

Sino-Indian Relations during the Era of Indira Gandhi

Dr. D. Chandramouli Reddy

Assistant Professor,

Dept. of Political Science and Public Administration,
Sri Krishnadevaraya University, Anantapur.

ABSTRACT

China's India policy cannot be separated from its overall view of the world and its more long-range objectives but there are also certain special and particular Sino-Indian problems. They would be there no matter what the global situation is.

A very major and very large unresolved issue, one that is not easily tractable, is the border dispute between the two countries. The border problem is no longer just a question of the Aksai and the McMohan Line. It is now far more complex and includes the strategically important Karakoram Highway, China's position on Kashmir, its own recognition of the accession of Sikkim to the Indian Union and its support for Naga and Mizo hostiles. All the same, the border dispute constitutes the most serious issue to be satisfactorily handled by the two countries. Mrs. Gandhi was of the opinion that the government would try and find a way in solving the dispute with China without insisting on its acceptance of the Colombo proposals as a pre-condition. India was prepared to follow a more flexible approach on the border issue with China. China on its part also showed signs of entering into negotiations with India.

After the re-emergence of Mrs. Gandhi to power in 1980 there was a change in the improvement of relations with China. The Chinese foreign minister Mr. Huang Hua visited India on 26 June, 1980 and this marked an important development in the restoration of relations between China and India. During the period 1982-84 both the Indian and the Chinese leaders expressed their desire to find a speedy and peaceful solution to the border and other disputes between India and China. Mrs. Gandhi continued the same policy

which was prevailed before the Janata Government, even though there was a slight change in the improvement of relations with China.

Keywords: *Aksai Chin, the McMohan Line, Sino-Indo Border dispute, Colombo proposals,*

India's relations with China antedate Indian independence and since 1947 they have been a major factor in India's foreign policy. Immediately after achieving independence, India was so preoccupied with problems of its own and China was so deeply involved in a civil war "that direct relations between the two countries, apart from contacts in international bodies were mostly restricted to the formalities and routine of the usual international contact".¹

The old cordial relations between India and China tended to take a new turn at the Asian Relation Conference in New Delhi in March, 1947. The Kuomintang delegates objected to the display of a map of Asia in which Tibet was shown as a territory outside China. They also protested against India's official recognition of the Tibetan delegation. "There appeared to be a rift in Sino-Indian solidarity produced by newer historical forces emerging on the surface"² observed one writer.

India and China represent ancient civilizations which date back five thousand years or more. During the course of this long period India and China never engaged in wars. Both the great countries had cultural and trade contacts. Indian spiritual leaders introduced Buddhism in China and in large part of South East Asia. Both India and China developed their own peculiar type of philosophy and culture according to their own genius.

After Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru became the Prime Minister of India, China became an important factor in India's foreign policy. Pandit Nehru believed that India and China could collectively refashion the events in Asia and in the world. India promptly recognised the Peoples' Republic of China on 30th December, 1949. India also championed that the Chinese seat in the United Nations should be represented by the Government of Peoples' Republic of China.

Panchasheela Agreement:

The Chinese Premier Mr. Chou-En-Lai visited India in June, 1954, and the Chinese and the Indian Prime Ministers propounded co-existence. The five principles were as follows: 1. Mutual respect for each others territorial integrity and sovereignty, 2. Mutual non-aggression, 3. Mutual non-interference in each other's internal affairs, 4. Equality and Mutual benefit, and 5. Peaceful co-existence.

During this period, India also entered into agreement with China in 1954, whereby India recognised China's sovereignty over Tibet. In 1955 India participated at the Bandung conference which was attended by twenty nine Afro-Asian nations along with China on 29th November, 1956. Mr. Chou-En- Lai again visited India and praised India's efforts towards the solving of the Korean and Indo-China disputes. However, during the period 1956-58 certain differences had emerged between India and China. India received reports of the Chinese road construction and military buildup in Tibet close to the Indian border. In 1958 China published maps which showed large areas of Indian Territory as parts of China. Pandit Nehru wrote a lengthy letter to Premier Chou-En-Lai on 14th December, 1958, wherein the issue of India-China border was raised and China was requested to settle the question peacefully.³ The Chinese launched a campaign of suppression of the Tibetans and Dalailama was forced to flee from Lhasa and sought asylum in India in 1959.

