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India's Foreign Policy

M. R. Masani

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- (a) measures for building a system of regional collective security for all countries between India, Japan and Australasia;
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- (d) the establishment of diplomatic relation with the Republic of China and Israel.

Recent events have some very hard lessons to teach us. The hardest of them was that, in the face of that crisis, India was isolated. I do not say that we did not have friends. But in our own corner, in our fight with Pakistan, except for Malaysia and Singapore, there was nobody. In the General Assembly of the UN, at the end of the debate, the Press Trust of India made an analysis of the trends in regard to our dispute with Pakistan. According to the PTI, the spokesmen of 63 nations were neutral and did not go beyond appealing for peace. 19 were hostile to India and, of these 19, 11 were members of the Arab League. 3 made

passing reference, but did not say anything. 25 ignored the issue. Out of 110, not one spoke up for India. This left our people bewildered; it left some of our people rather angry.

What was wrong with our foreign policy? It had three basic weaknesses. First of all, it was naive. It abounded in innocence. Our Panch Sheel pact with Communist China was the most notorious example of our naivete and our innocence. The betrayal of Tibet, for which we are paying now, was the result of it. Our naivete in another direction was to believe that, if we only turned our backs on Israel, all the Arab States would back us against Pakistan. By that neglect of friendly relations with Israel, we thought we would pay a price for Arab support. I have mentioned above that 11 of the Arab States spoke against us in the U. N. General Assembly. What is more, at Algiers, President Nasser had joined with the Chinese in having our move to have the conference defeated. These are facts.

The second thing from which our foreign policy suffered was its narcissistic character—watching ourselves in the mirror and admiring ourselves, imagining that the rest of the world saw us as we saw ourselves. We have now learnt that, that image was only in our imagination.

The third thing which was wrong was our self-righteousness, the air of moral superiority we adopted towards everybody else, teaching them lessons, talking down at them, refusing to judge between right

and wrong, whether it was in Berlin or Hungary or Tibet, talking of Peace, when other people were fighting for Freedom and Justice. The latest example of that was, for the last twelve months, we needed those in Vietnam who were trying to defend that country against the aggression of Communist China and its satellite. We kept on telling them: "You must not cross the frontier; defence must be on your own territory." And then, history caught up with us, and we had to cross the frontier ourselves! These are the basic defects of our foreign policy for which we were paying the price of being isolated. That foreign policy has ceased to have any relevance to our present needs. We have to come to terms with reality. As was said before, "too long have we lived in an artificial world of our own creation."

What is that reality? That reality is that the biggest threat to our independence, our way of life and our survival is that which comes from Communist China.

That is the major threat. The challenge of Communist China is a more permanent and more fundamental challenge not only to our survival, but to our democratic way of life. The only choice for us, along with the other countries of this region, is to stand up to Communist China or succumb and become satellites. Of all countries of the region, except for Japan, ours is the only country that can take the initiative and lead in bringing about arrangements for the security of South and Southeast Asia, India, along with Japan, is cast by geopolitics, by her position, by her size, by her democratic institutions, by her maturity, to lead the countries of this region along with Japan. That is the role that is offered to us by history and geopolitics and the question before us is whether we are going to accept this role or become a miserable camp follower. I have no doubt that the people of India would wish us and our government to take up the challenge and assume that role that history and geopolitics assign us.

If it is agreed, that there can be no option but to see that we take up this responsibility, then the question arises as to what should be our attitude and posture

as one of the leaders of Free Asia. Our obligation is to join with Japan in rallying the countries of South and Southeast Asia which lie between us to defend the free way of life which is menaced by the Chinese Communist imperialism and its allies. We have to provide that solidarity to them that we have failed to do in the last fifteen years. We have turned our back on our neighbours. We dealt with China unilaterally; we never consulted Burma or Pakistan when we signed the Panch Sheel treaty. Other countries in Asia feel that the Himalayas are not only our frontier, but the frontier of all the South and South-east Asian countries. They will join in its defence if we would give them that opportunity.

Luckily in this region, there has been a strengthening of the forces of freedom in the last few months. Last March or April, our neighbours in Ceylon escaped from the disaster of a communist-led government. More recently, Indonesia has drawn back from the brink and saved its national existence. The tide of war in Vietnam has now turned in favour of freedom and democracy, and so too in Malaysia. All that has happened; but no thanks to us. We did not move a finger to help any of these healthy processes.

What is required is a regional security arrangement with all countries within the triangle that would be made by India at one end, Japan at another and Australasia at the third. "Why Australasia?" Because Australia and New Zealand are also part of this region. Today, Australian and New Zealand boys are dying in the jungles of Malaysia and Vietnam, dying so that Asian freedom can be maintained against our enemies.

