent uncommitted nations of Asia and Africa 'Panch Sheel' was an end in itself. But events have shown that China had used it as a means to other ends. Co - existence had become a valuable tactical weapon in furtherance of Chinese Government's larger ambitions and strategy.⁸

The Government of India completely underrated the significance of the Chinese advance into Ladakh and at times Nehru's statements were vague and confusing. Nehru, speaking in the Lok Sabha on September 1959 said:

The place Askai Chin area, is in our maps undoubtedly. But I distinguish it completely from other areas. It is a matter for argument as to what part of it belongs to us and what part of it belongs to some body else. I cannot go about doing things in a matter which has been challenged not today but for hundred years. The point is, there has never been any delimitation there in that area and it has been a challenged area.⁹

China took advantage of these vague statement. Nehru's interest in foreign affairs was deep-seated but his approach to it was often based on inspiration rather than detailed application¹⁰ When ultimately Krishna Menon resigned from the Congress, it was pointed out that he had no quarrel with the Congress Policy

8. B.G. Varghese, "A Reassessment of Indian Policy in Asia," *India Quarterly*, V-17 (12) April-June 1961, p. 107.

9. *ibid.*, p. 117

10. *ibid.*, p. 118.

pledges. He regarded them as progressive. But he did not think that the Congress was a fit instrument to carry out those commitments. Its will for socialism and the fulfilment of oft repeated pledges had been undermined by elements who had gained control of the organisation precisely for the purpose of deflecting it from its declared objectives.¹¹

Out side the Congress as within it Krishna Menon's primary image as a moulder of modern India rested firmly on his unequalled intellectualism. It was in the realm of ideas that he reigned as a monarch and it was the body of thought that he contributed to India and the World that turned him into a historical personage.¹²

Conveying his assessment of Krishna Menon Dr.Sankar Dayal Sharma observes:

In the United Nations Krishna Menon emerged as one of the most creative, effective and successful practitioners of diplomacy. He championed the cause of national liberation and independence throughout the world. As an articulate exponent of India's policy of peace and non-alignment, he believed that solidarity among developing countries was essential to safeguard and consolidate the gains of freedom and protect themselves from exploitation. Naturally, this policy attracted criticism from some quarters but invariably it was criticism tinged with admiration for an

11. *Link*, Feb.12, 1967, p.11.

12. V.K. Madhavan Kutty, *op. cit.*, p.163.

extremely capable individual who laboured against all odds, not only for his own country, but for freedom, justice and equality for the people of the world.¹³

Dr. K. R. Narayanan, recalling India's policy towards Japan during the San Francisco Treaty and the contribution Krishna Menon made in shaping that policy states :

There was considerable pressure on India to attend the San Francisco Conference and sign the treaty. Nehru wanted Japan to be admitted to the comity of free nations without imposition of conditions and without affront to its national pride. But he also wanted the treaty to be such as not to give offence to China and U.S.S.R which were vitally interested in a Far Eastern settlement. It was Krishna Menon who first advised Nehru that, India should not go to San Francisco or sign the treaty but conclude a separate bilateral treaty with Japan. "We are", he said, "a big enough nation to make a bilateral Treaty". In the spirit of Asian nationalism he also argued that India should not join a European concert in making a victory settlement over Japan.¹⁴

He opined that our policy should conform to the Independent policy we have proclaimed.¹⁵ A controversy raged behind the walls of the South Block on the question of the Japanese Peace Treaty. Finally Menon's view prevailed, and

13 . Shankar Dayal Sharma, *Speech at Krishna Menon's Birth Centenary in Parliament* (New Delhi, May 6, 1997), p. 2.

14 . K. R. Narayanan, "Menon, Nehru and Foreign Policy," *Main Stream*, May 19, 1984, pp. 25-26.

15 . *idem*.

India signed a bilateral peace treaty treating Japan as an equal, not as a defeated nation.¹⁶ It made profound impact on the Japanese People, a psychological asset which has not yet been exhausted.

Nehru profoundly made use of Krishna Menon's advice on various problems confronting the nation both national and international. He wrote to Krishna Menon in August 24, 1949:

You should know me well enough to know what value I attach to your advice in any matter. You do not have to tell me that that advice is not only far more helpful to me because of your greater understanding but also because it comes from an independent mind which has not lost its resilience or such as it possesses.¹⁷

In another letter of Nehru addressed to C. D. Deshmukh on July 19, 1951 he reveals his assessment of Krishna Menon thus:

He (Krishna Menon) works himself nearly to death and tries to deal with almost everything himself. Of all our Ambassadors and High Commissioners abroad, if I may say so in confidence, there are only four persons who are first-rate in their different ways and who have achieved substantial results. These four are Krishna Menon, Vijayalakshmi Pandit, Panikkar and Radhakrishnan. In some ways Krishna Menon is a person of remarkable ability and capacity. From the purely intellectual point of view, I cannot remember having met any person with a keener intellect. He is a

16. *idem*.

17. S. Gopal, Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru, V, 13, *op. cit.*, p. 473.

man of high integrity and his whole life has been one of simplicity and sacrifice.¹⁸

Krishna Menon was suddenly taken ill in March 1974 in London where he had gone to organise a function to collect funds for a Nehru memorial there.²⁰ Finally, he died in the early hours of October 6, 1974. On Krishna Menon's death Indira Gandhi remarked "A volcano is extinct". In her tribute to Krishna Menon on November 18, 1974 she described his work in the field of international affairs in these words:

He was known for finding solutions to any problem of any country; and if it was rejected, he had another solution straightaway from another angle - so that he was some one who was not only an advocate of India's freedom and India's independent thinking and action, but he was a friend of all those who were in a similar position, those who were newly becoming independent and those who had to chart a course. He was a friend, philosopher and guide to all those so-called developing countries.²¹

Krishna Menon spent his life time espousing India's cause before independence in U.K; and later as India's chief spokesman in world forums. During these periods he had been helping the evolution and practice of India's foreign policy overtly or covertly and had influenced larger developments in various countries across the

18 S. Gopal, *Selected Works of Nehru* V. 16, p. 745.

20. V.K. Madhavan Kutty, *Builders of Modern India* (New Delhi, 1988) p. 163.

21. Shankar Dayal Sharma. *op. cit.* p. 2.

world. At every stage on his public life Krishna Menon was attacked for the wrong reasons and controversy dogged him in his numerous roles, ultimately resulting in his resignation from the Union Cabinet and subsequently from the Congress Party. Twenty five years after his death, Krishna Menon's influence is still a vital force in India. His thoughts and hopes remain valid. K. R. Narayanan, the president of India remarked:

Krishna Menon remains today not an embalmed splendour and a hoary reputation, but a haunting challenge and a taunting provocation. Some of the overflowing lava of ideas from his volcanic personality are still lying around simmering on the slopes of international politics.²²

22. K.R. Narayanan, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

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