From October 1 957, the Chinese border forces made frequent incursions into Indian territory and China claimed large tracts of land in Aksai Chin and NEFA.

The government of India made all efforts to bring about a peaceful solution to the border issue but it appeared that the Chinese were not interested. During the visit of Chou-En-Lai to Delhi in April 1960, the issue was raised at the highest level between Pandit Nehru and Premier Chou-En-Lai. However, no solution could be arrived at. In spite of India's best efforts the Chinese adopted unhelpful attitude and attacked India all along the Sino-Indian border in October, 1962.

The Tibetan Problem:

The government of the People's Republic of China (PRC) proclaimed on 1st January, 1950, that one of the basic tasks of the "People's Liberation Army" would henceforth be to "liberate" Tibet and "stand guard at the Chinese frontiers". The Chinese government's determination to liberate Tibet was subsequently reiterated by responsible leaders.⁴ The Chinese announcements perturbed the government of India. In India, Tibet was considered a buffer state guaranteeing the security of India and China and facilitating friendly relations between the two large nations along a mountainous border of some 2000 miles.

The Tibetan leaders had to agree to Peking's terms and they signed an agreement on 23rd May, 1951. What emerged from the agreement was not the legitimate Tibetan autonomy within the frame work of Chinese suzerainty, as the government of India wanted, but full fledged Chinese sovereignty over Tibet, with restricted Tibetan rights to autonomy in certain limited spheres.⁵

In the middle of March 1959, there was a sudden uprising in Lhasa leading to the outbreak of hostilities between the Tibetans and the Chinese forces and as a consequence, the Dalailama fled to India. The government of India granted him asylum and made it clear that although they sympathized with the Tibetains, in their aspiration for autonomy they fully recognised the suzerainty of China and could not, in any way, intervene in the developments inside Tibet. The Tibetan uprising and the reactions it evoked in India strained Sino-Indian relations further.

The Border Conflict:

The events in Tibet undermined India's faith in China's bonafides. India felt that the Chinese began, as if to retaliate against what had happened in Tibet, a series of intrusions across India's Northern frontier. At the same time the Chinese felt that the "Indian armed personnel" have "unlawfully intruded" into Chinese territory despite "solemn warning" of the Chinese frontier guards.⁶

During 1956-57 the Chinese built a road across the Aksai Chin area with a view to open up Western Tibet to Chinese immigration and diverting its trade from its traditional Southward direction, Northward into Western China and the Soviet Union. It was on 23rd January, 1959, that Chou-En-Lai in a letter to Nehru questioned for the first time the established boundary between India and China. He contended that the Sino-Indian boundary had never been formally delineated and that the so called "McMohan Line was a product of British policy of aggression against the Tibet region of China" and therefore, an illegal line.⁷

In July 1959, the Chinese armed forces came to Khurnak Fort in Ladakh and arrested an Indian patrol party in Aksai Chin. On 8th September, 1959, Chou-En-Lai formally laid claim to 50,000 square miles of territory. In October, 1959, the Chinese troops penetrated into Ladakh and opened fire on an Indian patrol near the Kongka pass, resulting in the death of some Indians. The Kongka pass incident brought Sino-Indian relations almost to a breaking point.

Nehru was eager to devise some via media and take action, short of conflict, in order to assuage the public opinion. The so called "forward policy" was formed in 1961, the purpose of which was to establish some symbolic posts both in Ladakh and in NEFA. It seems possible that Nehru framed the policy under pressure from the opposition parties.⁸ By the end of the year India established about fifty posts along the border. This was probably one of the reasons which provoked the Chinese to cross the McMohan Line in Eastern section on 8th September, 1962, and launch a large scale attack both in the Western and in the Eastern sections of the border on

20th October, 1962, overwhelming the Indian frontier posts. The government of India made the counter proposal that the status quo on the border as on 8th September, 1962, should be restored and that the two countries should then enter into discussions. Further violations took place across the border.⁹

Suddenly, on 21st November, 1962, the Chinese announced their unilateral cease-fire and their decision to withdraw. India declined to accept the terms but stated that it will not interfere with the previous demand for the restoration of the status quo (8th September, 1962) in all sectors of the boundary.

