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THE MILITARY AND SECURITY DIMENSIONS OF SOVIET-INDIAN RELATIONS

by

M. Rajan Menon

25 Jun[redacted]80

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Composition of this memorandum was accomplished by Mrs. Kathleen M. Preitz.

FOREWORD

This memorandum evolved from the Military Policy Symposium on "The Soviet Union in the Third World: Success and Failure," which was hosted by the Strategic Studies Institute in the Fall of 1979. During the Symposium, academic and government experts discussed a number of issues concerning this area which will have a continuing impact on US strategy. This memorandum considers one of these issues.

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This memorandum was prepared as a contribution to the field of national security research and study. As such, it does not reflect the official view of the College, the Department of the Army, or the Department of Defense.

DeWITT C. SMITH, JR.
Major General, USA
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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THE AUTHOR

DR. M. RAJAN MENON joined Vanderbilt University as an Assistant Professor of Political Science in 1978. He graduated from St. Stephen's College, Delhi, with a bachelor's degree in history, earned a master's degree in international relations from Lehigh University, and a doctorate in political science from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He has contributed to *Asian Survey, Current History,* and *Osteuropa*.

THE MILITARY AND SECURITY DIMENSIONS OF SOVIET-INDIAN RELATIONS

Where it is concerned with the instruments of policy, the existing literature on Soviet-Indian relations is skewed by the large number of studies dealing with Soviet economic aid. Relatively few attempts have been made to examine the military and security dimension of Indo-Soviet interaction and to assess its significance as a means for attaining Soviet objectives.[1] This neglect is hardly warranted. From the mid-1960's, Indian repayments have exceeded incoming Soviet economic aid, while about $460 million in previously extended development credits are yet to be utilized. Further, the $340 million provided in May 1977 was the first commitment of development aid since 1966.[2] On the other hand, while economic aid has tended to taper off, since 1965 the USSR has emerged as India's largest supplier of military hardware and a central factor in Indian conceptions of security.

This study is concerned with an understanding of the military and security aspect of Soviet-Indian relations and an assessment of the extent to which it has brought gains to the USSR. While the precise determination of Soviet goals in any particular country or

region is problematic, this analysis posits three probable Soviet objectives in India: (1) providing the basis for a stable and predictable bilateral relationship capable of enduring regime changes and periods of uncertainty in India; (2) evoking a responsive attitude to Soviet interests from the Indian leadership; and, (3) enlisting India as an asset in Soviet strategy against China. In the case of the last of these three goals, it is not clear what Soviet aims are, although they include the attainment of Indian support in the ongoing competition between Moscow and Peking as well as the building up of India as a military counterweight to China.[3]

THE USSR AND INDIA'S SECURITY

The linkage between Indo-Soviet relations and India's security needs is best examined in the context of the interaction of China, India, Pakistan, and the USSR. It is necessary to understand both the extent to which India's relations with Pakistan and China have improved over time, and the ways in which India's security concerns with respect to these two countries are served by its ties with the Soviet Union.

The India-Pakistan relationship has been a troubled one, and the issues dividing the two countries have resulted in four wars. Yet efforts have been made to resolve bilateral problems. Recent examples are the 1972 Simla talks following the Bangladesh war and the discussion held in February 1978 between Indian Foreign Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Zia ul Haq, the head of Pakistan's military government. The Simla negotiations sought to achieve a detente between the two countries by paving the way for reaching an understanding on the major problems remaining in the wake of the Bangladesh war and by producing a commitment to restore bilateral ties. Since then communications and trade links have been restored, and in 1976 diplomatic ties were reestablished. The Vajpayee-Zia talks indicated a willingness on the part of both sides to consolidate and extend this trend.

However, though the Indo-Pakistan relationship has been drawn out of the doldrums into which it was cast by the 1971 war, several factors operate to limit the extent to which normalization has progressed. While with passage of time the Kashmir dispute has ceased to be the emotion-laden source of friction that it once was, as recently as March 1979 Zia identified it as the only hindrance to

a rapprochement between the two countries.[4] In addition, Pakistan continues to be wary of India's ties with the USSR. Several factors have caused the Pakistanis to respond by looking to China for support. The feeling—gaining ground since the mid-1960's—that Pakistan's past membership in military alliances sponsored by the West has failed to bring expected benefits, such as the required level of arms supplies and unambiguous support during Indo-Pakistan crises, has culminated in a withdrawal from SEATO and CENTO in the 1970's. In addition, the unwillingness of President Carter to sanction the supply of the A-7 aircraft offered under the Ford administration, the April 1979 US decision to withhold new economic aid in response to reports that Pakistan was attempting to acquire a plutonium separation facility, and Zia's belief that US behavior during the deposal of the Shah of Iran and its policy toward the Taraki government in Afghanistan indicates a lack of resolve to counter the Soviet Union have combined to generate within Pakistan a lack of confidence in the United States and a tendency to regard China as the most reliable source of support in present conditions.[5] In turn, India continues to regard its ties with the Soviet Union as an appropriate response to the Sino-Pakistani alignment.