Let us give up the caste system of judging between non-aligned and aligned nations which we have followed to our disaster so far. We made friends with Indonesia because it was non-aligned. Look at how she has treated us! We turned our back upon Japan and Malaysia because they were aligned. See what friendship and support they have given us.

If this concept is to be accepted, then one of the things we must do is to stop

following the suicidal path of supporting the admission of Communist China to the United Nations. Do we realise that Communist China would become a member of the Security Council? Do we realise that she will have a Veto against us on behalf of herself and Pakistan whenever it suits her? Is it not a suicidal thing for a government, with all the experience we have got, to say that we shall go and vote for Communist China's admission? Rather, let us recall that another China, a free China, a nationalist China was our friend and helped us during World War II. It was the only country that spoke up for Indian Independence and annoyed Churchill during the War. That China is pinning down Communist armies and the air force on its Eastern frontiers. That China can join with us and form a Second Front if we are attacked in a major war. With such a China we should establish diplomatic relations and not with our enemies across the Himalayas.

Similarly, there are our friends in Tibet. We have treated Tibet cruelly. We have not been fair to our friend, His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Let us change our cowardly attitude. Let us own up to the fact that we should be glad to see Tibet liberated, that we are friends of Tibetan freedom and, as a token of our feeling, let us give diplomatic recognition to the government in exile of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. The Foreign Minister got applause in Lok Sabha for saying that if a Free Rhodesian Government was formed we would recognise it. Why do we have to go to Rhodesia to recognise a government in exile that fights for freedom when such a government is on our own territory and we could set an example to the rest of the world?

In so far as Pakistan is concerned, we shall have to have two policies: a short-term and a long-term policy. In the short-term, our firm posture of resisting any aggression or infiltration must be maintained. This limited objective of the armed conflict with Pakistan in September, has, I think, been fulfilled. The aggressor has been taught a lesson. Our long-term policy should be to keep the door open to developing normal friendly relations which are so demonstrably necessary in the interest of both the countries.

In so far as Kashmir is concerned, I believe that Pakistan, as a result of its wicked collusion with Communist China and its aggression against us, has lost whatever *locus standi* it had. There can be no concession made to Pakistan in regard to Kashmir which may be misconstrued as a reward of the misdeeds of Pakistan. But we surely will not forget the obligations we have undertaken towards the people of Kashmir. A solution of the problem has, therefore, to be worked out, but this should be done on our own initiative and at the proper time. Whatever the solution, it will have to be mutually acceptable and in the interests of both India and the people of Kashmir. What does this mean? It means that whatever the future status of Kashmir and its relationship with the Indian Union, it can only be one which, as in the case of Nagaland, is acceptable to India, which fits in with our national interests and our national security.

Now to a very important point, and that is about our future relations with two great powers — the United States of America and the Soviet Union. If the Chinese Communists and their Satellites are to be resist-successfully, I believe that the help of the great powers is essential. Any talk of going it alone is unrealistic and would be disastrous to our national interest. Both these powers have in the last few months played a constructive role in bringing about a cease-fire. We need the friendship and we need the goodwill of both these powers. In the changed circumstances, it would be a mistake to think in terms of exclusive friendship, friendship with one as against the other. The old basis of non-alignment, of two quarrelling powers, has gone and you do not have to pose one against the other any more.

But fact has to be faced, that both these powers function under certain limitations. In the case of the United States, its limitation is that it cannot take sides in a dispute between two countries in the non-Communist world. This has happened in many parts of the world. I give the example of Cyprus, a recent one where Turkey and Greece, both its allies, were at loggerheads. The United States did not take sides and tried to make friends between them. This is the role of the leading power

in the non-Communist world. It has got to be accepted.

Now, we need US help; let us not make any bones about it. We need the help and co-operation of the United States for three very specific reasons. The first is that today the United States is the only power which has the capability and willingness to deter Communist China from attacking India, if necessary, with force of arms. It is the only power with the capability and willingness to provide us with a nuclear shield against nuclear blackmail by China. That help was readily given in 1962 and it would be available, if necessary, again. There can be no system of regional security in South and Southeast Asia without the support of the United States.

The second reason why we want US co-operation is food. Thanks to our bad policies and neglect of agriculture, we are not and will not for a couple of years at least, even if good policies are followed, be in a position to avoid starvation, deaths and distress to our people. The only country that can give us the amount of food that we require is the United States.