When China invaded India in October 1 962, the Chinese were successful in defeating India and occupying a large tract of Indian territory. They have refused to vacate the same, inspite of many efforts by various states. When Pakistan attacked India in 1965, China gave her full support against India and was willing even to open a new front. In June 1967, two members of the Indian embassy in Peking were humiliated and expelled after inhuman treatment. The Indian embassy was besieged by the Red Guards. The relations between the two countries reached the breaking point.

Many reasons have been given for unilateral cease-fire by China. A very important reason why China withdrew was that the government of U.S and Great Britain promised India military help which enabled her to defend herself against China.

Indo-Soviet friendship was tested during the period of the Chinese aggression in 1962. The Chinese did not accept the McMohan Line as the Sino-Indian border and laid claims to a large part of the Indian territory in the Ladakh and NEFA. The Soviet Union maintained a studied silence for a long time and then issued a statement of neutrality stating that India and China with whom USSR enjoyed friendly relations would settle their disputes peacefully. The Soviet Union increased its economic aid and became a supplier of military hardware to India.

During the Indo-Pak war of 1965, the Soviet Union warned China to stay away from the conflict as their intervention would complicate the issues. Colombo Conference Proposals: In order to break the stalemate and to provide a basis for an agreed cease-fire arrangements, the representatives of six Asian-African countries viz., Ceylon, Burma, Indonesia, Cambodia, the United Arab Republic and Ghanamet in Colombo between 10th and 12th of December 1962, and put forward certain proposals, which they thought, would, if accepted by both the parties, lead to substantive discussions on the border problems.¹⁰

Although the Chinese government stated their so-called acceptance of the Colombo proposals "in principle" they made certain reservations on the proposal. In a note dated 3rd April, 1963, India suggested various constructive steps to resolve the problems including international arbitration.¹¹ After six months, the Chinese, in a note on 9th October, 1963, rejected the suggestions and accused India of having proposed these steps to make negotiations impossible by setting up an array of obstacles.¹² The rejection by China of the various proposals led to a deadlock in Sino-Indian relations which continued even after 1963. Nothing has come out of Colombo proposals and the stalemate continued.

During Mr. Shastri's period relations between Pakistan and China became more intimate. The Chinese entered into an agreement with Pakistan whereby China undertook to construct roads and fortifications in Pakistan held Kashmir which was an unfriendly act against India. China also supported Pakistan's claims over Kashmir and the Rann of Kutch. During the Indo-Pakistan war of 1965, China lent diplomatic support to Pakistan and supplied Pakistan with military equipment. It raised tension all along the India-China border with a view to pindown India's mountain divisions and thus create difficulties for India's mountain divisions by diverting its armed forces on two fronts.¹³

India's decisive victory over Pakistan led to a cease fire between the two countries. The Soviet Union made all efforts to bring about a peaceful solution and due to their

efforts the Tashkent agreement was signed between President Ayub Khan of Pakistan and Prime Minister Lai Bahadur Shastri in January, 1966, in Tashkent. In 1966, China was beset with internal turmoil. It was the Soviet Union who invited Indo-Pak leaders for a negotiated settlement at Tashkent. At the Tashkent meet India and Pakistan were made to compromise their differences. The Tashkent declaration did not settle for India any of her real problems. It was simply an approval by the super-powers on a cease-fire.