In addition to the perceived value of a close relationship with the USSR in offsetting Pakistan's ties with China, New Delhi values the contribution that Soviet arms supplies to India can make to India's future efforts to maintain a sufficient military capability against Pakistan. This consideration will continue to be important since, despite the improvement of Indo-Pakistani relations since 1971, the two countries have not ceased to regard each other as an external threat. For the foreseeable future, defense planning and weapons procurement in each country will be conducted with an eye on the perceived capabilities of the other.[6]

Though the Soviet Union has been India's most important source of arms since 1965, there is evidence to indicate that the major Soviet motivations have been a general quest for influence in India and a desire to complicate China's security planning rather than an explicit desire to put Pakistan at a disadvantage. This is suggested by the fact that Moscow's increasing arms transfers to India from the mid-1960's were combined with a more balanced posture on Indo-Pakistani disputes, a concerted effort to counter Pakistan's increasing identification with China through aid commitments, and even a limited supply of arms to Pakistan in 1968.[7] Even after the

signing of the Indo-Soviet treaty in August 1971, Moscow continued to urge restraint on India and Pakistan and avoided endorsing a political solution incompatible with a united Pakistan until full-scale war broke out between India and Pakistan in December.[8] Nonetheless, whatever the motives underlying Soviet arms supplies to India, from an Indian standpoint they will continue to be important to India's military requirements *vis-a-vis* Pakistan.

The course of Sino-Indian relations resembles India's relationship with Pakistan. Though the Sino-Indian relationship has been a troubled one since the 1962 border war, recent developments indicate mutual efforts to improve the situation. After a 15-year lapse, ambassadorial links were reestablished in 1976. In the following year, China broke a similar 15-year impasse by concluding an import agreement, while Indian representatives took part in the Canton trade fair. Following a number of Chinese statements denoting an interest in an improved relationship, it was announced in the summer of 1978 that Foreign Minister Vajpayee would visit Peking. Though the trip was deferred on one occasion, Vajpayee arrived in China in February 1979.

However, two decades of animosity, coupled with the existence of a number of unresolved issues separating the two countries, makes any rapid and fundamental change in Sino-Indian relations unlikely. Aside from the border dispute, which involves some 50,000 square miles of territory, the Chinese have long been suspicious of what they view as an alliance between India and the USSR. For its part, New Delhi appears unwilling to test the theory which holds that a loosening of Indo-Soviet ties would inexorably lead to greater harmony with China.[9]

Another controversy between India and China[10] concerns the presence in India of several Tibetan refugees and their leader, the Dalai Lama.[11] From the Indian side there has been concern that China is arming and training Mizo and Naga tribal insurgents in India's politically sensitive northeastern border region. New Delhi has also voiced its opposition to China's construction of the Karakoram Highway (inaugurated formally in June 1978) which links China and Pakistan through Pakistan-controlled Kashmir. Another problem area is India's concern about China's support of Pakistan. In recent years, Pakistan has become the largest recipient of Chinese economic and military aid. Further, mutual concern over increased Soviet presence and influence in Afghanistan has led

to increased contacts between China and Pakistan and reiteration of China's support for Pakistan's stand on the Kashmir dispute.[12] In December 1979 a massive Soviet military intervention into Afghanistan led to the ouster of Hafizullah Amin—who had toppled Taraki in a September coup— and the installation of a more compliant government led by Babrak Karmal. The speed with which the United States and China moved toward supplying arms to Pakistan caused major misgivings in India where as a result of the January 1980 elections Indira Gandhi made a comeback as Prime Minister. Although she called for a withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan, Mrs. Gandhi is likely to view the continuance of close ties with the USSR as a viable counterweight to the Sino-American effort to bolster Pakistan's military capability.

As for the impact of Vajpayee's negotiations in Peking on the future of Sino-Indian relations, Indian news reports indicated that the Chinese leaders were unwilling to moderate their support for the Pakistani position on Kashmir, despite the Indian foreign minister's contention that Peking's stand had been a major irritant in Sino-Indian relations.[13] Though Vajpayee was informed that China was no longer involved in supporting the Mizo and Naga rebels, no significant progress was made on the border dispute. Vajpayee would go no further than saying that the issue had been "unfrozen." But in references to the problem following his mission to China, both he and Desai maintained that the dispute was a continuing obstacle to a Sino-Indian rapproachement, and they reiterated India's unwillingness to concede any disputed territory to China in order to facilitate a settlement.[14] The gist of Vajpayee's report to Parliament on his exploratory mission—which was concluded ahead of schedule to protest Peking's decision to initiate its campaign against Vietnam while the Indian foreign minister was still in China—was that, while Sino-Indian differences on various issues had been discussed, substantial progress remained to be made prior to any fundamental change in the nature of bilateral relations.[15]

In the absence of a marked improvement in Sino-Indian relations, India will continue to regard its close ties with the USSR as a viable strategy to meet its security requirements. Similarly, China's continued support of Pakistan will be a major consideration precluding a loosening of India's ties with the USSR. In sum, therefore, a firm basis for Indo-Soviet relations will remain as long as India continues to perceive its relationship with the USSR

and its security needs *vis-a-vis* Pakistan and China as being intertwined. From the Soviet point of view, such a situation is beneficial inasmuch as it lends an element of stability and predictability to the Indo-Soviet relationship.