Thirdly, this country needs economic aid and foreign capital for the welfare and well-being of its people. Again, while we may accept economic aid from any country that we like, and rightly so, there is no country that could give us economic aid of the size

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The Soviet Union has three basic objectives in this part of the world. The first is to avoid an open clash with China. Though China does not want it, the Soviet Union has kept the door open to a detente. In other words, the schism between China and Russia is not irreversible. The second thing is that the Soviet Union wants to keep Communist China and the United States out of the entire region. The third thing is that the Soviet Union wants to stop Pakistan from falling completely into the arms of Communist China.

These are the limitations of the Soviet Union and we must appreciate them, just as we appreciate the limitations of the United States. I say this because it would be disastrous if we let ourselves build another illusion in place of that illusion of 'Hindi Chini Bhai Bhai', which brought us to such a disastrous pass. I say that because there are some signs that illusion may be replaced by another illusion or hypnosis of the same kind. Countries are not hundred per cent friends. They follow their own national interests and they change their friendships from time to time.



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But fact has to be faced, that both these powers function under certain limitations. In the case of the United States, its limitation is that it cannot take sides in a dispute between two countries in the non-Communist world. This has happened in many parts of the world. I give the example of Cyprus, a recent one where Turkey and Greece, both its allies, were at loggerheads. The United States did not take sides and tried to make friends between them. This is the role of the leading power

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The second reason why we want US co-operation is food. Thanks to our bad policies and neglect of agriculture, we are not and will not for a couple of years at least, even if good policies are followed, be in a position to avoid starvation, deaths and distress to our people. The only country that can give us the amount of food that we require is the United States.

Thirdly, this country needs economic aid and foreign capital for the welfare and well-being of its people. Again, while we may accept economic aid from any country that we like, and rightly so, there is no country that could give us economic aid of the size

that we require except the United States. Let me give some figures. Out of the Third Plan's external assistance, 59 per cent came from the United States and only 8.2 per cent from the Soviet Union. Therefore, in the present unsatisfactory state of the Soviet economy, it is in no condition to help us substantially.

The Soviet Union has three basic objectives in this part of the world. The first is to avoid an open clash with China. Though China does not want it, the Soviet Union has kept the door open to a detente. In other words, the schism between China and Russia is not irreversible. The second thing is that the Soviet Union wants to keep Communist China and the United States out of the entire region. The third thing is that the Soviet Union wants to stop Pakistan from falling completely into the arms of Communist China.

These are the limitations of the Soviet Union and we must appreciate them, just as we appreciate the limitations of the United States. I say this because it would be disastrous if we let ourselves build another illusion in place of that illusion of 'Hindi Chini Bhai Bhai', which brought us to such a disastrous pass. I say that because there are some signs that illusion may be replaced by another illusion or hypnosis of the same kind. Countries are not hundred per cent friends. They follow their own national interests and they change their friendships from time to time.



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M. R. Masani

In the face of the changing situation in our neighbourhood the country needs a radical revision in its foreign policy, the discarding of dogma and the adoption of realistic diplomacy. Among concrete measures that are necessary may be mentioned:

- (a) measures for building a system of regional collective security for all countries between India, Japan and Australasia;
- (b) forthright support for the defence of South Vietnam and Malaysia against aggression;
- (c) steps towards the liberation of Tibet and the recognition of the Dalai Lama as the head of a Free Tibetan Government; and
- (d) the establishment of diplomatic relations with the Republic of China and Israel.

Recent events have some very hard lessons to teach us. The hardest of them was that, in the face of that crisis, India was isolated. I do not say that we did not have friends. But in our own corner, in our fight with Pakistan, except for Malaysia and Singapore, there was nobody. In the General Assembly of the UN, at the end of the debate, the Press Trust of India made an analysis of the trends in regard to our dispute with Pakistan. According to the PTI, the spokesmen of 63 nations were neutral and did not go beyond appealing for peace. 19 were hostile to India and, of these 19, 11 were members of the Arab League. 3 made

passing reference, but did not say anything. 25 ignored the issue. Out of 110, not one spoke up for India. This left our people bewildered; it left some of our people rather angry.

What was wrong with our foreign policy? It had three basic weaknesses. First of all, it was naive. It abounded in innocence. Our Panch Sheel pact with Communist China was the most notorious example of our naivete and our innocence. The betrayal of Tibet, for which we are paying now, was the result of it. Our naivete in another direction was to believe that, if we only turned our backs on Israel, all the Arab States would back us against Pakistan. By that neglect of friendly relations with Israel, we thought we would pay a price for Arab support. I have mentioned above that 11 of the Arab States spoke against us in the U. N. General Assembly. What is more, at Algiers, President Nasser had joined with the Chinese in having our move to have the conference defeated. These are facts.