Sri Lai Bahadur Shastri continued to maintain the Nehru line on negotiations with China. During the period 1966-69, Mrs. Gandhi was beset with various domestic problems in India and, therefore could not make much headway in the field of international politics. During the general elections of 1967, the Congress fared badly in the states, although it managed to secure a majority in the centre. Mrs. Gandhi's position was not secure. India had also suffered drought conditions in 1965, 1966, 1967 and was heavily dependent on the United States for its food grains supplies. Mrs. Gandhi's position was also challenged within the congress by the syndicate led by Mr. Morarji Desai. In order to improve her image within the party and in the country, Mrs. Indira Gandhi adopted radical measures like the abolition of privy purses, and bank nationalization which led to the congress split in 1969. Mrs. Gandhi, after the congress split, emerged as the unquestioned leader of the Congress. On 1st January, 1969, Mrs. Gandhi stated that the government would try and find a way of solving the dispute with China without insisting on its acceptance of the Colombo proposals as a pre-condition. It, therefore, became clear that India was prepared to follow a more flexible approach on the border issue with China. In 1970 on the May Day celebrations, chairman Mao spoke to India's charged' affairs stating, "India is a great country so as China, the two countries have been friendly before and they ought to be friends again, and of course detach themselves from the two super powers."¹⁴

India received the news of Mao's smile with great enthusiasm and it appeared that atleast hopes of rapprochement with China were near. However, the

Indian response to China was conditioned by three factors, it was felt that improvement of relations with China would adversely affect India's relations with the Soviet Union. Secondly Mrs. Gandhi was hesitant to take bold steps towards China for fear of adverse reactions at home and finally it was felt in the Ministry of External Affairs that the time was not appropriate for the opening of a dialogue with China.¹⁵ During the early months of 1971, China showed evidence of a genuine desire to improve relations with India. Mrs. Gandhi congratulated the people of China on their representation in the United Nations. On the 27th October, 1971, Premier Chou-En-Lai thanked India for its support on the question of China's representation in the United Nations.¹⁶

China's representative in the third committee of the United Nations raised the Bangladesh issue and accused India of creating the refugee problem. The government of India viewed the Chinese outburst in the context of its pro-Pakistan bias and was not unduly alarmed. India was keen that exchanges at the ambassador level should be made immediately so that its improved relations with China would be to its advantage in its developing crisis with Pakistan over the Bangladesh issue. However, China was not prepared to jeopardize its relations with Pakistan for the sake of India's friendship.¹⁷

The Indo-Soviet Treaty of August 1971, delivered a blow to efforts at normalisation of relations with China. It was felt that unless relations with China improve India could not reduce its defence budget and divert huge amounts of money for developmental purposes. It was on account of India's Non-alignment policy that India was humiliated and defeated by the communist China in 1962. Had India entered into a treaty with any great power, communist China would not have dared to attack India in 1962. Infact, China's friendship with Pakistan against India forced India to have the treaty with the Soviet Union. Thus, because of the Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace Friendship and Co-operation, USSR came to India's help against the war with Pakistan and USA and China could not help Pakistan. So India won the war. Had India not made this treaty with the Soviet Union, most probably China and USA would have helped

Pakistan in which case India's success would have been doubtful. Indian foreign policy framers were convinced that India could not concede on the border issue and its treaty obligations with the Soviet Union. Beyond these two considerations, India was willing to enter into negotiations with China. The government of China was not happy with the turn of events in the Indian sub-continent leading to the emergence of Bangladesh. The Chinese radio accused India of trying to project itself as a super power.¹⁸

President Bhutto of Pakistan paid an official visit to China on 7th February, 1972, and apprised the Chinese of the situation in Pakistan, after the emergence of Bangladesh. Both Pakistan and China concluded that the Soviet influence in the Indian sub-continent should be reduced at all costs and a no-war pact should be signed amongst the nations of the Indian subcontinent. This would give China a special status in the region to reduce the influence of the super powers.¹⁹ Mr. Bhutto's visit to Peking was followed by the historic visit of President Nixon to China. India viewed these visits with mixed reaction. It was felt that a new Pak-China-United States axis was in the air. Mrs. Gandhi made it very clear that any decisions resulting from the Sino-United States negotiations could not be binding on the Asian Nations.²⁰

The Chinese welcomed the Simla Agreement as it felt that India and Pakistan should solve their problems bilaterally.²¹ Sardar Swaran Singh expressed India's relations with China. He said, "India had expressed its willingness on several occasions. It was even prepared to have economic relations with China without bringing any political differences...."²² In spite of India's best efforts China harped on old grievances and accused India with designs of installing Dalailama in Tibet.²³ In the Year 1972, relations between China and India remained the same. China improved its relations with the United States and Japan but did not prove a serious danger as a competitor to Indian exports.