SOVIET ARMS TRANSFERS TO INDIA

The linkage betwen Indo-Soviet relations and Indian security explains one facet of Soviet-Indian military relations. The other aspect involves the role that the USSR plays as a supplier of military hardware for the Indian armed forces. An analysis of Soviet military supplies to India reveals a marked increase in the importance of the USSR as a weapons source and a decrease in the importance of western countries in this respect.

Prior to the 1962 Sino-Indian war, India eschewed the acceptance of military aid from any quarter, and all imports of arms were purchased with cash. The vast majority of the arms bought in the 1950's came from Britain, and major acquisitions from either superpower were avoided.[16] Partly in response to emerging strains in the Sino-Indian relationship, procurement policy shifted in 1960 with the purchase of 24 Ilyushin IL-21 transport aircraft. With the outbreak of the Sino-Indian war, major arms deliveries were made to India by the United States, the Soviet Union, Britain, Canada, France, and Australia. For a variety of reasons, however, from 1965 India began to depend primarily on the USSR.[17]

The extent of this shift in policy is well depicted by the data presented in Table 1. As the table denotes, in contrast to India's reliance primarily on Britain in the 1950's, over the 1967-77 period the Soviet Union accounted for 81.2 percent of the monetary value of arms transferred to India. By contrast, acquisitions from Britain amounted to only 4.5 percent, while the United States and France each provided 2.4 percent. On the other hand, Czechoslovakia and Poland together supplied 6 percent. Thus in this period, of the states most extensively involved in the worldwide transfer of arms, the USSR has played the most important role in India.

Following the purchase of the 24 IL-21s in 1960, an agreement was reached between India and the USSR providing for the purchase by India of 12 MiG-21s and the provision of Soviet aid for the manufacture of these aircraft under license in India. Initial Soviet ambivalence on the Sino-Indian dispute delayed the implementation of the deal. But the open split between Moscow and

TABLE 1

Arms Transferred to India: 1967-76

Country	Millions of Current Dollars	Percent of Total[a]
United States	40	2.4
Soviet Union	1365	81.2
France	41	2.4
United Kingdom	75	4.5
Federal Republic of Germany	10	.6
Czechoslovakia	55	3.3
Poland	45	2.7
All Other	50	3.0
Total	1681	

[a]Percentages have been rounded. The total value was reported as $1680 million in the source.

Source: US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers, Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1978, Table VII, p. 158.

Peking removed this obstacle and the agreement was acted upon in late 1964.[18] Following that year Soviet arms transfers gained momentum, and in the ensuing period the USSR has provided India with the following types of hardware: MiG-21 interceptors; Sukhoi SU-7 and SU-7B attack fighters; Antonov AN-12, Ilyushin IL-14 and Tupolev TU-124 transport aircraft; Mi-4 and Mi-8 helicopters; Petya-class frigates; Polnocny-class landing craft; Poluchat-class coastal patrol vessels; Nanuchka-class missile corvettes; Osa-class patrol boats; an Ugra-class submarine tender; Atoll air-to-air missiles; SA-2 surface-to-air missiles; Styx surface-to-surface missiles; and T-54, T-55 and PT-76 tanks.[19]

Quite naturally, the large-scale delivery of Soviet arms has had an impact on the composition of India's armed forces. As Table 2 denotes, of the three service branches, the air force and navy have been most affected by the inflow of Soviet equipment and the army the least. As far as weapon types are concerned, equipment of Soviet origin is especially prominent in the case of frigates, submarines, patrol and missile boats, fighter-ground attack aircraft, interceptors, helicopters, tanks, and armored personnel carriers.

TABLE 2

The Soviet Component in Major Categories of Indian Military Equipment as of 1977

	Number of Soviet Origin	Number of Western Origin or Produced Indigenously
Navy		
Aircraft Carriers	--	1
Cruisers	--	2[a]
Destroyers	--	3
Frigates	10	15
Submarines	8	--
Missile Boats and Patrol Craft	13	3[b]
Amphibious Forces	6	1
Minesweepers	--	8
Survey Ships	--	2
Service Forces	2	12
Naval Air Wing	3	102
Air Force		
Bombers	--	50
Fighter, Ground Attack Aircraft	100	115
Interceptors	270	130
Reconnaissance Aircraft	--	6
Transport Aircraft	45	141
Helicopters	135	188
Trainers		
Army		
Tanks	1,050	880
Armored Personnel Carriers	700[c]	--

[a] One of the cruisers has since been decommissioned.
[b] Includes one of Yugoslav origin.
[c] Includes an unspecified number of Czechoslovak OT 62 and OT 64 (2A) APCs.