The second thing from which our foreign policy suffered was its narcissistic character—watching ourselves in the mirror and admiring ourselves, imagining that the rest of the world saw us as we saw ourselves. We have now learnt that, that image was only in our imagination.

The third thing which was wrong was our self-righteousness, the air of moral superiority we adopted towards everybody else, teaching them lessons, talking down at them, refusing to judge between right

and wrong, whether it was in Berlin or Hungary or Tibet, talking of Peace, when other people were fighting for Freedom and Justice. The latest example of that was, for the last twelve months, we needed those in Vietnam who were trying to defend that country against the aggression of Communist China and its satellite. We kept on telling them: "You must not cross the frontier; defence must be on your own territory." And then, history caught up with us, and we had to cross the frontier ourselves! These are the basic defects of our foreign policy for which we were paying the price of being isolated. That foreign policy has ceased to have any relevance to our present needs. We have to come to terms with reality. As was said before, "too long have we lived in an artificial world of our own creation."

What is that reality? That reality is that the biggest threat to our independence, our way of life and our survival is that which comes from Communist China.

That is the major threat. The challenge of Communist China is a more permanent and more fundamental challenge not only to our survival, but to our democratic way of life. The only choice for us, along with the other countries of this region, is to stand up to Communist China or succumb and become satellites. Of all countries of the region, except for Japan, ours is the only country that can take the initiative and lead in bringing about arrangements for the security of South and Southeast Asia, India, along with Japan, is cast by geopolitics, by her position, by her size, by her democratic institutions, by her maturity, to lead the countries of this region along with Japan. That is the role that is offered to us by history and geopolitics and the question before us is whether we are going to accept this role or become a miserable camp follower. I have no doubt that the people of India would wish us and our government to take up the challenge and assume that role that history and geopolitics assign us.

If it is agreed, that there can be no option but to see that we take up this responsibility, then the question arises as to what should be our attitude and posture

as one of the leaders of Free Asia. Our obligation is to join with Japan in rallying the countries of South and Southeast Asia which lie between us to defend the free way of life which is menaced by the Chinese Communist imperialism and its allies. We have to provide that solidarity to them that we have failed to do in the last fifteen years. We have turned our back on our neighbours. We dealt with China unilaterally; we never consulted Burma or Pakistan when we signed the Panch Sheel treaty. Other countries in Asia feel that the Himalayas are not only our frontier, but the frontier of all the South and Southeast Asian countries. They will join in its defence if we would give them that opportunity.

Luckily in this region, there has been a strengthening of the forces of freedom in the last few months. Last March or April, our neighbours in Ceylon escaped from the disaster of a communist-led government. More recently, Indonesia has drawn back from the brink and saved its national existence. The tide of war in Vietnam has now turned in favour of freedom and democracy, and so too in Malaysia. All that has happened; but no thanks to us. We did not move a finger to help any of these healthy processes.

What is required is a regional security arrangement with all countries within the triangle that would be made by India at one end, Japan at another and Australasia at the third. "Why Australasia?" Because Australia and New Zealand are also part of this region. Today, Australian and New Zealand boys are dying in the jungles of Malaysia and Vietnam, dying so that Asian freedom can be maintained against our enemies.

Let us give up the caste system of judging between non-aligned and aligned nations which we have followed to our disaster so far. We made friends with Indonesia because it was non-aligned. Look at how she has treated us! We turned our back upon Japan and Malaysia because they were aligned. See what friendship and support they have given us.

If this concept is to be accepted, then one of the things we must do is to stop

following the suicidal path of supporting the admission of Communist China to the United Nations. Do we realise that Communist China would become a member of the Security Council? Do we realise that she will have a Veto against us on behalf of herself and Pakistan whenever it suits her? Is it not a suicidal thing for a government, with all the experience we have got, to say that we shall go and vote for Communist China's admission? Rather, let us recall that another China, a free China, a nationalist China was our friend and helped us during World War II. It was the only country that spoke up for Indian Independence and annoyed Churchill during the War. That China is pinning down Communist armies and the air force on its Eastern frontiers. That China can join with us and form a Second Front if we are attacked in a major war. With such a China we should establish diplomatic relations and not with our enemies across the Himalayas.

Similarly, there are our friends in Tibet. We have treated Tibet cruelly. We have not been fair to our friend, His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Let us change our cowardly attitude. Let us own up to the fact that we should be glad to see Tibet liberated, that we are friends of Tibetan freedom and, as a token of our feeling, let us give diplomatic recognition to the government in exile of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. The Foreign Minister got applause in Lok Sabha for saying that if a Free Rhodesian Government was formed we would recognise it. Why do we have to go to Rhodesia to recognise a government in exile that fights for freedom when such a government is on our own territory and we could set an example to the rest of the world?

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