On the 15th April, 1975, India decided to restore full diplomatic relations with China at the ambassadorial

level and Mr. Y.B. Chavan India's Foreign Minister, hoped that relations would improve between the two countries.

The Janata Party which came to power in March 1977, announced its policy of "genuine non-alignment". It aimed at maintaining equidistance between the super powers. The Chinese leadership saw the change in Indian leadership an opportunity to reduce the Soviet influence in India.

On March 11, 1978, the border issue was discussed between Mr. Morarji Desai, India's Prime Minister and Mr. Wang-Pin-Nau leader of the Chinese delegation. The Chinese delegates assured the Indian leaders that the border issue would be settled peacefully. Mr. Yu-Chau in an interview with an Indian journalist stated in May 1978, that India and China should settle their disputes peacefully. The border dispute which baffled solution should be taken at the last.²⁴ Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee paid an official visit to China from 12th to 18th February, 1979.²⁵ The Chinese entertained the Indian Foreign Minister where he met Huang Hua, Foreign Minister, Teng Hsiao Ping, Vice-Premier, and Prime Minister Hua Kuo Feng. However, Mr. Vajpayee was kept in dark of the developments on the China-Vietnam border and he had to cut short his visit because of the Vietnam border development.

In 1980, the Congress Party under the leadership of Mrs. Indira Gandhi was returned to power by an overwhelming majority. Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao, India's new Foreign Minister, told the Lok Sabha that his government would make all efforts to improve relations with China but it was upto China to take the next step. The Chinese foreign Minister, Mr. Huang Hua visited India on 26 June, 1980 and this marked an important development in restoration of relations between India and China. During the period 1982-84 both Indian and Chinese leaders have expressed their desire to find a speedy and peaceful solution to the border and other disputes between India and China, so that these two great nations of the world could join hands towards world peace and disarmament. China has accepted the

reality of Bangladesh and the role of India as the dominant power in South Asia. China continues to feel uneasy at India's close relations with the Soviet Union. In its global world view, it continues to see the Soviet Union as a possible aggressor and a danger to its security. It has therefore, from the strategic angle, developed cordial relations with the United States. In the post-Mao period China has embarked upon modernization and has imported advance technology from the United States. Pakistan is important to China as a counter force to India.

A close look at China's policy towards her neighbours, particularly, the South Asian region has acquired added urgency in the context of the new and higher level of axis forged between China and the United States following Mr. Ronald Reagan's visit to China (May, 1984). There has been a feeling that Pakistan has attained nuclear capability by stealing secrets and deriving covert support from China. The nuclear accord was signed by the US President Reagan during his visit to China in April, 1984. The China-Pakistan security concerns was demonstrated both in 1965 and 1971 Indo-Pakistan war and also by the unparalleled Chinese military support to Pakistan in terms of free supply of military hardware and the establishment of defence production facilities.

The border problem between India and China has remained frozen for two decades. The issue was re-opened at the Chinese initiative in 1980, with the new well-known "package" presented by the Chinese government through a press statement. As a method of negotiations although discussions were held in an amicable and friendly atmosphere, no real progress towards a solution of the border problem could be made. The territorial claims of India and China on sectors, on the borders in dispute can be seen in the light of (a) the legal position, (b) historical usage and (c) the actual position on the ground what was known as NEFA, right upto McMohan Line, has been and is being held and administered by India while what should be known as Aksai Chin is under the Chinese control. NEFA in the

east the Aksai Chin in the west are areas of critical importance, the former for India and the latter for China.

India and China should take stock bilaterally of major developments around the world. They should review international issues concerning major powers in changing themselves. India has standing arrangements with a number of countries for periodic bilateral consultations on problems of foreign policy. These consultations do not impinge on sovereignty but help the participants to understand each other's points of view even if these views are not concordant. Prior consultations avert unpleasant surprises and may at times result in co-ordination of approach between consultants whose foreign policy objectives may not be in conflict.