Sources: International Institute for Strategic Studies, The Military Balance, 1977-78, p. 58; Jane's Fighting Ships, 1976-77, pp. 224-232; industry sources.

Despite the importance of the Soviet Union as an arms supplier, there has not been a tendency on India's part to turn solely to Moscow to fill emerging needs. For some years now, a major priority has been the acquisition of a deep penetration strike aircraft (DPSA) to replace the aging subsonic Canberras and Hunters that have served as a mainstay of India's bomber force.[20] In October 1978 it was officially announced that the Anglo-French Jaguar had been selected to meet the DPSA requirement in favor of its two major competitors, the French mirage F-1 and the Swedish Viggen.[21] Although it was reported that the Soviets had offered the MiG-23, SU-20, and SU-22 at favorable prices and with provisions for licensed production in India, technical considerations—such as the failure of the Soviet aircraft to meet the minimum range requirement of 300 nautical miles—led India to decline the offer.[22] Similarly, negotations between India and Britain have also been held for the acquisition of Harrier V/STOL aircraft to replace the outdated Sea Hawks currently operating from India's only aircraft carrier, *Vikrant.*[23]

While the prominence of the USSR as a source of arms has not inhibited India from seeking to diversify its sources of supply, certain factors point to the continued importance of the Soviet Union as a supplier. The high cost of modern military equipment inevitably raises the question of credit terms, especially for a developing country such as India. Since Indian arms procurements will have to be made with both cost and quality in mind, the Soviet Union's willingness to accept repayments in exports rather than convertible currency will continue to hold attraction. Further, given the importance attached to India by the Soviets as a counterweight to China and their long-standing interest in close and stable Indo-Soviet relations, Moscow is likely to be receptive to India's future military needs. By contrast, the politico-strategic basis for major arms transfers to India remains less salient in the case of the other major participants in the international arms trade.

Any discussion of the importance of external suppliers for India's defense needs must take into account the progress made by the country's armament industry, since the dependence on foreign sources will attenuate with the development of a viable indigenous capacity. As part of India's long-standing goal of achieving self-sufficiency in arms, a variety of weapons are being produced under license from Britain, Czechoslovakia, France, and the USSR.[24] The details concerning such production are provided in Table 3. In

TABLE 3

Weapons Produced Under License in India

Licensor	Designation, description	Powerplant	Armament	Date of License	Entered Production	Indigenous percent
Czecho-Slovakia	OT-62/64(2A) APC	--	--	1970	--	--
France	HAL SA-315 Cheetah high altitude helicopter (Aero-Spatiale SA-315 Lama)	TS (I:Fr)	SS.11 ATM (L:Fr)	1970	1972	--
	HAL SA-316 B Chetak general-purpose helicopter (Aero-Spatiale Alouette III)	TS (I:Fr)	--	1962	1965	--
	Bharat SS-11 ATM	S	Warhead:HE	1970	1971	100
	Type A69 Avisos	D(I:Fr)	Exocet SSM (I:Fr);ASW	1974	1975	--
UK	HAL Ajeet Light weight fighter(Gnat Mark II)	TJ (L:UK)	Aden Cannon (I:UK)	1973	1976	90 (Indian R&D)
	HAL HS-748 transport	TP (L:UK)	--	--	1959	Assembled from imported kits
	Ajeet trainer verion	TJ (L:UK)	--	1973	1978	
	Vijayanta medium battle tank	D (L:UK)	105 mm guns	1965	1967	95
	Leander class ASW frigate	T (L:UK)	1 Wasp helicopter (I:UK); 2 seacat SAM launchers (I:UK); ASW	1965	1973	First = 53%

TABLE 3 (continued)

Licensor	Designation, description	Powerplant	Armament	Date of License	Entered Production	Indigenous percent
USSR	HAL MiG-21M fighter	TJ (L:USSR)	Atoll AAM (L:USSR)	1970 (License for an earlier version was in 1964)	1973	90
	Bharat K-13A Atoll AAM (Infrared Missile for Mi GI 21)	S	Warhead:HE	1964	1969	--
Switzerland	Electronics			1975	--	--

Abbreviations:

AAM = Air to Air Missile
APC = Armored Personnel Carrier
ASW = Anti Submarine Warfare
ATM = Anti Tank Missile
D = Diesel
HAL = Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd.
HE = High explosive
I = Imported
L = License
S = Solid Propellant
SAM = Ship to Air Missile
SSM = Ship to Ship Missile
TJ = Turbojet
TS = Turboshaft