One of the major distortions in china's foreign policy was the complete abandonment of its earlier view of imperialism. The Chinese came round increasingly to identify imperialism with military power per se and the capacity of intervention. That this was totally non-Leninist view of imperialism may or may not be of interest to many people in the third world. But it is small wonder if Chinese have a hard time persuading the Asians and the Africans to balance that imperialism does not appear like what they always visualised. From the gentle disapproval of Mrs. Gandhi to the active involvement of Zia-Ul-Huq, they do not have much to disapprove. Afghanistan is a peripheral issue as far as Chinese security or its interests in South and South West Asia are concerned.

Over a period of time, items for a common agenda for talks between China and the countries of South Asia, and more particularly between China and India, are emerging. The Chinese are rethinking on the role and contribution of Nehru. The Chinese have taken to a Nehruvian course in foreign policy. But a reassessment of the role of Nehru among the historians of Beijing cannot be entirely fortuitous.²⁶

The Chinese have always been very cautious in their endeavours in giving a boost to the normalization

process which started in the midseventies. Their approach towards India is clear. They do not want to annoy the Indian leadership. In fact, they have not shown any flexibility in their approach towards India and are expecting from the Indian side to offer concessions on the border issues. No Indian government can afford to adopt a some what lenient posture towards the basic problems existing between the two countries. The Indian public opinion has always favoured in solving the major issues through peaceful means and has also welcomed the progress registered by the two countries in strengthening their relations.

After India became free in 1947, the first country which came forward to establish diplomatic relations with her was the Nationalist government of China. However, when it was overthrown by the Communists in 1949, the government of India recognised the government of Red China on 30th December, 1949. Many delegations were exchanged between the two countries. India left no stone unturned to bring Red China into the United Nations. When Tibet was run over by China, India entered into a treaty with Red China regarding Tibet by which Chinese suzerainty over Tibet was recognised.

When Pakistan attacked India in 1965, China gave her full support against India and was willing even to open a new front, China gave India an ultimatum. Even after that, China has shown her hostility towards India. China is already in occupation of Indian territory. It is true that the government of India is adding to her military strength but it cannot be denied the Chinese government can be forced to withdraw from Indian territory only if the Indian government uses force to throw out the Chinese from their present positions. No amount of bargaining or pressure from any side is going to force China to see reason. This is for the people of India and the government of India to decide. The only other possibility can be lliat if there is a war between the Communist China and the Nationalist China or between the Communist China and the Soviet Union, India may be able to take advantage of it and recover her lost territory.

One of the major distortions in China's foreign policy was the complete abandonment of its earlier view of imperialism. India and China should take stock bilaterally of major developments around the world. They should review international issues concerning major powers including themselves.

Both China and India are nevertheless rather acutely conscious of their roles in world affairs. With the change of leadership at the centre in 1977, there was not much of a change with regard to foreign policy of India in relation to China. A very major and large unresolved issue, the border problem is no longer just a question of Aksai Chin' and McMahon Line. It is now far more complex and includes the strategically important Karakoram Highway. The border dispute constitutes the most serious issue to be satisfactorily handled by the two countries. The various thorny issues like the border dispute, the question of the Karakoram Highway, support for Pakistan in Kashmir, etc., between the two countries should be sincerely resolved as early as possible in order to establish the foundation for a real, friendly relationship between India and China. The search for a viable peace with China must be constant endeavour of Indian foreign policy.²⁷

During the Janata rule in 1977-79, Morarji Desai tried to make India's foreign policy more evenly non-aligned. After the fall of the Janata regime the old Nehruvian foreign policy was restored by Mrs. Indira Gandhi.

The Janata Government continued the old policy, as it was really serious about normalizing Sino-Indian relations, and a change of policy was inescapable. One major reason behind the disaster of 1962 was the unhistorical stand of the Congress government that the Sino-Indian boundary was traditional and settled and that China should withdraw from the territories that it had occupied which India had claimed. The Janata Government endorsed this stand. Morarji Desai supported the Lok Sabha resolution of 1962 to "drive out" the Chinese from Indian soil. The Janata government did not allow rigidity to act as a constraint

on the expansion of trade and cultural relations with China.²⁸

Evaluation:

China's India policy cannot be separated from its overall view of the world and its more long-range objectives but there are also certain special and particular Sino-Indian problems. They would be there no matter what the global situation is.

Both China and India are acutely conscious of their roles in world affairs. The strong feeling of nationalism in both China and India imposes its own requirements for a long term understanding between the two countries.

The Soviet Union has been a major factor in the Sino-Indian relations. Some of the bitternesses in Sino-Indian relations have been the result of sharp differences in the policies of the two countries towards the Soviet Union. India's heavy reliance on the Soviet Union and Indo-Soviet relationship (including the Indo-Soviet Treaty) stood in the way of normalization of Sino-Indian relations.

China reconciled itself to the break-up of Pakistan and acknowledged that India was not working for the dismemberment of West Pakistan. This helped relax tension over Pakistan and promote better relations between China and - India, although the basic question of India-China-Pakistan relationships do not admit of an easy solution.

A very major and very large unresolved issue, one that is not easily tractable, is the border dispute between the two countries. The border problem is no longer just a question of the Aksai and the McMohan Line. It is now far more complex and includes the strategically important Karakoram Highway, China's position on Kashmir, its own recognition of the accession of Sikkim to the Indian Union and its support for Naga and Mizo hostiles. All the same, the border dispute constitutes the most serious issue to be satisfactorily handled by the two countries. The year 1982 marks a change in the developments of India's foreign policy. Though the

basic principles outlined still continued to form the basis of India's foreign policy in the post 1962 period, but it came to be characterised by greater pragmatism and realism. Improvement of relations between India and Pakistan since the Simla Agreement helped ease Sino-Indian relations and promote the process of normalization. Any sudden deterioration in India's relations with Pakistan could easily bring about an equally sudden deterioration in Sino-Indian relations. India and China are neighbours and must live in peace. We search for a viable peace with China and it must be a constant endeavour of Indian foreign policy.

Before the Janata regime Mrs. Gandhi was beset with various domestic problems and therefore could not make much headway in the field of international politics. Mrs. Gandhi adopted radical measures like the abolition of Privy purses and Bank nationalisation which led to the Congress split in 1969.

Mrs. Gandhi was of the opinion that the government would try and find a way in solving the dispute with China without insisting on its acceptance of the Colombo proposals as a pre-condition. India was prepared to follow a more flexible approach on the border issue with China. China on its part also showed signs of entering into negotiations with India.

The Indian response to China was conditioned by three factors. Firstly, it was felt improvement of relations with China would adversely affect India's relations with the Soviet Union. Secondly, Mrs. Gandhi was hesitant to take a bold step towards China for fear of adverse reactions at home. And thirdly, it was felt in the Ministry of External Affairs that the time was not appropriate for the opening of a dialogue with China.

China's sensitivity to Pakistan's security concerns was demonstrated both in 1965 and in 1971 Indo-Pak war and also by the unparalleled Chinese military support to Pakistan in terms of free supply of military hardware and the establishment of defense production facilities.

India and China should take stock bilaterally of major developments around the world. They should review international issues concerning major powers including themselves.

Janata regime aimed at maintaining equi-distance between the super powers. The Chinese leadership saw in the change in Indian leadership in 1977, an opportunity to reduce the Soviet influence in India. Janata Government continued old policy although it was serious about normalizing Sino-Indian relations, a change of policy was inescapable. Morarji Desai categorically supported the Lok Sabha resolution of 1962 to "drive out" the Chinese from the Indian soil. He however, substituted "vacate" for "drive out." With regard to expansion of trade and cultural relations with China the Janata Government was flexible. The Janata Government continued the trend set by its predecessor in maintaining cordial relations with the neighbours countries of India.

After the re-emergence of Mrs. Gandhi to power in 1980 there was a change in the improvement of relations with China. The Chinese foreign minister Mr. Huang Hua visited India on 26 June, 1980 and this marked an important development in the restoration of relations between China and India. During the period 1982-84 both the Indian and the Chinese leaders expressed their desire to find a speedy and peaceful solution to the border and other disputes between India and China. Mrs. Gandhi continued the same policy which was prevailed before the Janata Government, even though there was a slight change in the improvement of relations with China.

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