Source: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, World Armaments and Disarmaments: Yearbook 1977, Stockholm: Almquist and Wiksell, 1978, Appendix 7D, pp. 298-299.

addition several categories of indigenously designed arms are in development or production and the requirements for small arms, bombs, and explosives are now fully met by domestic production.[25]

Such progress notwithstanding, India is not likely to be able to meet all her defense needs through indigenous production in the near future. In the case of weapons produced under foreign license, despite a steady increase in the indigenous content, a reliance on the licenser exists for designs, critical components, and major maintenance. Furthermore, both in the case of such weapons, as well as in the case of indigenously developed systems, production delays have at times necessitated a reliance on imports.[26] Finally, if one considers that India's average annual expenditure on military research and development (R&D), has been less than 2 percent of the yearly defense budget over the 1969-70 to 1977-78 period, it would appear that India's defense industry will be hard pressed to keep pace with the rapid qualitative changes that are being made in modern weapons technology.[27]

SECURITY DEPENDENCE, ARMS TRANSFERS, AND SOVIET POLICY

A realization on the part of the Indian leadership of the importance of the USSR as a source of arms and a factor in Indian security has benefitted the Soviet Union by providing the basis for stable bilateral relations. An illustration of the value of such a situation for the Soviets is provided by a recent development in Indo-Soviet relations.

After Mrs. Gandhi's defeat in the March 1977 general election led to the formation of a government drawn from the victorious Janata party, Moscow was justifiably uncertain about the future direction of Indo-Soviet relations.[28] The Soviet media had enthusiastically supported Mrs. Gandhi's declaration of a State of Emergency on June 26, 1975. During the ensuing period of nearly two years, civil liberties were curtailed and many members of the Janata government had been arrested. Further, not only had prominent members of the new government been depicted in past years in the Soviet media as right-wing elements, but in addition, the new Prime Minister Morarji Desai had criticized Mrs. Gandhi for showing excessive deference for Soviet interests.[29]

Despite Soviet fears and Western predictions of a changed Indo-Soviet relationship, during its term in office the Desai government

continued the policy of maintaining the close ties with the USSR which successive Congress governments had adhered to since the mid-1950's. During the 27 months of the Desai government,[30] five top-level visits took place, and new trade and aid agreements were signed. Given the absence of any extensions of economic development credits between 1966 and May 1977, it is evident that the importance of the military and security dimension of Indo-Soviet relations played a major role in determining the Desai government's posture toward the USSR.

In addition to having provided New Delhi with an incentive for avoiding sharp discontinuities in its relationship with Moscow, the military and security dimension of Indo-Soviet relations has also evoked an Indian responsiveness to Soviet foreign policy interests. An example of this is provided by the Indian government's response to the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in August 1968. Despite the condemnation of the invasion by the major Indian newspapers and non-ruling political parties, the parliamentary statement made by Mrs. Gandi, while calling for the early withdrawal of foreign troops from Czechoslovakia, was clearly drafted with Soviet sensibilities in mind.[31] A similar low-key posture was adopted by the Indian representative in the United Nations. On August 23, India abstained from a Western-sponsored resolution on the ground that its tone was too condemnatory. Following a Soviet veto, another resolution was tabled calling upon the Secretary General to appoint a representative to ascertain the safety of the Czechoslovak leadership. While the Indian representative praised the heroism of the Czechs, in defining India's stand on the proposal he opposed any interference in Czechoslovakia's internal affairs.[32] In a final move, indicative of India's guarded posture, prior to his departure for the October session of the UN General Assembly, the Indian Minister of State for External Affairs indicated his opposition to the inclusion of the Czechoslovak issue on the agenda of the session.[33]

While the Indian stand on the Czechoslovak episode was at least partly shaped by an awareness of Soviet interests, it should be noted that the costs attached to India's cautious behavior were essentially minor in that no sacrifice on key Indian interests was entailed.

Quite a different picture of India's behavior emerges if one considers instances in which acting in accord with Soviet

preferences would have been at variance with major Indian goals. Despite the importance envisaged for India in Moscow's strategy against Peking, India has steered clear of becoming an instrument of Soviet policy. Although the Soviets have made a concerted effort to win India's approval for the Asian Collective Security scheme which was first proposed by Brezhnev in June 1969, New Delhi has been unwilling to endorse the project. There has been a clear awareness in India that Peking views the proposal as a Soviet effort to construct a coalition of states to contain China. Similarly, though the Indo-Soviet treaty denoted to many observers a new and closer phase of Soviet-Indian interaction, by 1976 Mrs. Gandhi was embarked on an effort to normalize Sino-Indian relations. The Vajpayee mission indicated similar resolve on the part of the Desai government to conduct an independent China policy. In addition, despite the fact that a major objective underlying Kosygin's March 1979 visit to India was to win India's support for the Soviet position on the Sino-Vietnamese war, the results were unimpressive. New Delhi refused to join in Kosygin's repeated criticism of China and refused to be hurried into recognizing the Vietnamese-backed Heng Samrin government of Kampuchea. The joint statement avoided referring to Kampuchea and included only a terse call for the withdrawal of Chinese troops from Vietnam.[34]

India's stand on the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) shows a similar unwillingness to make major sacrifices in order to facilitate Soviet objectives. In the negotiations leading up to the treaty and in the years since, New Delhi has refused to support it on the grounds that it contains an imbalance of obligations weighted against non-nuclear states. Moscow's approval of NPT as a regulatory regime and its reported efforts to get India to subscribe to it did not succeed in altering the Indian position.[35]

The USSR also failed to gain India's support for the embattled Taraki government in Afghanistan during Desai's June 1979 visit to the Soviet Union. Following the April 1978 coup which brought Taraki to power, there was an increase in the number of Soviet advisers in Afghanistan and a security-oriented treaty was signed between the two countries in December 1978. As the regime began to face mounting pressure from armed opponents, the Soviet media coupled increasing statements of support with allegations of Chinese, Pakistani and American interference on the side of the insurgents. Against this background, during Desai's visit, Kosygin stated that India could use its influence to help the Taraki

government acquire stability and to dissuade Pakistan from involving itself on the side of the opposition.[36] Despite the efforts to enlist India's support, Desai reportedly told the Soviet leaders that Taraki should enter into a dialogue with the opposition and broaden the basis of the regime's support in Afghanistan.[37] The joint statement signed at the close of his visit included only an elliptical reference to the rights of the "people" of Afghanistan to decide their future free of external interference, a sufficiently ambiguous choice of words in view of the increased Soviet presence in that country.[38]

On balance, therefore, the military and security dimension of Indo-Soviet relations has not provided Moscow with an assured basis for influencing Indian behavior. Clearly, focusing solely on the importance of the USSR for Indian security and a preoccupation with the data pertaining to Soviet arms transfers poses the danger of equating dependence and presence with influence. The need to put in perspective the data relating to Soviet arms supplies and training programs is especially important. Though the Soviet Union has provided $1.365 billion in arms to India from 1967 to 1976, it should be noted that the Indian defense budget in 1977-78 alone amounted to $3.45 billion.[39] Further, though the data included in Table 1 is the most recent available, it does not include the value of the Jaguar deal recently arrived at between India and Britain, which amounts to $1.5 billion-$2.0 billion—the largest arms agreement ever concluded by India.[40]

While 2,175 Indian military personnel have been trained in the USSR between 1956 and 1977, this figure should be viewed in relation to India's military manpower of 1,096,000. There are a larger number of Soviet-trained personnel (both in absolute terms and as a proportion of the size of the armed forces) in countries such as Afghanistan, Indonesia, Egypt, Iraq, Somalia, and Syria.[41] Nor has there been any evidence that personnel trained in the USSR constitute a pro-Soviet enclave in the armed forces. The number of Soviet military personnel in India has been relatively low and static. It stood at 200 in 1972, rose to 300 in 1973 and 1974, and dropped to 150 in 1977. Here again, countries that are much smaller than India—such as Afghanistan, Algeria, Iraq, Egypt, Somalia, and Syria—have hosted a larger number of Soviet military technicians.[42] Given the existence in India of a vast network of training establishments for armed services personnel, Soviet

personnel have never exercised the kind of impact that they have had on military strategy and training in countries such as Egypt.[43]

CONCLUSION: SUCCESS AND FAILURE

In the absence of a marked improvement in its relations with China and Pakistan, India will in the future adhere to the policy of maintaining close ties with the USSR. The importance of the Soviet Union as a source of arms will also continue, though for both political and technical reasons efforts will be made to pursue a diversified procurement policy. Thus for the foreseeable future the military and security dimension of Indo-Soviet relations will continue to be substantial and provide Moscow with the basis for a stable bilateral relationship. This observation should be qualified by taking into account that the Soviet relationship with Egypt and Somalia has deteriorated sharply in recent years despite the fact that the military and security aspect of the relationship with both countries was important.

The Soviet Union's success in utilizing arms supplies and security dependence to influence Indian behavior has, on the whole, been rather modest. India has been unwilling to align its conduct with Soviet preferences where doing so would have involved a sacrifice of major interests. New Delhi has not in any direct sense served as an instrument of Soviet diplomatic strategy against China and has kept open the option of normalizing ties with Peking. Further, unlike other major recepients of Soviet arms, India has been unwilling to provide the USSR with any naval facilities that can in any strict sense be regarded as military bases of support.[44] In sum, while the military and security dimension of Indo-Soviet relations provides for a durable bilateral relationship and enables the Soviets to establish a presence in India, they have been unable to translate this into a pattern of influence that is both predictable and substantial.

ENDNOTES

1. Two recent analyses of Soviet-Indian military relations are P. R. Chari, "Indo-Soviet Military Cooperation: A Review," *Asian Survey*, Vol. XIX, No. 3, March 1979, pp. 230-244; and Ashok Kapur, "Indo-Soviet Military Relations: Dependency, Interdependency and Uncertainties," *India Quarterly*, Vol. XXXIII, No. 3, July-September 1977, pp. 263-280.

2. US Central Intelligence Agency, National Foreign Assessment Center, *Communist Aid to Less Developed Countries of the Free World, 1977*, ER 77-10296, November 1978, pp. 7, 37.

3. While the possibility is remote that India would be willing to involve itself in a Sino-Soviet confrontation, the Soviets would benefit if the distribution of Chinese forces were affected by an uncertainty concerning India.

4. *Pakistan Times* (Lahore), March 20, 1979.

5. For a Pakistani analysis embodying some of the perceptions noted above, see Brigadier Abdul Rahman Siddiqi (Ret.), "Pakistan and its Neighbors," *Defence Journal* (Karachi), Vol. IV, No. 8, 1978, pp. 6-ll.

6. For an Indian assessment of Pakistan's current military capability, see Ravi Rikhye, "Proposal to Limit Arms: Difficulties with China and Pakistan," *Times of India* (New Delhi), June 26, 1978.

7. See Vijay Sen Budhraj, "The Evolution of Russia's Pakistan Policy," *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, Vol. XVI, No. 3, December 1979, pp. 343-360.

8. *Idem*, "Moscow and the Birth of Bangladesh," *Asian Survey*, Vol. XIII, No. 3, May 1973, pp. 482-495.

9. A prominent Indian defense analyst has observed: "The Chinese are believed to be inhibited by Indo-Soviet ties. But such tested links can hardly be sacrificed by India for gaining a larger relationship with China." P. R. Chari, "External Threats," *Seminar* (New Delhi), No. 225, May 1978, p. 14.

10. The major sources of friction in Sino-Indian relations are noted in US Congress, House of Representatives, Committee on International Relations, *The United States, India, and South Asia: Interests, Trends, and Issues for Congressional Concern*. Prepared by the Congressional Research Service. Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1978, pp. 23-24.

11. Despite the recent encouraging developments in Sino-Indian relations, Prime Minister Morarji Desai met with the Dalai Lama in April 1977, and Peking responded with an official note of protest.

12. *The New York Times*, January 19, 1979; *Pakistan Times* (Lahore), March 26, 1979; Girilal Jain, "Fresh Look at China Policy," *Times of India* (Bombay), March 14, 1979.

13. For Indian press reports on the Vajpayee mission, see *Statesman* (Calcutta), February 22, 1979; *Times of India* (Bombay), March 15, 1979. It is significant that a Pakistani military delegation was in China during Vajpayee's visit. See Girilal Jain, "Fresh Look at China Policy."

14. *Times of India* (Bombay), March 15, 1979.

15. For the text of the report, see *Overseas Hindustan Times* (New Delhi), March 8, 1979.

16. For a listing of the weapons acquired from the United States and the Soviet Union prior to 1962, see Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), *Arms Trade with the Third World*, Stockholm: Almqvist and Wiksell, 1971, Register 8, pp. 833-836.

17. The factors explaining India's increasing dependence on the USSR include the cutback in US arms sales to South Asia, the intersection of Soviet and Indian interests owing to a shared concern regarding China, and the Soviet willingness to accept repayments for arms purchases in the form of exports by India.

18. For details on the MiG deal, see Ian C. C. Graham, "The Indo-Soviet MiG Deal and its International Repercussions," *Asian Survey*, Vol. IV, No. 5, May 1964, pp. 823-830.

19. SIPRI, *Arms Trade Register: The Arms Trade with the Third World*, Stockholm: Almqvist and Wiksell, 1975, Register 17, pp. 33-37. International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance* (annual issues, 1969-70 through 1976-77); *Janes Fighting Ships* (London), 1976-77, pp. 226-232; Wing Commander Maharaj K. Chopra (Ret.), "To Russia with Love," *Organiser* (New Delhi), October 31, 1977; and industry sources. For a listing of the arms ordered from the USSR in 1977, see International Institute of Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance, 1978-79*, p. 106.

20. See "Quantity or Quality? The Indian Dilemma," *Air International*, October 1975, pp. 174-176.

21. *Times* (London), October 7, 1978.

22. On the Soviet offer, see *Times of India* (Bombay), February 10, 1978; *Hindu* (Madras), February 10, 1978; and *Economic and Political Weekly* (Bombay), April 8, 1978, p. 596.

23. *Hindu* (Madras), October 21, 1978; *Aviation Week and Space Technology*, October 23, 1978, p. 26.

24. The Soviet-licensed MiGs are produced at three factories located at Hyderabad, Koraput and Nasik, which manufacture electronic equipment, aeroengines, and air frames respectively. The three factories were set up with Soviet assistance under the 1962 agreement.

25. For details on the indigenously designed weapons under production or development, see SIPRI, *World Armaments and Disarmament: Yearbook 1976*, Stockholm: Almqvist and Wiksell, 1976, Appendix GE, p. 24. Also see *Janes All the World's Aircraft* (London), 1974-75, pp. 101-106.

26. A delay in the production of Vijayantas led to an order of 75 T-55 tanks from the USSR in the mid-1960's. SIPRI, *The Arms Trade with the Third World*. Later, owing to a similar delay in the production of the Indian-made HJT-16 Kiran trainer, Polish WSC-Mielec TS-11 Iskra jet trainers were purchased. SIPRI, *World Armaments and Disarmaments Yearbook 1975*, p. 230; *Ibid.*, 1976, p. 264.

27. For data on India's expenditure on military R&D, see Lieutenant Colonel Gautam Sharma (Ret.). "Defence Production in India," *Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses Journal* (New Delhi), Vol. X, No. 4, April-June 1978, Table 7, p. 242.

28. The following discussion of Indo-Soviet relations after the March 1977 elections is based upon Rajan Menon, "India and the Soviet Union: A New Stage of Relations?," *Asian Survey*, Vol. XVIII, No. 7, July 1978, pp. 731-750.

29. In a July 1975 interview with Oriana Fallaci, Desai remarked that, "She [Mrs. Gandhi] never loses an opportunity to please the Soviets." Oriana Fallaci, "Mrs. Gandhi's Opposition: Morarji Desai," *New Republic*, August 2 and 9, 1975, p. 155.

30. Following widespread defections from his party, Morarji Desai resigned in July 1979. A new government, headed by Charan Singh, was sworn in but Mrs. Gandhi became Prime Minister following the January 1980 elections.

31. The statement also noted India's long-standing friendship with the USSR. See *Amrita Bazar Patrika* (Calcutta), August 22, 1968.

32. *Ibid.*, August 24, 1968.

33. *Sunday Statesman* (Calcutta), September 29, 1968. A few days prior to the minister's statement, the Soviet and Czech ambassadors had called on him to express their concern of the critical attitudes adopted toward the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia by the Indian press. *Hindustan Times* (New Delhi), September 24, 1968.

34. For details on Kosygin's efforts and the Indian response, see *Times of India* (Bombay), March 14, 1979; March 15, 1979; March 17, 1979. For an advanced analysis of the visit, see Robert Rand, "Soviet Premier Kosygin Visits India," *Radio Liberty Research Bulletin*, RL 78/79, March 8, 1979, pp. 1-3. Following Kosygin's visit two former Indian officials—T. N. Kaul and Dinesh Singh—visited the capitals of the members of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) in a reported effort to lobby for the recognition of the Heng Samrin government. These attempts follow from New Delhi's distrust of Peking and its traditionally good relationship with Hanoi, rather than from Kosygin's visit. See Rodney Tasker, "Short Shrift from Hanoi's Friend," *Far Eastern Economic Review* (Hong Kong), August 10, 1979, pp. 9-10.

35. According to one scholar, "In the new international division of labor, it had obviously fallen to the Soviet Union's lot to tackle India, whereas the United States was prompting West Germany to sign on the dotted line." Dietmar Rothermund, "India and the Soviet Union," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 386, November 1969, p. 87.

36. *Hindustan Times* (New Delhi), June 13, 1979.

37. *Ibid.*

38. Text in *Pravda*, June 15, 1979.

39. International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance, 1977-78*, p. 58.

40. Chari, "Indo-Soviet Military Relations, p. 238.

41. US Central Intelligence Agency, *Communist Aid to Less Developed Countries of the Free World*, 1977, Table 3, p. 4.

42. *Ibid.*, Table 2, p. 3; US Department of State, Bureau of Intelligence and Research, *Communist States and Developing Countries: Aid and Trade in 1973*, INR RS-20, October 1974; US Department of State, Bureau of Public Services, *Communist States and Developing Countries: Aid and Trade in 1974*, Special Report, No. 23, February 1976, p. 14.

43. For details on Indian military training facilities, see Government of India, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, *India: A Reference Annual, 1975*, New Delhi: Publications Division, 1975, pp. 40-43.

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This memorandum is concerned with an understanding of the military and security aspect of Soviet-Indian relations and an assessment of the extent to which it has brought gains to the USSR. While the precise determination of Soviet goals in any particular country or region is problematic, the author posits three probable Soviet objectives in India: (1) providing the basis for a stable and predictible bilateral relationship capable of enduring regime changes and periods of uncertainty in India; (2) evoking a responsive attitude to Soviet

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interests from the Indian leadership; and, (3) enlisting India as an asset in Soviet strategy against China. The author concludes that while the military and security dimension of Indo-Soviet relations provides for a durable bilateral relationship and enables the Soviets to establish a presence in India, they have been unable to translate this into a pattern of influence that is both predictable and substantial.